

The Wang Center

Boston Landmarks Commission Study Report



THE WANG CENTER

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

amended July 10, 1990

Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission
on the Potential Designation of the
THE WANG CENTER

Interior

as a Landmark

under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended.

Approved By Judith B. McDonough June 5, 1990
Executive Director Date

Approved By Alan Schwarz 6.5.90
Chairman Date

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1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

1.1 Address and Assessor's Parcel Number

The address of the Wang Center is 268 Tremont Street. It is in ward 3, assessor's parcel number 5640 and 5640-1.

1.2 Area in Which the Property is Located

The Wang Center is located on Tremont Street, a major thoroughfare leading from downtown Boston to the South End. It is near the corner of Stuart and Kneeland Streets, two blocks from the Boston Common and the Boylston Street Green Line MBTA station. The area is considered the Midtown Cultural District and lies a few blocks from Chinatown and the South End.

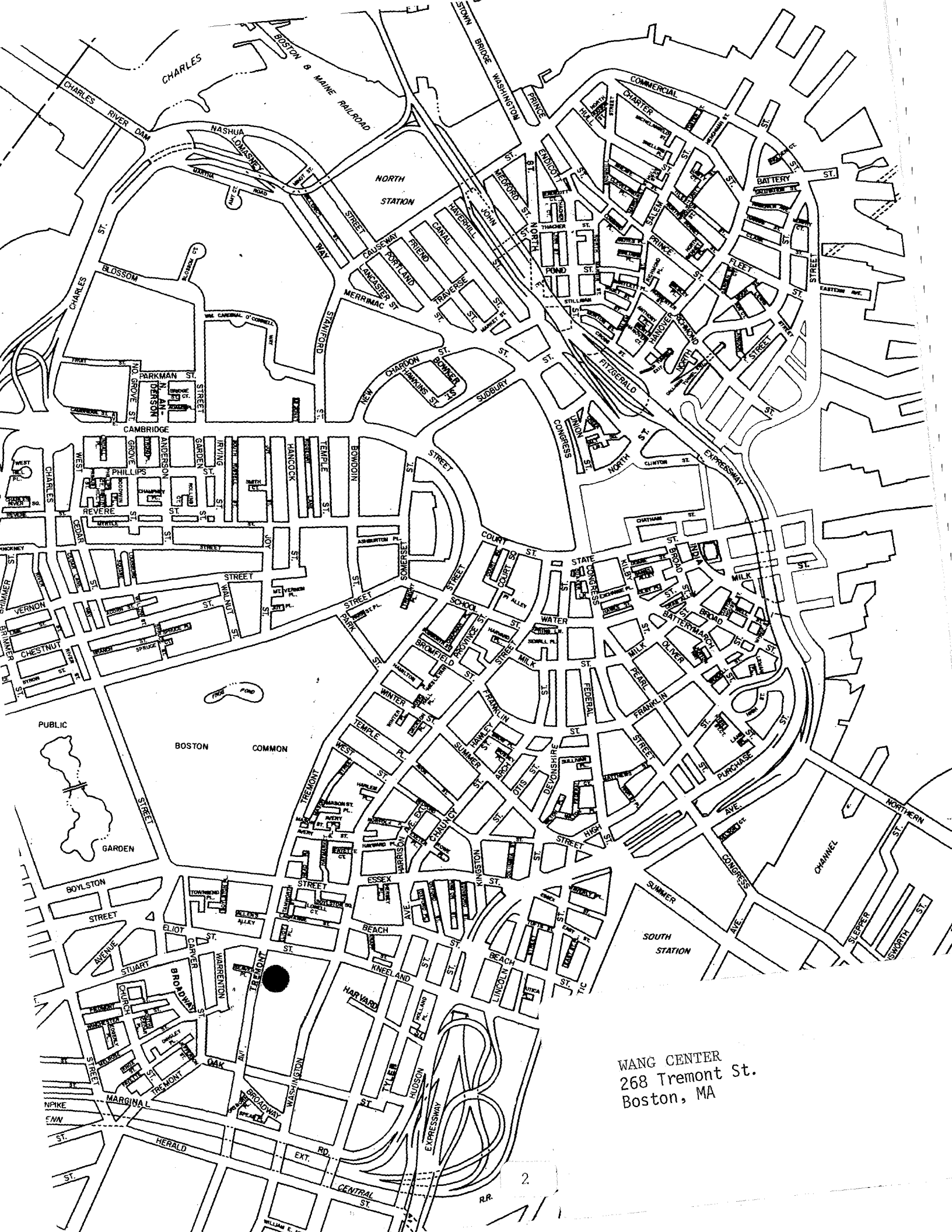
The theater itself is located within a fourteen-story late Renaissance Revival office building. To the north, across a narrow alley, is the low-rise brick Wilbur Theater. To the south across from a small triangular-shaped plaza, is a modern eight-story cast concrete parking garage.

The immediate area is characterized by a wide variety of architectural styles and building types, varied in scale and interspersed with several large vacant parcels. The architectural diversity includes early 20th century 10-12 story hotel and office buildings, such as the Renaissance Revival Hotel Bradford, now the Quality Inn Tremont House, and the 2-6 story late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings and theaters. Within a radius of 500 feet are four other theaters -- the Wilbur, the Shubert, and the Emerson Majestic -- located on Tremont Street. These theaters are constructed in a variety of materials including stone, brick, cast stone and terra cotta.

Vacant parcels include a large parking lot diagonally across from the theater at the corner of Stuart and Tremont Streets and a vacant lot adjacent to the Wilbur Theater. The State Transportation Building is located at the corner of Tremont and Stuart, and several medical buildings are located directly behind the Wang Center.

1.3 Map Showing Location

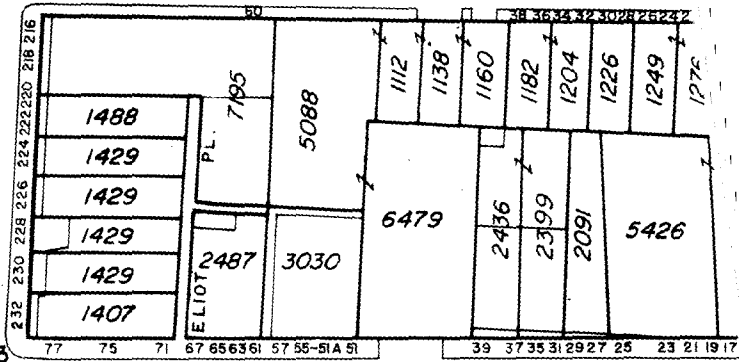
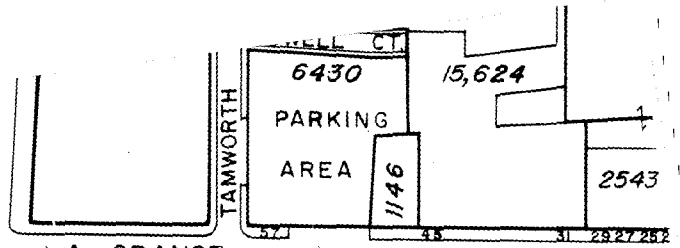
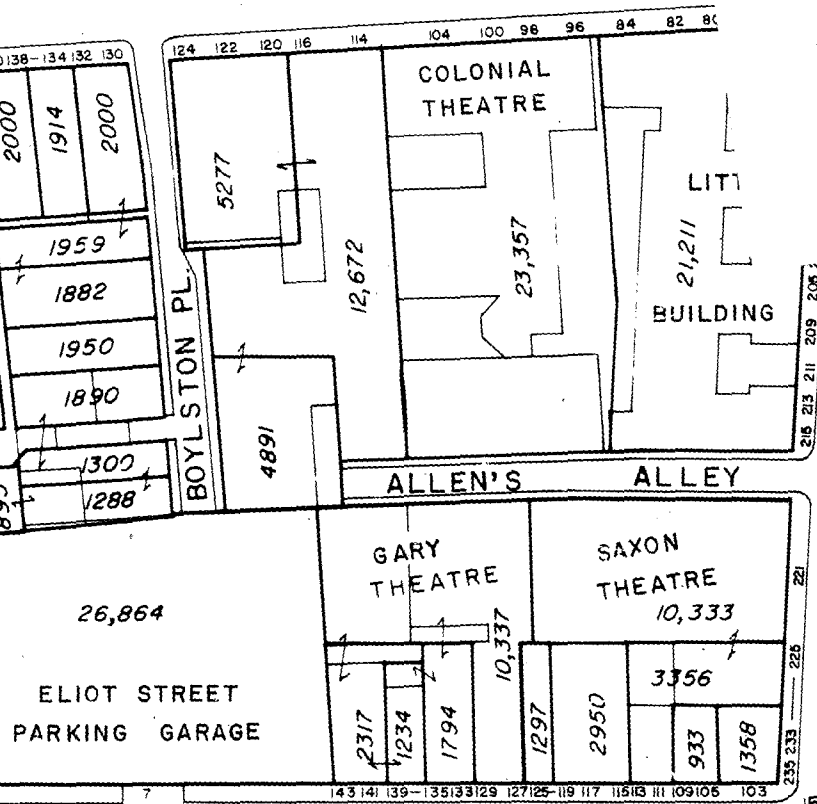
Attached.



WANG CENTER
268 Tremont St.
Boston, MA

WANG CENTER
268 Tremont St.
Boston, Ma.

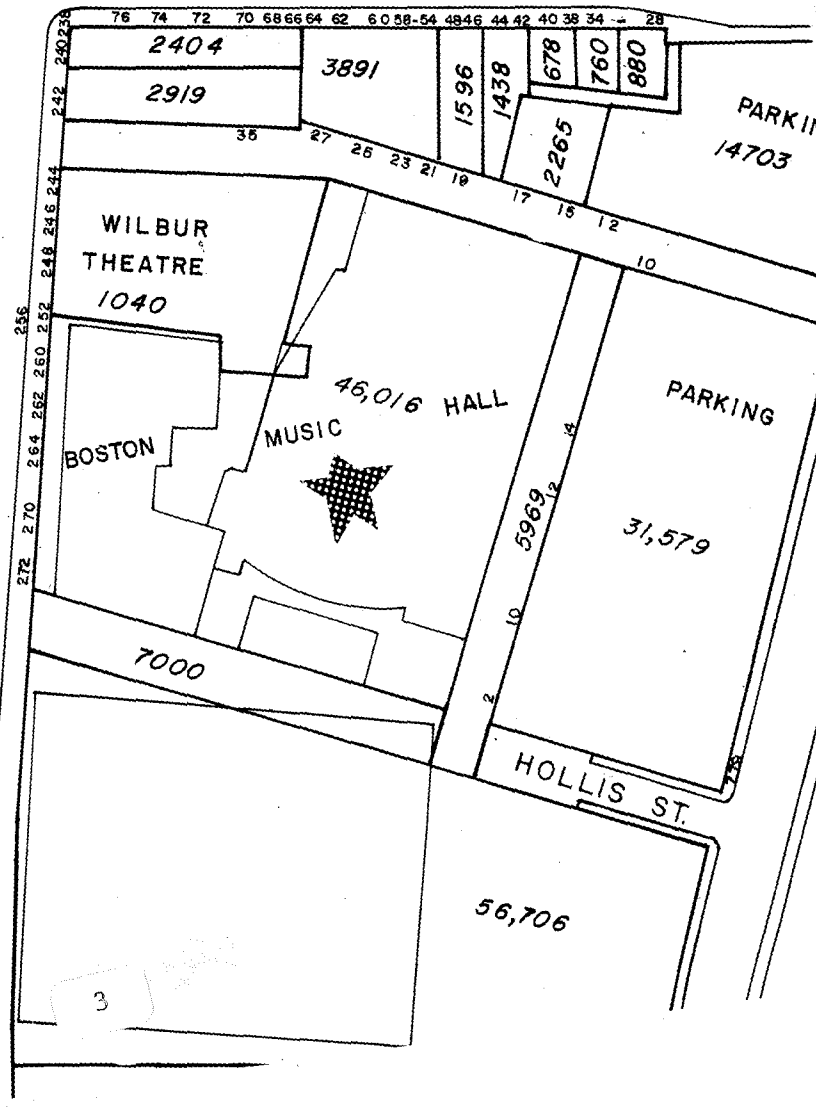
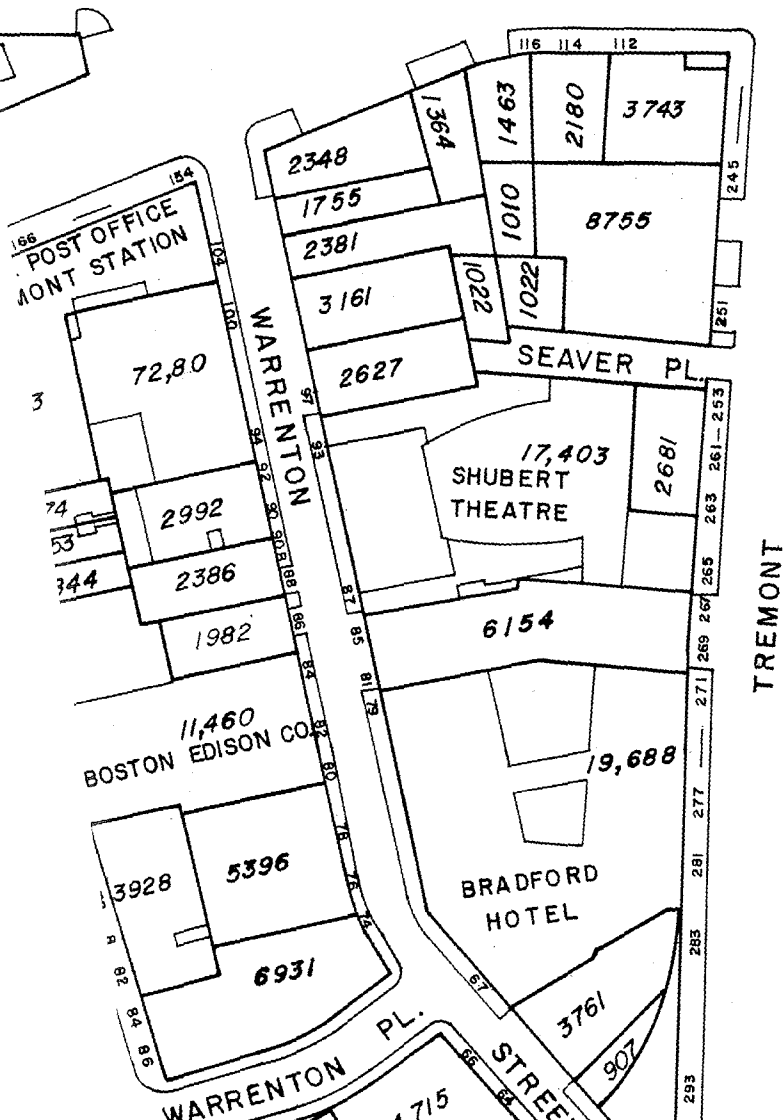
1" = 100'



STUART

55-V-3
X 24.09

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2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type and Use

The Wang Center was constructed as a "movie palace" housed within a fourteen-story office building. The theater was originally used for combined film and stage shows; it is presently a center for the performing arts in Boston.

2.2 Description

Exterior

The theater is located within a fourteen-story steel frame late Renaissance Revival office building constructed of granite on the ground floor and cast stone above. The building measures 137 feet across and 155 feet high. The flat-roofed structure extends 244 feet into the center of the block. The auditorium and stage house project out from the rear at an approximately 90-degree angle, giving the building a rough L-shape plan.

A modern theater marquee extends across much of the ground floor. The entrance to the theater, located at offset right, is marked by a recessed vestibule flanked on the right by one storefront and on the left by three storefronts and the entrance to the office building elevator lobby.

A two-story colonnade of engaged fluted Greek Ionic columns extends from level two to three. Above, the shaft of the building is organized by rising cast stone piers, slightly recessed cast stone spandrels, and paired metal window units. At level four, the piers are cast with designs representing the arts, music, and theater. Windows at level five have pedimented entablatures. The building is terminated by a two-story colonnade of engaged Corinthian pilasters at level twelve and thirteen, followed by a shortened attic story. Above the dentil cornice is an elaborate roof cresting of cast stone, with alternating palmettes and theater masks.

Along the south elevation, opening onto a small triangular plaza paved with concrete and planted with small trees, the first six bays match the front facade in scale and style. These are followed by a tan panel brick rear entrance to the theater equivalent in height to five stories.

Interior

The Wang Center has a baroque interior most notable for its vast scale and variety of public spaces, including numerous lobbies, lounges, and promenades. Wall and ceiling surfaces are typically covered with mirrors, murals, or gilded plaster work following a general color scheme of gold, ivory, tan and pale blue. The standard of decorative work is not as exacting as in some other Boston theaters of the same style, nor are the materials always of the highest qualities, but the Metropolitan compensates in its overwhelming size and exuberance.

Entrance Vestibule and Lobbies

The theater is entered through the vestibule, a small recessed area which has been partially modernized. Modern ticket booths on either side stand in place of the original bronze ticket outlet. Original details which remain here include the frieze above the six sets of bronze and glass entrance doors and the ceiling, which is ornamented with a low relief painted plaster diaper pattern.

The outer lobby is a one-story, high ceiling space decorated on all wall and ceiling surfaces. The north and south walls are divided into three bays by panels of red, tan, and black marble. Within the bays are mirrors, poster display cases with marble surrounds, or a decorative bronze ticket cage (along the north side).^{*} Above the elaborate frieze and modillion block cornice is a vaulted ceiling with a painting of female figures and cherubs amid clouds, surrounded by an ornate gilded plaster frame. The area between this frame and the cornice is ornamented by Wedgwood-like medallions in the center of each wall, flanked by putti, and by theater masks in the corners set within shells which encircle the heads like halos. The floor is covered by rubber matting, alternating with tan and red terrazzo squares. Five free-standing covered radiators presently heat the space in winter. The four chandeliers are not original.

The next space, the stair lobby, is entered through six more sets of bronze and glass doors. This one-story vaulted area features wide double staircases along the side (north and south) walls set within elliptical arches. The floor is of tan terrazzo squares and the walls are of tan marble. The center of the ceiling is decorated with a mural painting of cherubs amid clouds. The east and west lunettes are both ornamented with the same relief sculpture, which depicts a grouping of classical figures. Two small cut glass chandeliers appear to be original.

^{*} The word marble is used to describe finish appearance. There is considerable use of actual marble and the use of marbleized surfaces in the Theater. Unless specifically stated this report does not distinguish between materials in describing the interior features.

To reach the main lobby, the theater patron passes through yet another circulation area, the elevator lobby, which has two bronze interior elevators along the south wall. The walls here are divided into bays by tan marble piers, and simple ceiling moldings. The low ceiling makes the passage into the Grand Lobby even more dramatic.

Grand Lobby

The four-story Grand Lobby is dominated by a double staircase along the east wall and a two-story colonnade encircling the space at levels two and three. Along the lower level, the floor is terrazzo and walls are of tan marble. Arched and squared openings along the five-bay north and south walls lead to one-story promenades. From the north promenade, French doors within carved dark oak entablatures lead into the auditorium. Large expanses of small-paned windows between these doors allow persons awaiting seats to view the stage.

The focal point of the Grand Lobby is the staircase leading to the second floor promenades. Carved tan marble balustrades terminate in large circular newels surmounted by large bronze torchiers. A polished wooden railing divides the stair into two sections.

Level two and three are defined by sixteen massive two-story free standing columns with gilded Corinthian capitals. These are constructed of plaster painted to simulate rose colored marble. Carved marble balustrades extend between the columns. Along the west balustrade is a carved marble clock surmounted by an eagle. Behind the colonnade is the loge promenade. Along the north and south walls of this promenade, two-story windows in the center three bays have arched carved dark oak surrounds and are flanked by side doors with dark oak pedimented entablatures.

The sixteen columns support a decorative frieze and cornice, from which springs the ceiling vault. The ceiling is divided into three sections, the largest in the center, defined by gilded plaster frames. Within the frames, mural paintings depict cherubs amid clouds.

The Grand Lobby is illuminated by two massive original gold-plated crystal chandeliers. The original candelabrum remain along the walls at the lower level, and the ten crystal chandeliers remain along the loge promenade.

Auditorium

The horseshoe-shaped auditorium has a sloping orchestra section, a large single balcony, and a series of fourteen loge boxes encircling the wall beneath the balcony. The theater has a full orchestra pit. The stage was extended from 29 to 60 feet, with up to 85 feet depth at some points. All surfaces of the auditorium are highly decorated and largely intact.

The stage opening is framed by a proscenium arch measuring sixty feet wide and thirty-six feet high, ornamented by classical moldings framing a gilded diaper pattern. At the top center, a winged female figure is set within a plaster drapery motif. Above the proscenium arch is a mural painting depicting scenes from the history of music and art. On either side of the stage, the proscenium exits are exaggerated in size and are flanked by single free standing plaster columns entwined with festooning. The columns support a frieze and free classical broken semi-circular pediment with a large urn finial. On either side of the urn are single male or female figures seated atop the pediment holding a festoon draped from the urn.

The walls of the auditorium are divided into bays by pilaster strips decorated with low relief gilded plaster work. Semi-circular arches spring from medallions located at the top of the pilasters. The arches were originally hung with drapery festoons and filled with small-paned black glass mirrors which have since been painted over.

The medallions also serve as the springpoint for ceiling vaults. The pilasters continue above the medallions and serve as a vault ribbing. The medallions also serve as the springpoint for elliptical arches above the semi-circular wall arches. The spandrels between arches are filled with blind bulls eyes. Above these are mural paintings set within gilded rococo frames. The center of the ceiling is ornamented with a large recessed oval sunburst medallion with a frame of alternating painted floral panels and recessed ovals and an outer frame of classical moldings. The center of the medallion is again recessed and is painted a sky blue color.

The theater has seven loge boxes per side, with twelve to twenty seats per box. The boxes are ornamented along the outer sides with low relief plasterwork painted in cream colors on a pink background.

The loges are set under the wide overhang of the balcony, the soffit of which is highly decorated with ornamental plasterwork. Along the front of the balcony soffit are three round leaded glass windows used to cover recessed light fixtures. At the rear of the balcony soffit is a large recessed area, roughly kidney-shaped, with a heavily ornamented frame and a cloud mural in the center.

Promenades

The loge promenade, the lower of three promenades overlooking the well of the Grand Lobby, has a coffered ceiling. At the head of the grand stair was a niche with a marble bench along the edge and ornamented plasterwork above. This has been infilled with marbleized surfaces and wall for the display of portraits.

The Wang Center has a very large, steeply pitched single balcony with seating that appears to be original. Railings are of cast iron. The lower balcony promenade extends along the east, west and north sides of the Grand Lobby at level three. Decorative cast metal railings extend along the open edge. The ceiling is ornamented along the east and west sections of the promenade, and the original chandeliers remain along the north section. Another promenade is located at level four to serve the upper level of the balcony. This space is vaulted along the north, west and east walls and also overlooks the Grand Lobby. Walls and ceiling are not ornamented. The original small chandeliers remain in place.

The principle lounging areas of the Wang Center are located in the basement and are reached via marble walled stairways off the stair lobby and main lobby. The basement lounge is a one-story space with oak-paneled walls divided into bays by pilasters, from which spring the ceiling vaults. The trustee's lounge is a remodeled space at the east end of the basement. The ceiling is painted in yellow-gold with an orange, yellow and green border, and the floor is of black and gray terrazzo. At the far end is a double staircase with cast metal railing descending from the east end of the Grand Lobby. Lighting fixtures here are from the Art Deco period.

The men's lounging area includes a large one-story smoking room with a gray and black terrazzo floor and dark oak paneled walls. At the far end, a distinctive carved marble fireplace has a medieval spirit expressed in the tudor-arched head and carving along the head and jams. At each of the four corners of the room is a free-standing wooden pier. The plaster is decorated with a quatrefoil and fleur de lis pattern. The original lighting fixtures have survived here.

The ladies' room has two large anterooms with terrazzo floors and Federal-style wall moldings. The second anteroom features mirrors in the center of three of the walls, flanked by the original wall sconces. Two dressing tables under the mirror appear to be original but are missing their original tops. In general, these rooms are not highly decorated.

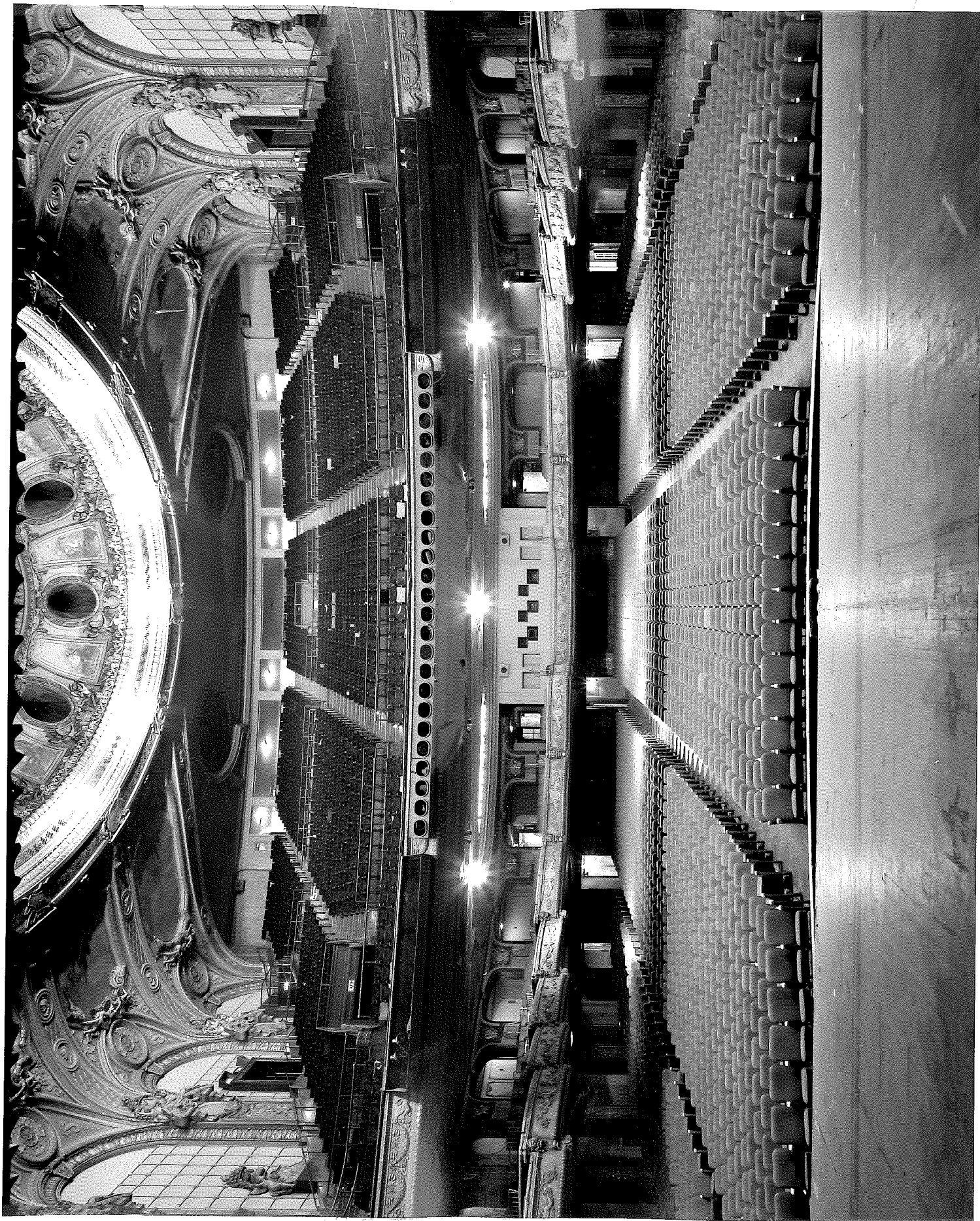


Wang Center
268 Tremont Street
Auditorium



Wang Center
268 Tremont Street
Auditorium

Photo credit:
William W. Owens, Jr.
February, 1976



Wang Center
268 Tremont Street
Auditorium



Wang Center
268 Tremont Street
Grand Lobby

Photo credit:

William W. Owens, Jr.
February, 1976



Wang Center
268 Tremont Street
Auditorium

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY

3.1 Summary of Historical Significance

The Wang Center has been called "historically the most important Boston landmark of the roaring twenties."¹ With the construction of this immense movie palace, the Boston rialto reached its extravagant climax. During its more than half century of operation as Boston's largest theater, the Wang has been an entertainment center of major significance to the cultural history of New England. From the lavish stage shows and first run films of the early years to the big band era of the 1930s and 40s, to the great touring ballet and opera companies of recent years, the Wang Center has a distinguished past. In 1980 the theater assumed its original name, the Metropolitan Theater; in 1983 the theater was renamed The Wang Center for the Performing Arts in honor of a large endowment from Dr. An Wang and his family.

The initial developer of the Wang Center, Boston movie mogul Nathan Gordon, originally planned a theater and hotel complex, a concept later changed to mixed theater and office use.² Near the end of construction, the development was sold to the Paramount/Publrix Theater Corporation. The cost for the total project, which covered over an acre of ground in Boston's theater district, was reported to be over eight million dollars. The fourteen-story building was one of the first in Boston to be built to the new height limit of 155 feet.³ The theater, which originally had a seating capacity of 4,400 was one of the largest in the United States and one of the twelve largest in the world.

Opening ceremonies on October 16, 1925, presided over by Massachusetts Governor Alvin Fuller, were attended by some of the most powerful figures in the entertainment industry. Among the speakers was E. F. Albee, head of the nationwide Keith enterprises, who was later responsible for construction of the B. F. Keith Memorial (presently the Opera House). Albee shared the management of the Metropolitan with Jesse Laskey and the Famous Players and the Baligan and Katz chain of Chicago. According to the Boston Globe, the latter organization was in direct charge of operations.⁴ Present along with Albee and Laskey on opening day was Adolph Zukor, head of the Paramount/Publrix chain.

This "wonder theater" opened to the public on October 17, 1925. Opening day fare was typical of the variety of entertainment offered during those early years. The program began with an organ recital and presentation called "episode in the life of Chopin and Madam Sand." This was followed by a stage show, "The Melting Pot," described as "a fantasy in scenes set to music."⁵ The latter was the

creation of talented resident producer John Murray Anderson, described in contemporary newspaper accounts as "a genius of stagecraft."⁶ Anderson's shows also appeared at Radio City Music Hall in New York and at the Alhambra and Hippodrome in London.⁷ Often the stage show theme was related to the feature film, which in this case was "The King of Main Street." According to early newspaper accounts, all films shown at the Metropolitan were to be the first New England showings of Paramount's new releases.⁸ The opening day programs also included cartoons and dancers.

Entertainment at the Metropolitan was thoroughly professional in quality. The theater employed a corps de ballet, a 100 voice chorus and a 55 piece orchestra originally conducted by Nathaniel W. Finston. Along with the stage shows, the musicians and dancers presented tableaux, ballet and operatic moments. Music was also provided by a \$100,000 Skinner organ, said to have 3100 pipes and promoted as "the most orchestral organ in the world."⁹ It was said to be capable of imitating rain, wind, and other supporting sounds as well as "the tone of every instrument found in a symphony orchestra."¹⁰ The original organist, Arthur Martell, was a well-known Boston figure.

The Metropolitan operated on a policy of popular prices (from 35¢ to a maximum of 75¢ on weekend evenings), continuous performances, and no reserved seats. The generous size lobbies and lounges held the thousands of people awaiting seats, and the management went to great lengths to insure that the wait was nearly as enjoyable as the show. The Metropolitan was appropriately advertised as an "Art Institute of Amusements: which combined features of an art museum, concert hall, club house and palace as well as a theater. Patrons could view not only the architecture, but also paintings by area artists which hung along the walls of the promenade. They could listen to a small orchestra playing in the Grand Lobby, join bridge games arranged by hostesses, play ping pong or billiards, or relax in lounging chairs.¹¹ In the evening, couples danced after the show in the Grand Lounge to the music of Sid Reinbeck and his Met Collegians.¹² After 1932 a small Art Deco restaurant called the "Platinum Salon" opened in the lounge area.

The job of seating patrons and ensuring that no seat went unfilled was given to a corps of some forty ushers carefully chosen for their good looks, manners and poise. The Head Usher stood in the Grand Lobby at a brass master switchboard with lights which disclosed the location of vacant seats. Patrons were admitted during the shows as well as at short intermissions, since both the convenience of the patron and the profits of the theater required that no seat remain empty.¹³

In its first years of operation, the Metropolitan's combination of silent film and stage reviews was typical of movie houses of the day. With the advent of talking pictures in 1926, live entertainment other than organ music was abandoned in most American theaters, and the Metropolitan became one of the few to carry on the tradition of the stage show. In his history of the movie palace, The Best Remaining Seats, Ben Hall notes the unique place of the Metropolitan and a handful of other major theaters during the 1930s.

Only the great flagship houses -- the Paramount in New York, the Metropolitan in Boston, the Chicago in Chicago, and a sprinkling of others in locations where pride and local custom demanded live stage shows along with the movies -- kept up any semblance of the glory that was once Publix.¹⁴

By the late 1930s and 1940s, costs were mounting and big name headliners became increasingly necessary to draw crowds.¹⁵ During the World War II era, the Big Band, including Duke Ellington, the Dorsey Brothers, Benny Goodman, and Gene Krupa played here. Bob Hope, Al Jolson, and Dorothy Lamour performed at war bond drives. Among the other well-known performers who have appeared at the Metropolitan over the years are Rudy Vallee, Burns and Allen, Martha Raye, Jack Benny, Amos and Andy, Harry Richman, the Mills Brothers, Kitty Carlisle, Julius LaRosa, and Pat O'Brien.

After World War II, attendance declined due to the impact of television, suburbanization, and new entertainment patterns. The stage show productions were abandoned. After the destruction of the Boston Opera House in the late 1950s, the Met became attractive to large touring productions. Renamed the Music Hall in 1962, the theater hosted world famous ballet, dance and opera groups including the Bolshoi Ballet, Kirov Ballet, Boston Ballet, Stuttgart Opera, and Metropolitan Opera. However, stage depth and production facilities were less than adequate and touring shows were often forced to compromise artistic standards or bypass the Boston audience altogether.

In 1974, the Boston Redevelopment Authority undertook a study of the need for a performing arts center and found that only the Music Hall/Metropolitan had the potential to serve the City's needs. The Boston Redevelopment Authority approached the owners, New England Medical Center Hospital, suggesting that a non-profit group be established to lease and renovate the facility. Renovation work began in November, 1979, and the theater reopened in December, 1980, as the Metropolitan Center. The first season brought a renewal of the Metropolitan's tradition of major attractions with a season of Broadway hits.

In 1983, Dr. An Wang and his family gave \$1 million to renovate and repair the Met Center, and he announced a \$3 million challenge campaign towards the Center's endowment. In 1983, the theater was renamed The Wang Center for the Performing Arts in recognition of Dr. Wang's gift.

In October of 1989 the Wang Center announced its intention to restore the theater to its "original grandeur and elegance." In support of this effort, the Wang Center has established a \$10 million fund-raising campaign.

3.2 Architectural Significance

Called an "architectural marvel" on the front page of the Boston Globe the morning after it opened, the Wang Center is the most important example of the movie palace and represents the climax of flamboyant classicism in Boston theater design. Not only is the theater significant because of its size alone -- it is the largest in New England and one of the largest in the world -- but it is also distinctive for the grandeur of space and regal atmosphere aptly-described in early advertizements as a place of "mountainous and beautiful proportions, like a Magic City." The Wang Center is the last Boston theater designed by C. H. Blackall, a Boston architect who became nationally known for his theaters. Blackall's design for the Metropolitan, which was well published in architectural books and periodicals and was widely admired in his day, is still considered to be "representative of the very highest standards of movie palace design."¹⁶ The theater has also remained largely intact and its beauty has been enhanced by recent restoration work.

Early advertisements boasted of the theater's "thousand and one wonders."¹⁷ A parade of low ceiling marbled halls draws the audience through to the dramatic four-story Grand Lobby, encircled by three tiers of promenades and lighted by two gold plated chandeliers said to weigh 1800 pounds. The lobby, with its two-story rose colored columns, ornate plaster ceiling and grand stair, was modeled after Garnier's Paris Opera.¹⁸ A glittering atmosphere, described as Louis XIV, is created by lavish use of marble, crystal chandeliers, mirrors, gold leaf, painted murals, and vaulted ceilings. While specific detailing is not as fine as in some other Boston theaters, the effect is none the less spectacular. As G. H. Edgell wrote in his 1927 publication American Architecture of Today, "The interior...is gorgeous, if not wholly refined. The enormous entrance foyer is as impressive as Versailles."¹⁹

Scores of artisans were employed in the decorative effort. The auditorium murals were the work of Edmund Philo Kellogg, a well-known Chicago painter of the time. Kellogg was born in Chicago in 1879 and his name appears in the biographical reference American Art Annual from 1913

through at least the 1920s. Kellogg studied under Freer, Duveneck, Chase and Albert Herter and taught at Chicago's Academy of Fine Arts. He also worked on the St. Paul Institute and the Chicago Athletic Association.²⁰

The central mural above the proscenium arch was entitled "Conception of Drama and Music." According to contemporary accounts, it was highlighted with 250 precious and semi-precious stones valued at \$10,000.

The lobby ceiling murals, which are more exacting than those in the auditorium because they were meant to be seen from a closer range, were the work of Louis Amorosi. Amorosi was described in newspaper reports as "an eminent Italian mural painter" and "ex-official painter to the Vatican."²¹ The outer lobby mural is a copy of Titian's celebrated "Triumph of Venus" and the Grand Lobby mural, which is original in design, represents "Advanced Music and Drama." An article in the 1925 Christian Science Monitor reported that Amorosi was a "specialist in such themes, and in aerial perspective."²²

The Metropolitan was designed to be functional as well as grand. The lobbies and lounges could hold thousands of patrons awaiting seats. (The Boston Globe reported that 9000 persons could be so accommodated.) The organization of lobbies and promenades facilitated the circulation of patrons into and out of the auditorium with ease and safety.

Early newspaper articles claimed that the Metropolitan, while primarily a movie house, would be capable of presenting any stage attraction which could be accommodated in any New England theater. Because of the tremendous height of the stage, the new theater could "exceed the capabilities of any New England legitimate playhouse in most respects."²³ Another article claimed that the stage was the highest in the world.

Newspaper articles pointed out a number of special design features. The projection booth was below the balcony to eliminate distortion of the film image. The steeply sloping single balcony was designed without visible supporting columns. The loge boxes, influenced by European theater design, are unique among Boston theaters and provide an operatic touch. The design of the orchestra pit -- the latest in 1920's technology -- allowed for the raising and lowering of the 55-piece orchestra for dramatic effect. And, reflecting its dependence on mass audiences, the Metropolitan was the first in Boston to provide an official press room for reporters.²⁴

As "the public's castle" the Wang Center is an outstanding American example of the movie palace, a theater type which flourished briefly during the period between World War I and the Depression. Films had been introduced just before the turn of the century, and by the 1920s promoters across the country were competing to attract eager movie fans.

The film was customarily combined with a stage show which turned movie-going into a total recreational experience. As profits soared and entertainment grew more elaborate, larger and more extravagant theaters were built. The term "movie palace" describes the attempt of theater architects to attract middle class patrons to this popular entertainment form by surrounding them with lavish decor. The philosophy was expressed in American Theaters of Today (1930) as follows:

The modern theater is more than a house in which to see a picture or to produce an act. It has a very important place in our social and economic structure. The vast majority of those attending our theater are of very limited means. Their homes are not luxurious and the theater affords them an opportunity to imagine themselves as wealthy people in luxurious surroundings.²⁵

The Depression brought an end to the movie palace era, and subsequent theaters were not only smaller but also of a different design aesthetic.

The Wang Center is the last of eighteen Boston theaters designed by the nationally known Boston architect Clarence H. Blackall (1857-1942). It is an excellent example both Blackall's aesthetic sense and his ability to incorporate the latest in construction technology. Blackall was born and educated in New York and studied architecture at the University of Illinois and at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. In the early 1880s, while in the employ of the distinguished Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns, Blackall became the first American student to win the Rotch Travelling Scholarship providing two years of travel and study in Europe. In 1889, he joined James F. Clapp and Charles A. Whittmore in organizing a firm with which he was associated for nearly half a century. Among the firm's important early commissions was the Bowdoin Square Theater. Over the years, Blackall was associated with the construction or remodelling of eighteen Boston theaters, of which ten remain today. Of these, the most important are the Colonial, the Wilbur (1914), and the Metropolitan (1925), all of which are or have been recommended for designation as Boston Landmarks. The other remaining Boston theaters by Blackall are the Gaiety/Publix (1909), Modern (1914), Washington Street Olympia/Pilgrim (1912), , Broadway Theater (South Boston, 1921), National Theater (South End, 1911), and Tremont Temple (1895).

With his partners, Blackall also designed a number of outstanding Boston commercial buildings including the Carter/Winthrop Building (1894), Boston's first steel frame skyscraper, and the Little Building (1917). He also served as consulting architect for the Copley Hotel.

Blackall's architectural writing and organization work made him a prominent member of the profession. He was an early member of the Boston Society of Architects and the American Institute of Architects. He was also one of the organizers and first president of the Boston Architectural Club, and a founder and first secretary of the Architectural Heritage League of New York. His contributions to professional journals included articles on architectural education, housing for the poor, theater laws, and theater fires. He also served for a time as an editorial writer for Brickbuilder Magazine.

3.3 Relationship to Criteria for Landmark Designation

The Wang Center meets the criteria for Landmark designation, as defined in Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975:

- as a structure prominently identified with the cultural history of the City, the Commonwealth, and the New England Region;
- as a structure embodying the distinctive characteristics of the baroque style in theater decoration;
- as a notable work by a Boston architect who was nationally known as a designer of theaters.

4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

4.1 Current Assessed Value and Property Tax

The assessed value of parcel 5640, in ward 3, is \$3,146,000; \$1,150,500 for the commercial land, and \$1,995,500 for the building. The total assessed value for parcel 5640-1 is \$14,156,000.

4.2 Current Ownership and Status

The theater is presently leased to the Wang Center for the Performing Arts, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. The owner of the building is the New England Medical Center, also a tax exempt organization.

5.9 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Background

During the Colonial period, the present Theater District was a marshy, sparsely settled area outside the original town center and close to the neck -- the slender stem of land connecting the Shawmut peninsula to Roxbury and the mainland. Washington Street and Frogg Lane (now Boylston Street) were the principle public ways, and important landmarks included the Common, the Common Burying Ground (originally the South Burying Ground), established in 1754, and the Hollis Street Meeting House of 1732.

Because of its strategic location on the neck, the area's commercial importance increased during the early 19th century. The Bulfinch designed Boylston Market was constructed in 1810 at the corner of Boylston and Washington Streets to serve farmers bringing produce to market. The coming of the railroads during the 1830s and 1840s increased traffic in the Park Square area, where the Boston and Providence terminal was located, and in the newly filled South Cove area, location of the Boston and Worcester and Old Colony terminals. By mid-century the edge of the Common was becoming a favored location for large residential, commercial, and institutional structures such as the first Boston Public Library (1855), the Masonic Temple (1864) and the Hotel Pelham (1857), Boston's first "French flat" or apartment house.

By the turn of the century, the area south of the Common had begun to develop as a theater district. The third building of the Hollis Street Meeting House had been converted to a theater in 1885. This was followed by the construction of the Tremont Theater in 1889, the Colonial in 1900, the Majestic in 1903, the Shubert in 1910, the Wilbur in 1914, and the Metropolitan in 1925. The area has continued throughout the century to be characterized by a mix of small-scale retail and entertainment uses on the street level with office, residential, wholesale, and light manufacturing uses above -- a diversity which has its origins in the somewhat haphazard growth of the late 19th century city.

After the razing of Scollay Square, this area experienced an influx of adult entertainment establishments. In 1974, in an attempt to confine the area's activities, the city, through zoning regulations, made the area a designated Adult Entertainment District. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s about 25 to 30 adult oriented establishments flourished in the Combat Zone. In recent years many forces have started to transform the area. Boston's growing downtown economy and the rapid growth of Chinatown have created a demand for office, retail, and residential space in the district. Some of the new retail and office activities occupy space once used for adult-oriented clubs and stores in the Combat Zone.

5.2 Current Planning Issues

Since March 1986, about two-thirds of the adult-oriented establishments in the theatre area have gone out of business or had their licenses revoked. None of the facilities has reopened in other parts of the city. By contrast, non-adult entertainment uses now outnumber the adult bookstores, movie theaters, peep shows and bars on lower Washington Street between Essex and Kneeland Streets, the block which was once the heart of the Combat Zone.

Recent planning for the Cultural District tries to encourage cultural uses in this area and has focussed on several key parcels in the district, including the Hinge Block, the vacant parking lot next to the Shubert Theater (parcel C-4), the vacant lot next to the Wilbur Theater (P-7), the vacant parking lot on Hayward Place and the adjacent Lafayette Place Mall planned for the Boston Crossing development, and the parcels on Washington Street between Boylston and Avery Streets planned for the Commonwealth Center development. In addition, planning for the district has focused on ways to revitalize two of the historic districts located within the Cultural District: the Liberty Tree National Register District and the Washington Street Historic Theater District.

The Midtown Cultural District Plan attempts to preserve the historic character of the area by protecting historic buildings, blocks, and street patterns, steering major development into areas that contain few historic structures, limiting building heights in areas with historic buildings, and promoting the renovation of historic buildings. Article 38 of the Boston Zoning Code established the Midtown Cultural District in 1989; it states as its goals and objectives,

to direct downtown development in a way that promotes balanced growth for Boston; to prevent overdevelopment in the Financial District and the Back Bay by promoting mixed-use development on Midtown; to revitalize Midtown as the region's center for performing and visual arts by rehabilitating historic theaters and creating new cultural facilities for the city's nonprofit arts community; to protect the quality of life and provide for expansion of the thriving Chinatown neighborhood by creating affordable housing and business opportunities, and by controlling institutional expansion in the area; to preserve Boston's historic resources and public open spaces, which provide enjoyment to all residents and visitors and which increase land values in their proximity, by virtue of historic, aesthetic, and environmentally beneficial qualities; to provide new and expanded facilities for community services; and to create a new residential neighborhood downtown by encouraging the development of housing which is affordable to all segments of the community.

This zoning creates Planned Development Areas, Protection Areas, the Hinge Block Special Study Area, and a Housing Priority Area. The Wang Center is within Planned Development Area III. These Planned Development Areas were created in an attempt

to establish a more flexible zoning law and encourage large-scale private development on underutilized sites in the Midtown Cultural District while insuring quality design by providing planning and design controls; to protect and rehabilitate Boston's historic entertainment center as its cultural district, and to achieve the plan for the area as a vibrant regional arts district; to preserve and create the facilities necessary to house and showcase the resident artists and non-profit arts groups; to create new day care facilities; to protect and provide for expansion of housing and community facilities for the Chinatown Community; and to preserve and protect the historic resources of Midtown.

The PDA in which the Wang Center is located is zoned at a maximum building height range of 155 feet to 300 feet, with FARs of 10 to 14. Article 38 should be consulted for further zoning details and processes.

The Wang Center is presently undertaking a major rehabilitation of the interior of the theater, and has been in contact with the Boston Landmarks Commission. The Wang Center has done their planning through a restoration committee approach. The review of plans thusfar presented to the Landmarks Commission have taken place under the accelerated design review provisions, where changes to petitioned and potential landmarks are reviewed by the Landmarks Commission prior to their designation. Approval has been granted for those requested alterations.

The first public hearing for the potential designation of the Wang Center was held on October 23, 1983. The Landmarks Commission took no action following that hearing.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

6.1 Alternatives

The Commission has the option of designating interior spaces of the property as a Landmark. The Commission also retains the option of not designating the interior of the building as a Landmark.

The building in which the theater is housed is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places.

6.2 Impact of Alternatives

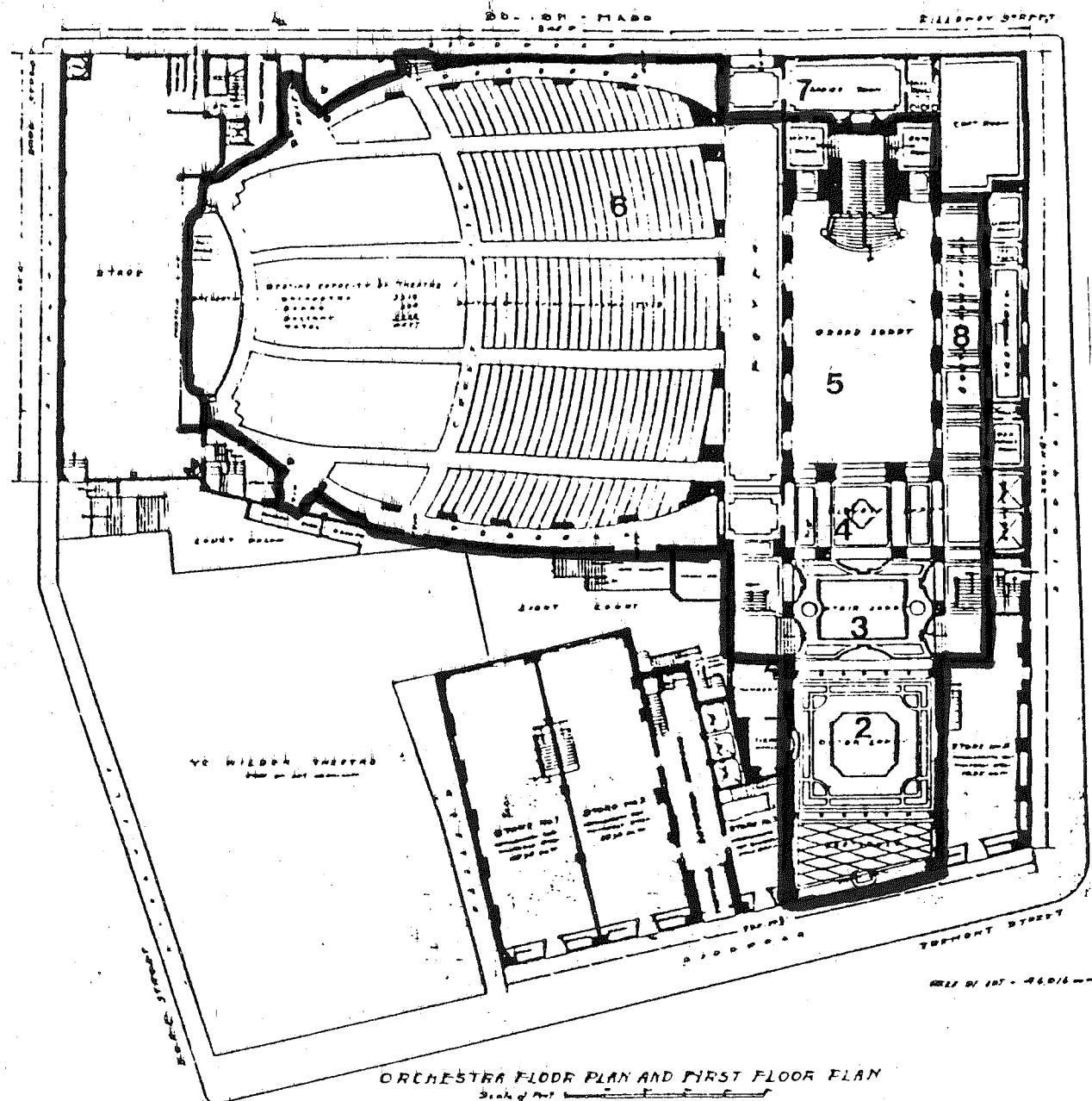
Landmark designation under Chapter 772 would require the review of physical changes to the designated interior spaces of the Wang Theater in accordance with the standards and criteria adopted as part of the designation.

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places would provide protection through the Section 106 Review process whenever federal, federally licensed, or federally assisted actions are undertaken. Similar protection from state sponsored activities is achieved by concurrent listing of all National Register properties on the State Register of Historic Places under Chapter 254, General Laws of Massachusetts.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the interior of the Wang Center be designated a landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 as amended. Specific interior spaces recommended for designation are the following: the outer vestibule, outer lobby, stair lobby (including stairway to the basement lobby), the basement lobby, the elevator lobby (including the elevators), the Grand Lobby (including the south promenade, the stairways to the loge promenade and the basement lobby), the auditorium (including the foyer and side halls), the loge promenade (including the terrace and the stairway to the mezzanine), the loge (including the side halls), the mezzanine promenade (including the stairs to the balcony), the mezzanine (including the side halls), the balcony promenade, and the balcony.

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



Wang Center
268 Tremont Street
First Floor and Auditorium
Recommended for Designation

Other Areas Recommended
for designation are
identified in the
Recommendation Section

1. Outer vestibule
2. Outer lobby.
3. Stair lobby.
4. Elevator lobby
5. Grand lobby.
6. Auditorium.
7. Ladies room (not designated)
8. Grand lobby promenade

8.0 GENERAL STANDARDS & 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 the 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 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 (subdivided into categories for buildings and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standard 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 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 filligree, cupolas, dormers, 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 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, 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 purpose 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 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 new 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 shall 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 a 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 or 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. INTENT

The intent of these guidelines is to preserve the visual character of the theater which is virtually intact. The Commission encourages continued maintenance of the Wang Center and suggests that any required replacements or additions be faithful to the original design insofar as possible. If any major restoration or construction activity, or work on sensitive or significant features of the theater is considered, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare an historic building conservation study and/or consult a materials conservator early in the planning process. The Commission has no intention to interfere with temporary alterations to the configuration of the stage and orchestra seating such as a thrust stage, ramps, cabaret seating or screening to block off seats or sections of the theater which may be required by certain productions. As a result, none of these standards and criteria is intended to interfere with ongoing theater productions, and such temporary alterations are therefore exempt from prior Commission review and approval. Temporary is defined as one year or less. The Commission encourages continued restoration of the interior to the maximum extent possible and recognizes the need to make sympathetic change.

B. LEVELS OF REVIEW*

The Commission has no desire to interfere with the normal maintenance procedures of the Wang Center. In order to provide some guidance for the theater management and the Commission, the activities which might be construed as causing an alteration to the physical character of the theater have been categorized into:

1. Routine activities which are not subject to review by the Commission:

- * Maintenance activities associated with routine housekeeping.
- * Routine activities associated with theater production that do not result in any permanent alterations or attached fixtures.
- * Changing of posters or announcements in existing display boxes.
- * Back stage and service areas are not under review.

**This section is an addition to standards and criteria developed in the October 4, 1983 study report developed for this property.*

2. Activities which may be determined by the Executive Director to be eligible for a Certificate of Exemption: only ordinary maintenance and repair involving no change in design, material, color and outward appearance, including such items as,

- * Major cleaning programs (including chemical surface cleaning).
- * Re-upholstering.
- * Re-carpeting.
- * In-kind replacement or repair.
- * Maintenance or repair of the marquee and display boxes.
- * Any alterations within the balcony stairwells, balcony promenade, and mezzanine promenade which are not visible from the grand lobby.

3. Activities requiring Landmark Commission review: any reconstruction, restoration, exterior or interior replacement or alteration or demolition, such as,

- * New construction of any type or removal of any existing features or elements shall require review by the Landmarks Commission. This includes but is not limited to seating; ornament; fixtures; surface treatments; or any alteration involving change in design, material, color, location, or outward appearance.
- * Alterations within the mezzanine promenade or loge terrace which are visible from the grand lobby floor.

4. Activities not explicitly listed above:

In the case of any activity not explicitly covered in these Standards and Criteria, the Executive Director shall determine whether an application is required and if so, whether it shall be an application for a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption.

C. THEATER ENTRANCE

The following features are part of the entrance to the Wang Center and are integral to the theater's appearance.

1. Doors

The existing doors shall be retained. If replacement, changes shall match original in material, composition, scale, and shape.

The ceiling of the outer vestibule shall be retained. All repairs will be reviewed.

2. Display Systems

The display boxes shall be retained. Any alteration will be subject to review and approval. Changing of displays does not require review.

3. Marquee

The existing marquee is not original, but does mark the entrance to the theater. Any proposed changes require review.

4. Lighting

Any additional entrance lighting shall be reviewed by the Commission.

D. INTERIOR

Included in the designation are the outer vestibule, outer lobby, stair lobby (including stairway to the basement lobby), the basement lobby, the elevator lobby (including the elevators), the Grand Lobby (including the south promenade, the stairways to the loge promenade and the basement lobby), the auditorium (including the foyer and side halls), the loge promenade (including the terrace and the stairway to the mezzanine), the loge (including the side halls), the mezzanine promenade (including the stairs to the balcony), the mezzanine (including the side halls), the balcony promenade, and the balcony.

1. Volume

The full unobstructed volume and spacial relationships of the designated interior spaces shall be maintained. New openings and new framing down or closing of existing openings will not be allowed.

2. Finishes

All materials and finishes within the designated spaces shall be retained. If replacement is necessary, changes shall match original in material, composition, texture, and appearance. No original surface material shall be removed, altered, or covered. Cleaning of interior surfaces shall be completed using the gentlest methods possible.

a. Natural wood surfaces shall not be painted, and if new finishes are proposed they should match original.

b. If repainting of designated areas is proposed:
1) paint seriation studies, to determine original paint colors, are required; and 2) a panel which represents the existing color scheme must be retained (the sample may be in an inconspicuous location, and of a size that provides adequate evidence of existing treatments). All murals shall be retained.

c. All the terrazzo flooring shall be retained. Carpeting and wall coverings should match or evoke the design of the original or the period.

- d. All decorative ceiling detail shall be retained. Repairs shall match original in composition, scale, materials and appearance.
 - e. Plaster wall surfaces shall be retained. Scagliolla surfaces shall be retained. Repairs shall match original in texture, composition and appearance.
 - f. Mirrors and mirrored surfaces shall be retained. Extant painted mirrors on the upper auditorium walls may remain painted.
 - g. Metal surfaces and detail shall be retained; if replacement is necessary changes should match original in material, design, finish, and appearance.
3. Seating
Whenever possible, existing seating shall be retained. If necessary, replacement house seating should match original in arrangement and general appearance.
4. Doors
The interior doors throughout the theater shall be retained. If replacement is necessary, new doors should match the original in composition, materials, shape, size, finish, and appearance.
5. Hardware
All hardware shall be retained; if replacement is necessary, changes shall match original in materials, design, finish, and appearance.
6. Stair Railings
All stair railings shall be retained; if replacement is necessary, all changes shall match original in materials, design, finish, and appearance.
7. Lighting
Original lighting fixtures exist throughout the interior, including the candlabrum, chandeliers, and must be retained. Any required replacements should match the original in materials, design, finish, and appearance. Any required, supplemental house lighting should be sympathetic to color and quality of original and should not mimic the original in design.
8. The clock in the grand lobby shall be retained. Any repairs to the exterior of the clock will be reviewed by the Commission.

9. 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 permanently affect the appearance of the designated spaces will be reviewed by the Commission. These items include, but are not limited to, the fire screen, curtain, sound booth, and any other permanent fixtures.

10.0 FOOTNOTES

- 1 Douglass Tucci, Built in Boston, p. 215.
- 2 Boston Landmarks Commission files
- 3 Boston Evening Transcript, June 23, 1923.
- 4 Boston Globe, October 17, 1925.
- 5 Boston Herald, October 11, 1925.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Douglass Tucci, "The Boston Rialto....," p. 13.
- 8 Boston Herald, October 11, 1925.
- 9 Boston Herald, October 17, 1925.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Tucci, "The Boston Rialto....," p. 12.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ben Hall, The Best Remaining Seats, p. 253.
- 15 Tucci, "The Boston Rialto....," p. 14.
- 16 Ibid., p.13
- 17 Boston Herald, October 18, 1925 (Special "Metropolitan Theater Section," p. 1)
- 18 Tucci, "The Boston Rialto....," p. 13.
- 19 G.H. Edgell, The American Architecture of Today, p. 332.
- 20 Susan Bonchi, "In the Shadow of the Masters," p. 38-39.
- 21 Boston Herald, October 17, 1981.
- 22 Christian Science Monitor, September 24, 1925.
- 23 Boston Herald, October 11, 1925, p. 11c.
- 24 Boston Herald, October 17, 1925.
- 25 R.W. Sexton and B.F. Betts, ed. Americian Theaters of Today, Vol. 11, p. 24.

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