

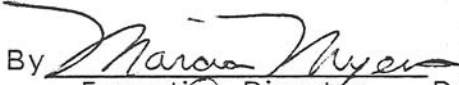
Paramount Theatre Study Report

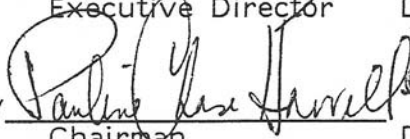


Petition #23

**Boston Landmarks Commission
Environment Department
City of Boston**

Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission
on the potential designation of the
PARAMOUNT THEATRE
as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975

Approved By  OCT. 10 4 1983
Executive Director Date

Accepted By  OCT. 10 4 1983
Chairman Date

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1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

1.1 Address and Assessor's Parcel Number

The address of the Paramount Theatre is 549-563 Washington Street. The building is located in Ward 3, Precinct 8. The assessor's parcel number is 4832.

1.2 Area in Which the Property is Located

The Theatre is located on the west side of Washington Street, one of the City's major thoroughfares, on the block between West and Avery Streets. This block is considered part of the Theatre District and also borders on the retail shopping area.

The building is bounded on the north by the party wall with 543-547 Washington Street and on the south by the party wall with 565-569 Washington Street. A portion of the rear wall borders the rear of the former Herald Building on Mason Street and the rest of the rear facade faces either the Mason Street parking area or Mason Street Place, a narrow service alley.

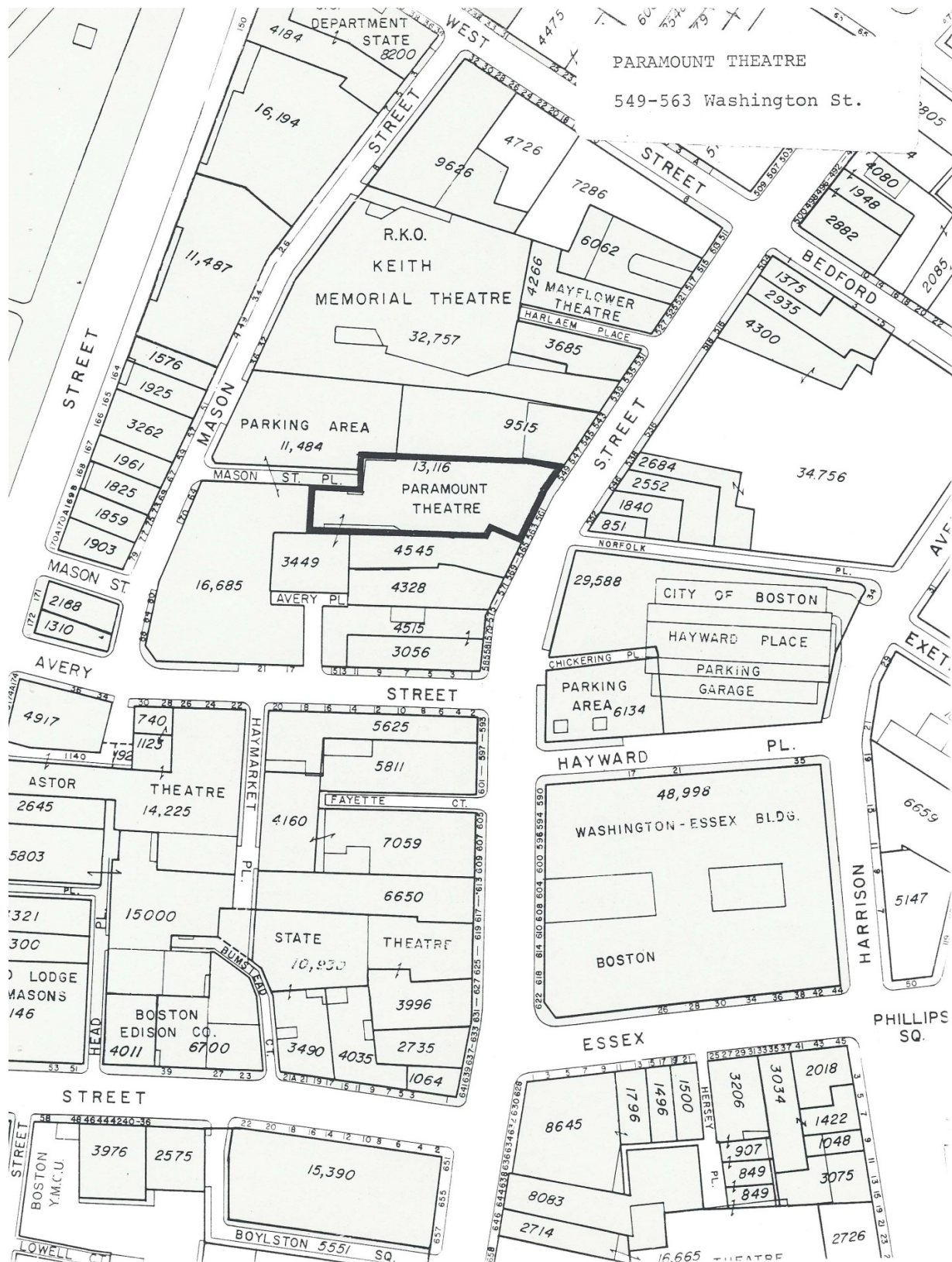
The west side of Washington Street, particularly the Paramount block, is characterized by a variety of commercial architecture including late 19th and early 20th century stone, cast stone, and terra cotta buildings ranging in height from two to nine stories. The Paramount and six buildings adjacent to the north form the "Washington Street Theatre District," a National Register district which is considered significant because of its history and architectural diversity.

The Paramount is one of three theatres on the block. Other buildings have retail, restaurant, or amusement uses on the ground floor and offices or vacant space above. Buildings are in good to fair condition.

On the east side of Washington Street, directly opposite the Paramount block, construction is underway on Lafayette Place, which is a modern shopping mall, underground garage, and hotel complex which will provide a sharp contrast in scale and style.

1.3 Map Showing Location





2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type and Use

The Paramount is a two-story movie theatre originally seating 1,500, with two retail stores at ground level. The theatre has been closed since February, 1976, and has suffered some fire and water damage since that date. The two stores are presently occupied by “Young's,” a bag and hat shop, and “Paradise Shop,” a wig, hat, and sunglass store.

2.2 Physical Description

Exterior:

The Paramount Theatre was constructed between 1930 and 1932 in the Art Deco style. The steel-frame, flat-roofed structure covers a 13,116 square foot lot which measures 80 feet along Washington Street and varies in depth between 165 and 200 feet. The Washington Street facade measures 70 feet in height and is constructed of cast stone blocks with light grey limestone coloration. The principal design characteristics of the facade are its flatness, symmetry, and restrained use of Art Deco ornamental conventions such as reverse cable fluting and bas relief sculpture. Verticality is stressed through the use of pilasters, tall narrow windows, and an upright sign. The facade is largely intact even at ground level and retains the original marquee and sign.

The ground floor is arranged symmetrically and designed to meet theatre needs and also to accommodate two stores. An octagonal-shaped ticket booth at the center of the ground floor has a polished veined black marble base and aluminum or chrome roof with ziggurat massing, a device in which a series of successively smaller geometric blocks are set one on top of the other, creating a terraced effect. The black marble used on the ticket booth is also used several more times along the ground floor, for the side piers, the lintel above the ground floor, the soffit area under the doors, and the base under the poster displays.

Three sets of double doors flank the ticket booth on each side. The doors are wooden with a center glass cut-out which is rectangular in shape except for a stepped pattern rising to a point at the top center. The doors are presently covered by plywood boarding but are intact except for the glass.

Flanking each section of doors is a space for movie posters, set off by a 6” band of aluminum trim at the top, channeled with horizontal lines. The poster display glass is now boarded over. Flanking the poster area are the two storefronts, which do not have original doors or sash.

Above the ground floor is a large marquee which projects about eight feet over the sidewalk and is supported from above by four metal rods. The marquee is presently

covered with modern aluminum panels and lettering; two of the panels have been removed, revealing the original small electric bulbs arranged in horizontal wave patterns and painted in bands of red, orange, and yellow.

Above, the cast stone facade is divided into two side bays and a slightly higher center section. The side bays project very slightly, about three to five inches. In the center of each side bay is a tall rectangular window which extends almost the height of the facade and is covered by unpainted metal grillwork in a geometrical pattern. Above the left grill is the shell-shaped emblem of Paramount Pictures and above the right is the circular emblem of Publix Theatres, both executed in bas relief and cast stone.

The center section of the facade is dominated by the upright sign, which is stepped out at the base and rises above the roofline. The two sides of the sign are identical. The design is vertically-oriented and contrasts different geometrical forms. The predominant feature is the white capital letters "PARAMOUNT" arranged vertically on a blue background. The major elements of the upright sign were originally lighted at night, but the original bulbs have been removed. The sign is now lit from spotlights placed at the top of the marquee.

On each side of the sign is a bas relief cast stone pilaster strip with nine reverse cable flutes. The pilasters terminate in a rectangular bas relief sculpture panel. These panels rise slightly above the roofline and feature cupids holding a lyre, the stringed instrument which was used by the ancient Greeks, especially to accompany song and storytelling.

The exterior is in good condition. The cast stone needs cleaning, particularly to remove discoloration under the upright sign. The paint on the upright sign and the marquee soffit is peeling.

Interior:

The Paramount is a single balcony theatre with interior decoration in the Art Deco style. Generally, the decoration is characterized by flatness and richness of surfaces, as well as a use of geometric and stylized naturalistic motifs. The interior is largely intact but in need of considerable cosmetic refurbishing.

The theatre is entered through a narrow one-story vestibule between exterior and interior sets of doors. The floor here is covered with red and yellow checked rubber matting, and the ceiling is painted in subdued red and gold tones, with a simple border.

The main lobby is separated from the vestibule by six sets of double doors of the same design as the exterior doors. The lobby is one-story in height, of moderate size and irregular shape, and features a staircase at right which branches above the first landing and proceeds up to a balcony lounge area. The stair rail and balusters are of gilded cast metal with a stylized naturalistic design. The most notable feature of the lobby is the walls, which are covered with stained walnut and ebony tones to create chevron and

diamond patterns. Wooden reverse cable fluted pilasters flank the two entrances to the auditorium. The ceiling is painted a salmon color with a floral border and features the original square light fixtures, which are embossed with a large center rosette. The lobby carpeting has a modernistic design of squares in various shades of pink and maroon. In recent years a modern refreshment stand was added along part of the west wall.

The auditorium is horseshoe-shaped with a sloping orchestra floor and large single balcony which extends over about half of the orchestra section and continues along the sides to create the effect of theater “boxes.”

The proscenium arch is framed on each side by three vertical bands painted with simple geometrical borders on alternate silver and gold leaf backgrounds. Above the stage is a stylized painted sunburst motif with three Greek figures in the center and rays of color radiating outward. The painted firescreen curtain has a stylized floral border.

The ceiling is framed by two concrete eight-sided bands, the first decorated with panels which have alternating floral motifs and theatre masks painted in gold and white on a smoke-blue background. The interior border features floral and leaf motifs in white and gold on a rose-colored background.

Inside the borders, radiating from center front, is a decorative metal grill in a stylized partial sunburst pattern. In the center of the ceiling is a second variation on the sunburst motif. An 8-sided center medallion is ornamented with a stylized pattern and the rays of the “sunburst” are painted in yellow and rose colors radiating outward against a dark ceiling background. Until mid-1983, the original four-tiered chandelier hung from the center of the medallion. It is now missing.

The walls of the auditorium are divided into six bays per side by reverse cable fluted pilasters painted with gold leaf. Wall sconces originally placed in the center of each pilaster have been removed but reportedly could be reinstalled. The pilasters, each of which has seven flutes, extend almost to the ceiling. At the top of each is a slightly projecting “capital” composed of seven glass panels edged in metal which hang down from a double row of pressed metal palmettes. Above the palmettes are stylized gilded bas relief nude figures of Amazon-like women posed in a kneeling position with arms reaching outward.

Within each of the bays is a painted panel framed by a stylized fan border on a background of gold leaf. Beneath each panel, the wall surface is painted with a neutral salmon and gold pattern reminiscent of sponge painting.

Alternating panels feature romantic scenes painted on canvas in pastel colors on a dark blue/black painted background. Each scene is different but utilizes three common motifs: a pedestal topped with an urn filled with flowers, a balustrade or the end section of a balustrade, and several different types of unfamiliar flowers in the sky area. These

motifs suggest that the scenes are all taking place in the same exotic setting. Male and female figures in the scenes wear costumes from the 17th and 18th century French and English court tradition. Men appear either as gentlemen wearing knee britches and powdered wigs or as jesters in diamond-patterned body suits and neck ruffles. Court ladies wear powdered wigs and long full gowns, while other women appear in looser, more flowing white dresses.

The six panels on the north wall are painted as follows, beginning at the proscenium arch:

1. Court gentlemen and his lady sitting close together on balustrade.
2. No scene.
3. (a) Below balcony: dancing female figure.
(b) Above balcony: court gentleman kissing the hand of his lady.
4. No scene.
5. (a) Below balcony: male behind female, embracing her.
(b) Above balcony: court lady holding hand of seated male in jester costume.
6. (a) Below balcony: plain.
(b) Above balcony: different style from other scenes. Background is pastel blue rather than very dark blue. A male figure painted in white and gold is seated playing the flute.

The panels on the south wall are decorated as follows:

1. Female in simple white dress sitting on balustrade swooning backward into arms of seated male in jester costume.
2. No scene.
3. (a) Below balcony: court gentleman playing the guitar and singing; court lady smelling flower.
(b) Above balcony: seated female holding hand of standing male.
4. No scene.
5. (a) Below balcony: court gentleman and lady standing on opposite sides of the balustrade. She is holding a book and has her face turned away from him.
(b) Above balcony: court gentleman reclining, court lady dancing or reaching up to touch a red balloon.
6. (a) Below balcony: no scene.
(b) Above balcony: Same as #6 above balcony on north side. Background is pastel blue. A male figure, painted in white and gold, is shown seated playing the flute.

The underside of the balcony is painted with a series of borders using floral and geometric motifs. The original four square light fixtures remain in place here. The light fixtures are made of metal or gilded wood and have a large center rosette design.

The auditorium floor is poured cement. Carpeting along the aisles matches that of the lobby. The original theatre seats, which have survived only in the balcony area, are of cast metal with a stylized floral decoration. The seat coverings in the balcony area have a modernistic design in a red and gold velvet-like material which may also be original. Railings along the balcony are of cast iron rather than brass. Painted borders are used to decorate the entrances to the balcony from the upstairs lounge.

The large, one-story upstairs lounge is rectangular in shape and is less ornate than the main lobby. The ceiling is covered in gold leaf with two floral borders. Walls are not presently ornamented. Along the west wall is a fireplace with a simple flat marble mantel and mirror above with a flat gilded surround. The red and black carpet, which combines geometric with floral patterns, is appropriate to the space. Original signs remain over the entrances to the balcony and men's lounge. The original large four-sided sofa dominates the center of the room and two original moderne lounge chairs flank the fireplace.

The anteroom of the ladies' lounge appears to have had mirrors and make-up tables; these have since been removed. The area now has a linoleum floor, plain walls, and the original painted ceiling design. The original pedestal sinks and white tile floor and walls remain in the inner rooms of both the ladies' and men's lounges. The men's lounge has a small anteroom with a red ceramic tile floor and no painted ornamentation.

The Paramount also has a small, one-story basement lounge. This space is less ornate than all other public spaces but does have some Art Deco moldings and reverse cable fluted pilasters along the west wall. These should be covered rather than removed if the space is modernized. The floor is linoleum, and neither walls nor ceiling have painted ornamentation.

2.3 Photographs



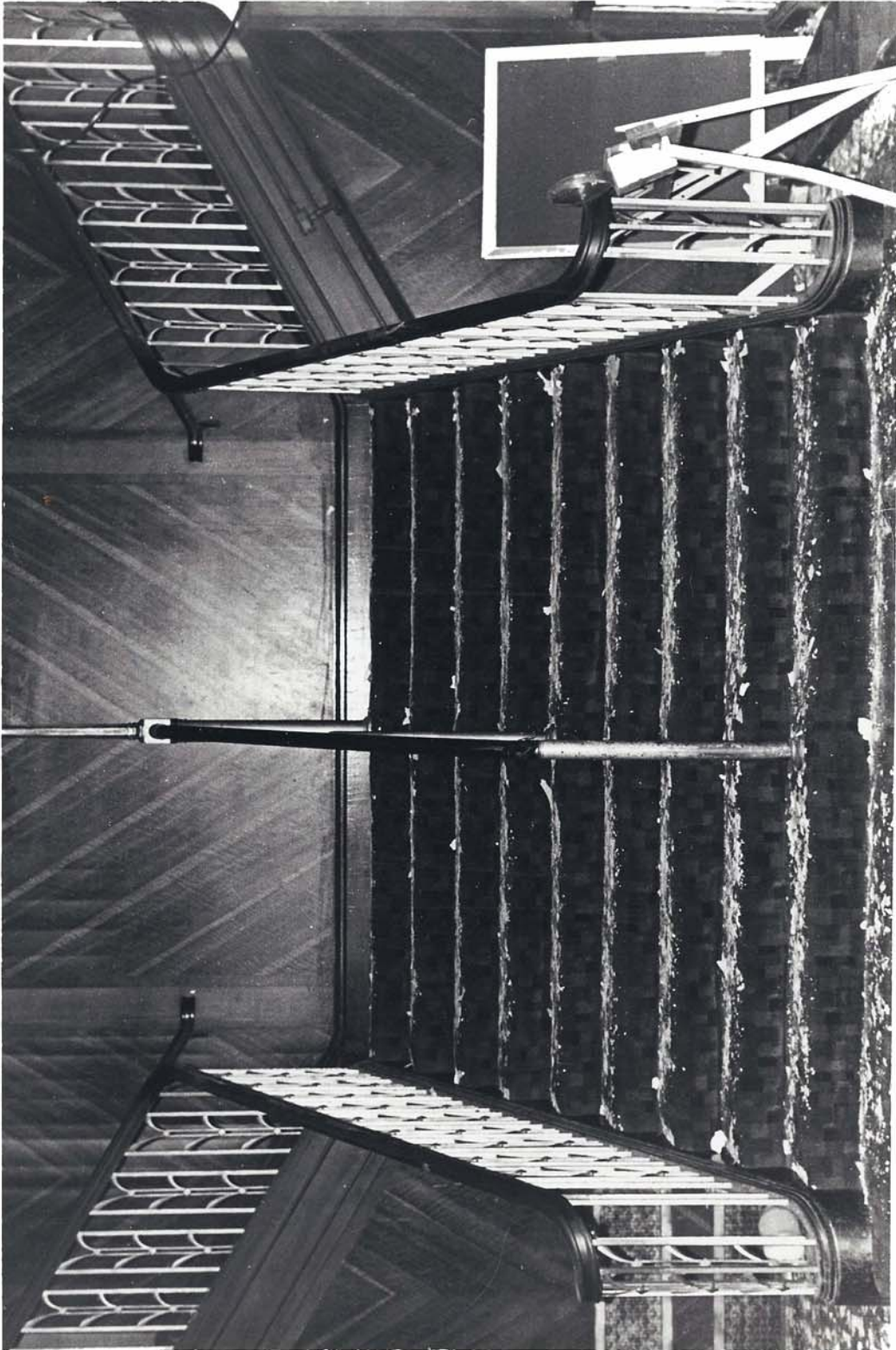


Painted bay on auditorium wall depicts a courtly scene.



Auditorium entrance.





Main Lobby Staircase leading to balcony
lounge area.



Main Lobby, separated from the vestibule by six sets of double doors.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

3.1 Summary of Historical Associations

The Paramount Theatre is one of several Boston theatres associated historically with the nationally-known firm of Paramount Pictures, an early movie production company which continues in existence today. The company was founded in 1912 as an exchange for the renting of films, and the famous trademark, the mountain with a halo of stars, was invented at that time.¹ The company was guided in the early years by Adolf Zukor, a Hungarian immigrant; and its chief producer of films was Cecil B. DeMille. Through merging with other companies, Paramount acquired production and distribution facilities.

The company also developed a nationwide network of Publix theatres which showed Paramount pictures. In Boston, the largest of these theatres was the 4,400-seat Metropolitan, a “movie palace” which was renowned for its stage shows. At the time of the opening of the Paramount Theatre on Washington Street, there were also twenty-two Paramount-Publix neighborhood theatres, including the Strand in Dorchester, Egyptian in Brighton (demolished), and Oriental in Mattapan (drastically modernized as a retail store).²

1932 advertisements for the new Paramount Theatre spoke of a “Gala Public Opening, dedicated to Paramount-Publix faith in the future and prosperity of New England.”³ Opening speeches included tributes to the courage of Paramount-Publix executives, their confidence in business conditions, and the benefit to the unemployment situation which had resulted from the theatre's construction during the early years of the Depression.⁴

The Paramount was constructed on a site previously occupied by two of the most famous hostelries in Boston, the Lamb Tavern and the Adams House. The Lamb, established in 1745, was a modest, two-story wooden building which served as the starting place for the Providence stage for several years beginning with the initial run in 1767.⁵ In 1844, the Lamb was replaced by the first Adams House, named for its proprietor, Laban Adams, and constructed in granite in the Greek Revival style. This building was replaced in 1883 by an enlarged hotel described in Bacon's *Dictionary of Boston* as “one of the finest of hotel buildings.”⁶ This 300-room structure was designed

¹ Leslie Halliwell, *Mountain of Dreams: The Golden Years of Paramount Pictures*. (New York: Stonehill Publishing Co., 1976).

² *Boston Herald*, February 26, 1932, p. 19 (advertisements).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Boston Globe*, February 26, 1932, p. 17.

⁵ Edwin M. Bacon, *Bacon's Dictionary of Boston* (1886).

⁶ *Ibid.*

by William Washburn, the architect of Parkers and several other fine hotels, and stood until about 1930, when it was razed to make way for the Paramount.

3.2 Summary of Architectural Significance

The Paramount Theatre is significant as an outstanding example of Art Deco theater architecture representing the first and only remaining use of this style in a Boston theater. Its interior is considered the City's most comprehensive example of Art Deco interior design, and both the exterior and interior have survived largely intact down to the original furnishings and detailing. In addition, the theater is significant as Boston's first "intimate deluxe picture house," designed for the best possible projection of films rather than for film/stage show combinations.

When it opened in 1932, the Paramount was described as "not a great palace of vaulted halls, marble staircases and glitter" but rather an "amazingly modern" theater which offered the public a distinct contrast to the baroque interiors of earlier Boston stage and movie theatres.⁷ Contemporary newspaper articles said of the design: "It is difficult to classify in any school of design this new show palace. It is strikingly different from any that Boston has ever seen..."⁸ This "modern" style is now called Art Deco, a term derived from an abbreviation for "Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels," a Paris design fair of 1925. Art Deco was an eclectic style which drew inspiration from cubism and from Aztec, Egyptian, and American Indian Art, Art Nouveau, and the machine aesthetic. During its period of popularity, from the late 1920s through the 1940s, the style influenced design in graphics, furniture, and other decorative arts, as well as architecture.

The exterior of the Paramount is based on a series of flat, elongated rectangular units characteristic of 1930s modernistic architecture. Ornament is sparse and projects only slightly from the wall surface. Typical motifs include the use of reverse cable fluted pilasters and the repetition of vertical elements. The facade is designed to accommodate a marquee and upright sign which have been called "period pieces of electrical extravagance." If restored to their original condition, the marquee and sign would be the best remaining examples of their type in Boston.

In the book *Art Deco Architecture in New York, 1920-1940*, Don Vlack refers to Art Deco interiors as "an architecture of surfaces: shimmering, sparkling, dazzling and active."⁹ At the Paramount, rare and exotic woods, gold leaf, and muted colors are used to create a rich but subdued surface display which is exceptional in its vitality and intact quality. The polished oriental walnut and African ebony which ornament the lobby walls are

⁷ *Boston Globe*, op. cit.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Don Vlack, *Art Deco Architecture in New York, 1920-1940*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 92.

inlaid according to grain patterns, a use of the craft of marquetry which was a feature of the Art Deco tradition. Gold leaf and aluminum paint are used to create glittering surfaces which catch the light in the dimmed auditorium. Also typical is the use of decorative motifs drawn either from nature or geometry. Stylized natural forms used repeatedly at the Paramount include shells, sunbursts, and flowers, which are abstracted to appear more slender and elegant. Of the geometric motifs, the most common is the ziggurat, a design which involves the piling of successively smaller and recessive blocks one upon the other, resulting in a steady, rhythmic ascension. A two-dimensional variation on the ziggurat can be seen in the shape of the Paramount doors and pilaster capitals.

The most striking interior feature is the romantic scene panels, which are painted in pastel colors against a dark painted canvas background. The scenes depict men and women from an idealized past era, engaged in the timeless rituals of courtship. The panels create a mood of escapism and fantasy which becomes part of the theatre experience.

The interior of Boston's Paramount would appear to be the work of a designer who also worked on interiors of other Paramount theatres elsewhere in the country. A comparison of the Boston example with the recently restored Paramount Theatre in Aurora, Illinois, designed by Chicago architects C.W. and George L. Rapp, shows clear similarities both in the overall flatness and richness of surfaces and in the use of specific design motifs.¹⁰ The Aurora Theatre, like the Boston example, features a large sunburst in the center of the ceiling, framed by a series of borders. The walls are divided into bays by gilded reverse cable fluted pilasters, and scene panels between pilasters are painted with courtship scenes which appear to be the work of the same artist as those in Boston. The scene panels utilize the same dark background and motifs such as stylized flowers, a balustrade, and courtly ladies and gentlemen.

Another noteworthy feature of the Paramount is the survival of most of the original fixtures and furnishings. These include the original ceiling chandelier and many light fixtures. The original aisle lights are said to be available for purchase if the theatre is restored. The original seats remain in the balcony area, along with some of what may be the original red velvet-like seat coverings of modernistic design. Original furniture includes a sofa located on the main stairway, a four-sided sofa and two lounge chairs in the upstairs lounge, and a sofa in the ladies room.

In addition to the use of the most up-to-date decorative style, the Paramount also represents a departure from earlier Boston theaters in its size and technical features. 1932 newspaper advertisements described the theatre as "exquisitely intimate," a phrase which calls attention to its moderate size, particularly in relation to its downtown predecessor, the Metropolitan/Music Hall (1925). Like many of the gilt and marble

¹⁰ "Paramount Arts Centre," brochure, Conrad Schmitt Studios.

picture palaces built in major cities during the 1910s and 1920s, the “Met” had a seating capacity of over 4,000, which made the 1,500-seat Paramount seem, indeed, “homelike” and “intimate.” The Paramount clearly exemplifies the national trend away from such spatially extravagant theaters.

The picture palaces of the two previous decades were designed to accommodate musical entertainment and stage shows as well as films, which occupied a secondary position for many years.¹¹ Since the future popularity of films was uncertain during these early years, theatres were generally built using the time-honored balcony-mezzanine plan, which was well-suited for live entertainment but resulted in greater screen distortion during film projection. The large theaters were also ill-suited acoustically for the new era of sound films, which was inaugurated in October 1927, with the opening of *The Jazz Singer*.

The Paramount, on the other hand, was described as being “especially constructed for perfect presentation of talking pictures,” and as being “dedicated to the talking pictures for the first time.”¹² The single balcony plan was used to minimize screen distortion. The theatre was said to feature the “last word in sound and projection equipment,” and acoustics were said to have been carefully considered.¹³ According to the newspapers, “Acoustically the walls have been so treated that every reverberation is absorbed. Every appointment of the theatre was designed for acoustical perfection.”¹⁴

The Paramount Theatre thus exemplifies a re-ordering of priorities which was taking place in theatres across the country after the introduction of sound films. As films improved in quality and added sound, they were able to attract audiences on their own, without the additional attraction of a stage show. The only live talent which appears to have been provided at the new Paramount was an organist and a band. As a modern deluxe picture house, the Paramount marks a departure from the stage show tradition and the beginning of a new phase in movie theater history.

Architect Arthur H. Bowditch was a successful and prolific early 20th century architect about whom little biographical information is presently known. He is first listed in the *Boston City Directory* in 1888, as a draftsman at 13 Exchange Street, which was also the address of the distinguished architectural firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. In 1889 and 1890, he is listed as a draftsman at 186 Devonshire Street, which was the address of another eminent architect, Wm. Gibbons Preston. Bowditch is first listed as an architect in 1893. From 1903 to 1907, he practiced with Edward Bowman Stratton, but for most of his long career he seems to have preferred to practice without a partner. Bowditch died on March 13, 1941, at his home in Brookline.

¹¹ Dennis Sharp, *The Picture Palace and Other Buildings for the Movies*. (New York: Praeger, 1969).

¹² *Boston Herald*, February 26, 1932, p. 19. *Boston Globe*, op. cit.

¹³ *Boston Globe*, op. cit.

¹⁴ *Ibid*.

Bowditch designed numerous large-scale downtown commercial buildings including the Old South Building (1902-4), Merchants Building (75 Summer St., 1901), Blake Building (485-499 Washington St., 1908), Winter St. Building (443-447 Washington Street, 1913), Washington-Essex Building (600 Washington St., 1906), and Essex Hotel (1900). He frequently used architectural terra cotta for these early skyscrapers, which are lavishly decorated in the Beaux Arts classical tradition and display consistently high standards of design and craftsmanship. Bowditch also designed a number of hotels and apartment buildings in the Back Bay and elsewhere in the City, including The Carleton, The Lenox (1901), The Somerset Hotel, The Stoneholm (1907), and the Pelham Hall apartments. As mentioned earlier, Bowditch appears to have worked with a company designer on the interior decoration of the Paramount, which resembles the design of at least one other Paramount theatre in another part of the country.

3.3 Relationship to the Criteria for Landmark Designation

The Paramount Theatre clearly meets the criteria for landmark designation as established by Section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 in that it is of distinguished architectural design and represents a unique use of the Art Deco style in a Boston theatre. The high architectural quality, degree of intactness, and relative rarity of Art Deco examples make the Paramount inherently valuable for study as an important representative of its style and building type. The structure is significant to the architectural and cultural history of the City, the Commonwealth and the New England Region.

4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

4.1 Current Assessed Value and Property Tax

Prior to foreclosure by the City of Boston for non-payment of taxes, the Paramount Theatre was assessed as follows (1980 figures):

Land:	\$281,000.00
Building:	\$26,000.00
Total:	\$307,000.00
Tax:	\$77,640.30

4.2 Current Ownership and Status (August, 1980)

The Theatre is currently owned by the City of Boston, which completed foreclosure proceedings on May 5, 1980. At the time of foreclosure, the former owner, A & H Realty Company, owed six years worth of back taxes dating from 1974 through and including 1979, plus accumulated interest.

The Real Property Department has completed an inventory of the building's contents as of mid-May, 1980. An appraisal of the theatre has not yet been done, nor has the method of disposal of the property been determined.

The two retail stores located on the ground level of the building are currently occupied by a wig shop and a bag and hat shop. The shop owners are expected to pay rent to the City for use of this space.

The theatre had been occupied between 1979 and 1983. The City of Boston recently succeeded, through the court process, in evicting the occupant.

5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Background

The importance of Washington Street as a commercial thoroughfare dates back to the Colonial period, when it served as the only land route from the Shawmut Peninsula to Roxbury and the mainland. One of the best known taverns along this route was the Lamb Tavern (1745), located on the site of the Paramount, from which the first Boston to Providence stagecoach departed in 1767. Another local tavern, the Liberty Tree, on the corner of Washington and Essex Streets, became famous in the 1760s as the meeting place for the Sons of Liberty.

During the Federal period, the lower Washington Street area continued to develop commercially with the construction in 1810 of the Bulfinch-designed Boylston Market at the corner of Washington and Boylston Streets, conveniently located for farmers bringing their produce into town from outlying regions. In the 1830s and 40s, the coming of the railroads to the newly-filled South Cove area brought increasing numbers of travelers who patronized several new Greek Revival style hotels, including the Adams House (1844, rebuilt 1883), which had replaced the old Lamb Tavern on the Paramount site.

The presence of travelers seeking entertainment, as well as the location between the City's business and residential districts, may have been a factor in the growing popularity of the area for theatres. On the block where the Paramount now stands, the earliest theatre was the Lion (1835), which combined equestrian and dramatic arts and was later transformed into the Melodian (1839), a concert hall. In the late 19th century, the block featured two theatres of national significance, the 3000-seat Boston Theatre (1854), reputed to be "without question the finest theatre in the world," and Keith's Theatre (1894), called "the mother house of vaudeville."

In the early 20th century, legitimate theatres and vaudeville, burlesque, and movie houses were constructed nearby along Washington, Tremont, and Boylston Streets. In the Paramount block, B. F. Keith opened one of the City's first movie theatres, the Bijou Dream (1908), on the second floor of the Adams House Annex at 543-547 Washington Street, in a space which had earlier served as a parlor theatre called the Bijou. Another small early movie theatre, the Modern, opened in a converted 19th century carpet warehouse in 1913. The Boston Theatre was replaced in 1925-28 by the B.F. Keith Memorial (now the Savoy), built as a memorial to showman B.F. Keith and important not only for its flamboyance but also as one of the last great vaudeville houses. The former Keith's Theatre, which stood where the Mason Street parking area is today and was entered from 547 Washington Street, remained in use as a movie theatre into the 1950s.

When the Paramount Theatre opened in 1932, there were four other operating movie theatres on the block: the B.F. Keith Memorial (which by that time was called the RKO Keith Memorial and featured movies rather than vaudeville), the Modern, the Bijou, and Keith's Theatre (then called the Shubert Lyric Theatre and later called the Normandie). All five continued to operate during the Depression and World War II era, the heyday of the motion picture industry. Beginning in the 1950s theatres on the block began to close, due in large part to increasing post-war suburbanization and wide popularity of television.

Keith's Theatre (the Normandie) was razed in 1952. The Bijou closed in the early 1950's; that space has since been remodeled and is no longer a theatre. The Modern, which later became the Mayflower, became an adult movie theatre and finally closed its doors in the 1970s. The B.F. Keith Memorial, purchased by Sack Theatres in 1965 and renamed the Savoy, closed in the late 1970s. The Paramount, which had also been showing adult films, closed in 1976.

The economic decline of the area, reflected in the gradual closing of theatres, was paralleled by a lessening of demand for retail and office space in the Paramount and adjacent blocks. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, retail clothing stores, particularly small men's clothing and accessory stores, had lined lower Washington Street all the way to Kneeland Street. Upper floors of the four-to-six story masonry commercial buildings along the street were occupied by a mixture of uses, but particularly by manufacturers and wholesalers of clothing, who appreciated the proximity to the City's Garment District centered at Essex and Kingston Streets and Harrison Avenue. In recent years, the wholesale clothing industry in Boston has declined, resulting in vacancies in upper floors. The size of the retail shopping district has also shrunk considerably, until it is now centered in the immediate vicinity of Summer, Winter, and Washington Streets. This change has also been blamed largely on the growth of suburban shopping malls.

The deterioration of the lower Washington Street area can also be attributed in part to an influx of adult entertainment establishments since the early 1960s, when urban renewal resulted in the razing of the formerly notorious "Scollay Square," now Government Center. A special zoning code amendment was enacted to restrict the spread of X-rated entertainment uses to the two blocks of Washington Street between Boylston/Essex and Stuart/Kneeland, which have since been dubbed the "Combat Zone."

5.2 Current Planning Issues (1983)

Planning strategies for the Paramount block and surrounding area have focused on encouraging new investment and revitalizing two of the area's traditional sources of vitality: entertainment and retail shopping. BRA planners and private consultants have

emphasized re-use of existing structures, with new construction advocated only for vacant or “underutilized” parcels. The BRA has been involved in coordinating a number of planned and proposed development projects and encouraging new proposals compatible with the area’s existing uses and structures. An underlying assumption in this planning process is that, as revitalization occurs, demand for space in the lower Washington Street area will increase market value rents to the point where adult entertainment establishments will choose to relocate elsewhere.

The Paramount block and adjacent area are being considered for designation as a Commercial Area Revitalization District. The CARD program is a State/City plan designed to leverage money for private investment. The designation allows approved development projects within the CARD district to apply for tax-free revenue bonds providing up to 100% financing for development costs, a procedure which enables qualified developers to borrow money at less than market rates. Phase I of the Theatre District/Chinatown CARD District has already been designated and includes the area south of Stuart Street. Phase II, scheduled to be implemented in the next few months, will extend the boundaries of the district as far north as Temple Place.

Revival of theatre activity has already begun on the Paramount block and elsewhere in the area. The Opera Company of Boston took over the 2,500-seat Savoy in 1978. The BRA is now seeking a grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help pay for public improvements, technical assistance, and a revolving loan fund. Negotiations with abutters concerning the proposed closing of Mason Street continue. The Opera Company has dropped its option to purchase the Lane Bryant Building at 26-32 West Street, which would have been used for additional rehearsal and program space.

The 600-seat Modern Theatre was purchased in 1976 by the Modern Theater, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt group which had completed part of their planned interior and exterior restoration work. The theater is now once again vacant.

Elsewhere in the Theatre District, the \$7.5 million dollar renovation of the Music Hall by Metropolitan Center, Inc. is now underway, and construction is complete on expansion of the stage out to Stuart Street. The Wilbur Theater, which was offered for sale by Tufts University in 1979, has had several successful seasons under new managers, who owned the theatre as of September, 1980. Across the street, the Shubert Theatre is undergoing renovation.

Efforts to revitalize downtown retail shopping are also underway. The City has recently completed a major upgrading of the “Downtown Crossing,” creating a pedestrian mall which extends to the corner of Washington and West and includes new brick sidewalks and streets, lighting, and pedestrian amenities. Directly across from the Paramount, construction is underway on the 1,200-car, City-owned underground parking garage which is part of the Lafayette Place project, a Mondev development which will include a

hotel and 200,000 square feet of retail space. The project is nearing completion and its large scale will undoubtedly have a major impact on the surrounding area by providing new audiences for theatres in the area, as well as convenient parking.

In addition to entertainment and retail uses, housing has been encouraged as a new use for existing buildings. The former Herald building at 64-88 Mason, which abuts the Paramount along part of its rear wall, has been converted to elderly housing, as has the former R. H. Stearns Department Store at 140 Tremont Street at the corner of Temple Place. The Chinese community has recently converted several buildings in the lower Washington Street area for housing.

5.3 Relationship to Current Zoning

The Paramount Theatre is within a B-10 zone, permitting all standard uses up to an allowable physical density (measured by the Floor Area Ratio, or FAR) of ten times the total site area. In the case of the Paramount, the total site area is 13,116 square feet and the FAR is 131,160 square feet.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

6.1 Alternatives

The Paramount Theatre is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the “Washington Street Theatre District.” National Register status provides a limited degree of protection as well as tax incentives for rehabilitation.

The language of the Boston Landmarks Commission enabling statute, which precludes all but Landmark Designation in the central city, limits the possible designation category to that of Landmark.

The Commission also retains the option of not designating the building as a Landmark.

6.2 Impact of Alternatives

Landmark designation under Chapter 772 would require the review of physical changes to the building interior and exterior in accordance with standards and criteria adopted as part of the designation.

The building is within the Washington Street Theatre District listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Protection from federal, federally-licensed or federally-assisted actions is provided by the inclusion of the building in this National Register District and is undertaken by the Section 106 Review process. National Register listing also provides various federal income tax incentives for rehabilitation under the provisions of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. Properties within a National Register Historic District are eligible to take advantage of these provisions once it is determined that a) the rehabilitation can be certified according to the Tax Act and b) that the building contributes to the historic character of the district; this building clearly meets that criteria.

Similar protection from state-sponsored activities is achieved by the concurrent listings of all National Register properties in the recently created State Register of Historic Places under Chapter 152, General Laws.

Failure to designate the building as a landmark would mean the City could offer no protection or guidance to present or future owners.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the Paramount Theatre be designated as a Landmark and that the interior vestibule, lobby, auditorium, stairway, and upstairs lounge and restrooms be designated as a Landmark.

The standards and criteria for administering the regulatory functions provided for in Chapter 772 are attached in Section 8.

8.0 BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION - STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

8.1 Introductory Statement on Standards and Criteria to be Used in Evaluating Applications for Certificates

Per Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts), Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of the Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purposes of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation. The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers, and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reasons for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been so structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.

It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, not all of which are under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- a. Building code conformance and safety requirements.
- b. Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems.
- c. Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels: (1) those general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (with three different categories for buildings, building interiors and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standards and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.

8.2 General Standards and Criteria

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. The use of imitation replacement materials is generally discouraged.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property and its environment.

7. Contemporary design is encouraged for new additions; thus, they must not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style or period.
8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered as part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. EXTERIOR WALLS

I. MASONRY

1. Retain whenever possible, original masonry and mortar.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile, and method of application.
3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellent coating to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.
6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

II. NON-MASONRY

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.

2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.

C. ROOFS

1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
2. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size shape, color, texture, and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers, and brackets.

D. WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass, shutters, and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
3. On some properties consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation, or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.

E. PORCHES, STEPS, AND EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues, and decorative items.

F. SIGNS, MARQUEES, AND AWNINGS

1. Signs, marquees, and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained and repaired where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees, and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees, and awnings shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees, and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall either be contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structures being reused for purposes different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.

G. PENTHOUSES

1. The objective of preserving the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse will be approved.
2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
 - a. Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; setbacks shall be utilized.
 - b. Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.

- c. Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
- d. Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

H. LANDSCAPE FEATURES

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its newer surroundings.
3. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

I. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. There are three aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building:
 - a. Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
 - b. Quality of illumination on building exterior.
 - c. Interior lighting as seen from the exterior.

2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
 - a. Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
 - b. Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
 - c. New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
5. Interior lighting shall only be reviewed when its character has a significant effect on the exterior of the building; that is, when the view of the illuminated fixtures themselves, or the quality and color of the light they produce, is clearly visible through the exterior fenestration.

J. REMOVAL OF LATER ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general guideline.
2. Factors that will be considered include:
 - a. Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials, and character.
 - b. Historic association with the property.
 - c. Quality in the design and execution of the addition.
 - d. Functional usefulness.

9.0 SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

A. GENERAL

The Art Deco aesthetic is generally more flamboyant than what is exhibited in this building. Because of this fact, and its complete overall design approach, which integrates volumes, finishes, and details into a single whole, each architectural element must be considered important. In general, items should be retained and repaired, if necessary, rather than replaced. The successful preservation of Art Deco detail depends on the ensemble and appropriateness of each item.

B. EXTERIOR

1. Front Façade

1. All existing masonry surfaces will be retained and restored.
2. No existing openings will be closed without specific written approval. If approval is given, it will be for a design that clearly distinguishes the alteration from the original fabric.
3. No new openings will be allowed in the front facade. Openings and alterations may be made to the other facades without specific review and approval. The commission encourages alterations consistent with and supportive of the original design and appearance of the building.

2. Windows and Doors

1. Existing windows should be retained or replaced to match the original design. Replacement windows may be in a material different from the original provided the appearance of the window is not altered.
2. The existing grilles will be retained. The metal may be cleaned and coated with a paint that preserves the detail and appearance of the original. NB: The visible structure behind the screens (including walls) should be painted a dark, recessive color to prevent visual competition with the grilles.
3. The existing doors are original and will be retained and restored. Any repair or replacement of detail will be carefully and accurately done. No alteration to the design will be approved, although a more secure glazing material and locking device may be approved after review.

3. Other Facades and Roof

1. Routine maintenance and any necessary alterations may be made on these surfaces without the specific review of the commission.
2. The commission encourages the design and execution of any alterations be done in a way to reinforce the original design.

4. Architectural Details

1. Marquee

- a. The existing applied signs and panels should be removed to allow the restoration of the original marquee.
- b. The existing structure of the original marquee will be retained and restored, including the concealed fire stairs.
- c. The existing fascia elements will be retained and restored, or replaced to match. This includes the “waves” and sign bands and the molded edge sections. Replacements should match the original.
- d. The original profile of the marquee should be restored, based on historic documentation.
- e. The original ceiling system, consisting of enameled panels and downlights, should be retained and restored. The controlled pattern of the downlights must be retained. This preserves the emphasis on the entrances in a subtle way.

NB: This ceiling system is effectively a camouflage of the exit stairs. This detail must be preserved.

2. Signs

The original signage for the building consisted of two parts: the large architectural sign affixed to the façade and the shaped signs surmounting the marquee.

a. Vertical Sign:

This sign must be retained and restored to the greatest extent possible.

1. All metal surfaces must be cleaned and preserved. Necessary repair and replacement should be done in a way that renders them invisible.
2. The various portions of the sign should be painted to match the original, based on both paint scraping and historic evidence. Color may be used on the metal to evoke or reinforce the colored lights.

3. Restoration of the “thousands of twinkling lights” is encouraged in the multi-colored manner of the original.

- b. Marquee Sign:

The commission encourages the restoration of the shaped crowns that were atop the marquee. If this cannot be accomplished, the existing portions of the marquee must be restored as outlined above.

3. Lighting Systems

The traditional exterior lighting systems consisted of the two signs, marquee face, and downlights described above. The commission encourages restoration of these. Alternative and/or interim lighting systems will be allowed and must have written approval prior to installation.

- a. General facade lighting may be allowed provided the source is concealed from view and the pattern compliments the facade.
- b. Large areas of back-lit translucent signs should be avoided. Smaller pieces of back-lit signs to recreate the appearance of neon may be used. This should not be used as a substitute for the bands and clusters of “twinkling lights” characteristic of the original.

4. Display Systems

There were two systems for advertising or publicizing attractions: display cases on the façade at sidewalk level and changeable back-lit individual letters of the marquee (two lines on the front and three on each end). These should be the only locations for display.

- a. The aluminum frames and glass fronts of the display cases will be restored. Interior lighting may be installed provided no visible alteration is required.
- b. The horizontal wood display boards above the entrances must be removed and the façade materials (e.g. black marble) restored.
- c. Dark, opaque background with white translucent graphics should be used on the marquee to preserve the dominance of the designed forms.

5. Ticket Booth

The original ticket booth centered between the entrance doors will be retained and restored. If its use is superseded, it should remain in situ.

6. Stores or Auxiliary Spaces

The small retail spaces which flank the entrance are original and retain some elements of the original storefronts. All changes to these spaces that affect the appearance of the building must be reviewed and approved by the commission.

- a. Only burnished aluminum to match the existing will be used as a framing material, with clear glass or black glass as the panel material.
- b. The two fronts may be designed differently provided each design relates well to the opening and the design of the facade.
- c. Signage for the storefronts will be limited to the sign band at the top of the opening and should not obscure any original material. Back-lit and neon signs will not be permitted in this area. Consideration will be given to an alteration of the downlighting from the marquee for use as a lighting source for the shopfronts.

7. Additional Exterior Items

1. The flagpole and bracing must be removed and the masonry scars repaired. No other flagpoles or signing devices will be allowed.
2. Consideration should be given to placing an appropriate small mesh screen behind the decorative vertical grilles to prevent entry and roosting by birds and other creatures. These materials must not compete visually with the grilles, nor be attached to them.
3. The rubber matting in the entrance vestibule should be retained or replaced to match as closely as possible.

C. INTERIOR

All the interior spaces except for the lower lobby, the second floor offices, and the backstage spaces will be subject to review and approval. Routine maintenance and repair may be done without review, provided no original finish, material or detail is removed, damaged, or concealed in the process. All alterations and additions must be reviewed and approved. The commission encourages restoration of the interior to the maximum extent possible and recognizes the need to make sympathetic change, including the use of the building. In such event, alterations to the interior will be allowed provided the aesthetic integrity of the theatre is maintained.

1. Volume

The full unobstructed volume of the interior spaces subject to review will be maintained unless written approval for alteration is given prior to any work being done.

1. Lobby, vestibule, and stairways:
No change will be allowed to the volume and arrangement of these spaces. The refreshment stand should be removed and the original finishes and volume restored.
2. Auditorium and balcony:
No change will be allowed to the volume and arrangement of these spaces without prior approval. Modifications required for a change of use such as leveled floors should be designed to reinforce the design, and executed in a very careful manner to protect the original fabric.
3. Public services spaces (e.g. restrooms):
Changes to the volume and function of these will be allowed, subject to review and approval. The commission encourages retention and reuse to the maximum extent possible and will expect new designs to be sympathetic to the image of the building.
4. Backstage and service areas:
No review of changes in these areas will be made.
5. The lounge in the lower level:
This lounge is not subject to review. The commission, however, encourages retention, and possible reuse or relocation of original material and finish.

2. Finishes

All materials and finishes within the designated areas are subject to review.

1. No original finish or material will be altered, covered, or removed without prior written approval. This includes wall, floors and ceiling surfaces, railings, grilles, etc.
2. Original material (wood, metal, paints, etc.) will be restored to the greatest extent possible. Retention in current condition is usually preferred to replacement or covering.

3. When replacement materials are allowed, they will match the original as closely as possible in appearance. Carpeting and wall covering should match or evoke design of the original or period.
4. All materials and finishes which were intended to be left natural, wood and metals particularly, will be restored or repaired in kind. No finished wood or metals will be painted.
5. Painted surfaces, plain or decorative, will be restored or redone to match exactly the original. Gilded surfaces will be restored or regilded. Paint colors must be based on analysis or accurate documentation and must be approved by the commission.

3. Fittings and Furniture (including lighting devices)

All remaining items which are original to the building should be retained. These include tables, consoles, upholstered furniture, vanities, seats, lighting fixtures, etc.

1. All items which are removed will be thoroughly documented by photographs filed with the commission with details of their disposition.
2. Replacement items should be selected to reinforce the art deco design aesthetic of the building. Whenever possible, the items should match the original in design and location.

4. Lighting

Because the interior lighting was described as remarkable, special care should be exercised to recreate the sophisticated, indirect lighting effects of the original. In those cases where specific designs exist or are documented, the commission encourages repair or replacement to match. In any event, all permanent visible lighting devices (excluding stage lighting) must be approved.

5. Theater Equipment

Equipment which is integral to the function of the theater and does not damage the interior may be installed without review. Items which are more related to the image and perception of the theater will be reviewed and approved by the commission. These latter items include:

1. Fire screen:
The design of the fire screen must closely match the original.
2. Curtain:
The front curtain which is perceived as part of the house must match the original.
3. House seats:
The design and placement of seats should resemble the original as closely as possible, especially on the orchestra level.

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