

People's Cooperative Store 1922

Located at 301 Fairhope Avenue, The People's Cooperative Store was built in 1922. It is a two-story commercial building with a 50' frontage. Originally, its exterior was brick, then stucco. The lower storefront today is a modern design of aluminum and glass with central supporting piers. The auditorium upstairs is intact. In the co-op days, it was used for community social gatherings and meetings.

This building is an embodiment of the Fairhope cooperative ideal and is one of the most important buildings in Fairhope's commercial history. It was owned by 115 people, each person an equal owner with one share, one vote. The store carried groceries, fertilizer, farm supplies, clothing, shoes, etc. It also had a restaurant and a co-op bakery where one could purchase bread and pastries. Unfortunately, it was not a great success and the co-op closed in 1926. Since its closing, the store has had several occupants: Hammond's Grocery Store, Piggy Wiggly Grocery Store, Bill's Dollar Store, and Fairhope Hardware Store.

Since the closing of the Fairhope Hardware Store in 2018, the building has remained empty. The store has come under new ownership and will undergo an impressive renovation to include a restaurant, retail spaces, and an event space upstairs with an associated roof terrace. The building is to be named People's Cooperative, paying homage to the founding fathers.