Clerk File No. 313795

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Landmarks Preservation Board Report on Designation of 777 Thomas Street.

Related Legislation File: CB 118087

| Date Introduced and Referred: | To: (committee): |
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| Date Re-referred: | To: (committee): |
| Date Re-referred: | To: (committee): |
| Date of Final Action: | Disposition: |

# The City of Seattle – Legislative Department

Clerk File sponsored by: _____

## Committee Action:

| Date | Recommendation | Vote |
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This file is complete and ready for presentation to Full Council. _____

## Full Council Action:

| Date | Decision | Vote |
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C.F. 313795

The City of Seattle

# Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

**REPORT ON DESIGNATION** LPB 66/13

Name and Address of Property: 777 Thomas Street

Legal Description: Lot 1, Block 80, in D.T. Denny's Addition to North Seattle, according to the plat thereof recorded in Volume 2 of Plats, Page 46, records of King County, Washington.

At the public meeting held on February 6, 2013 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of building at 777 Thomas Street as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standard for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

*D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.*

## DESCRIPTION

### Site and Adjacent Neighborhood Context

The subject building is located on a gently sloping, corner site on Thomas Street and 8th Avenue N., one block north of Denny Park. The building completely fills the parcel. The building lot has an alley to the west. The arterial Dexter Avenue is one block away to the west, running north to south, and one block further west is the major arterial Aurora Avenue/Highway 99.

The subject site and surrounding blocks are zoned SM-85 (Seattle Mixed Use, maximum height 85'). The surrounding blocks (other than the nearby Seattle Center) are marked primarily by one- and two-story mid-20th-century light industrial and commercial buildings, and some parking lots. The character of the surrounding area changes markedly south of Denny Way, in the Belltown neighborhood, with increasingly denser urban fabric of modern high-rise mixed-use residential towers intermixed with c.1920-30s brick apartment buildings. Similar development occurs to the south around Westlake and Stewart/Olive Streets.

The nearest Seattle historic landmark is the Street Clock, West Earth Company, at Dexter Avenue N. and Harrison Street. Other nearby Seattle historic landmarks within a few blocks include:

- Terry Avenue Building (James Schack, 1915) on 320 Terry Avenue N. between Harrison and Thomas
- The Van Vorst Building (between 1909-1915) on Boren between Harrison and Republican
- Troy Laundry Building (Victor Voorhees, 1927) on Fairview between Harrison and Thomas
- Seattle Times Building (Robert Reamer, 1931) at Fairview and John.

Because Aurora Avenue is a below-grade highway with only a few east-west crossing points available, the noisy roadway forms a powerful western boundary to the immediate neighborhood. Relatively close landmarks to the west of Aurora include the following, but experientially, they are not conveniently reached:

- The Space Needle (John Graham Jr., Victor Steinbrueck, and John Ridley, 1961-62) at Broad and Thomas
- The Seattle Monorail (1961-62) along Fifth Avenue, at Thomas Street
- Seattle First National Bank (John Maloney, 1950, after a prototype by J. Lister Holmes, 1946), at 6th Avenue N. and Denny Way

Nearby notable recent buildings on the west side of Aurora Avenue which are not landmarks include the Experience Music Project (Frank Gehry, 2000) at Fifth and Thomas, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (NBBJ, 2011) at Broad and Harrison.

**Building description**

777 Thomas is a one-story building constructed in 1931 for use as an automobile repair garage, designed in a simple Art Deco style (Zig-Zag). The building is located on a corner, with two street elevations and an alley elevation. It measures approximately 60 by 120 feet in plan, oriented lengthwise east to west, and with elevations about 17-20 feet in height across the gently sloping site. There is no basement.

In the past, the building had been used primarily as a warehouse/office for Johns-Manville building products; then as a plastics injection molding factory for the Korry Manufacturing Company; then as an automobile service garage. Today the building is used as a service and repair shop for luxury European automobiles.

The structure has a concrete foundation, cement floors, and built-up flat roof with 14-1/2 foot ceilings. The roof originally had five skylights over the main work area, but these have been covered over. Exterior walls are brick, with reinforced concrete window headers. Simple Art Deco motifs appear to have been created on exterior walls by casting simple forms against a layer of board formed cast-in-place concrete. The impression of the board forms are evident on the exterior, particularly the alley side, while interior walls are exposed painted brick. Certain elements too complicated to create in such a fashion, such as the main door surround on Thomas Street or the roof parapet coping, are called out on the 1931 drawings as cast stone (that is, cast concrete), probably ordered from a manufacturer.

Interior structure consists of one line of 10x10" heavy timber posts on concrete footings following a 19'-9" bay module. The posts divide the interior space into one-third along the

north wall (for offices and show area), and two thirds along the south wall (for the main garage working spaces). The posts support five 12x28" heavy timber girders, which are supported at the other end on brick and concrete piers engaging the exterior walls, and on the girders are 2x12 wood joists supporting roof decking.

The north elevation, along Thomas Street, consists of six wide window bays on a 19-20 foot module which retain the original steel sash windows, above low concrete bulkheads. In recent years, portions of the windows have been simply covered by corrugated metal siding in order to create office space and more privacy for the interior, with the original metal sash underneath. The building piers between the six bays have cast-stone ornament which feature a single vertical band of overlapping, upward-pointing chevron "scales" contained by three incised lines on each side of the chevrons.

Viewing the north elevation, there is primary entrance located in the second bay from the left, and a full-bay-width garage door occupying the second bay from the right. The garage door on the interior connects to the interior floor by a short ramp down. Non-original light fixtures are affixed to each pier.

The primary entrance is located in the center of the window bay it occupies, but stands free from the piers of the window bay. The door surrounds feature Art Deco cast-stone masonry elements consisting of superimposed curved and pointed geometric shapes, superimposed vertical lines or planes, and two stylized volutes.

The east elevation, along 8th Avenue N., resembles the north elevation, except that it consists of three window bays, with a garage door in the center bay, and a secondary entrance integral to the left bay's window.

The west elevation, along the alley, features three large windows and one small window (lacking the regular three-bay appearance of the east elevation). The windows, which are intact with original steel sash, are entirely covered by painted plywood. This elevation is utilitarian in nature and without ornament, except for a corner pier featuring the chevron band and parapet fretwork which wraps around to the alley as a continuation of the north elevation corner pier.

The south elevation is constructed as a party wall condition, although the adjacent property is a surface parking lot with no structures on it. This south elevation has no windows at all. There is no exterior ornament, except that the parapet fretwork wraps the southeast corner by about two feet.

The interior is open, divided between one-third of the space as open office and reception area along the northeast windows, and an informal car showroom area along the northwest windows. The other two-thirds of the space consist of several hydraulic lifts, repair stalls, and other automobile repair equipment lining the south interior wall. An enclosed balcony office space is located at the southwest corner of the garage area, with shower and changing rooms for the mechanics, is indicated on the original 1931 drawings. At the entry/reception area, the 1931 drawings call out a fireplace on center with, and opposite, the main entry; this

fireplace is no longer extant. As a single interior decorative feature, the nearly free-standing main entry projects into the interior of the entry/reception area, in a manner suggesting superimposed and recessing door frames, with a band of inverted scalloped fretwork along the top.

Both the interior and the exterior of the building have had a few alterations over the decades, but the exterior is largely intact. Interior spaces have been reconfigured several times to meet the needs of different tenants, including possibly a substantial subdivision of spaces in the 1960s and 1970s when the building was used as a plastics molding factory for the Korry Manufacturing Company (and was one of several adjacent buildings used for this purpose by that company, so permit records sometimes overlap the various buildings). Today, the interior is marked by more open spaces for its use as a garage. Due to the light industrial nature of many of the occupants, there are numerous permits on file for electrical, ventilation, and plumbing alterations.

Known alterations include:

1931 Construction.

c.1949 Minor interior alterations to adapt building to office, warehouse, and stockroom for the Johns-Manville Company.

1967 Proposed interior alterations to remodel space into offices and plastics molding shop; drawings on file include rooms for grinding, milling, and tooling; engineers offices; drafting and printing rooms; and so forth. It is not clear whether this work was carried out.

1975 Alter existing buildings per plan (Lots 1, 2, 3). Drawings indicate a similar arrangement of spaces as the 1967 drawings. It is not clear whether this work was carried out.

1988 Alteration of building interior; add spray booth; create new entry; change use from office, wholesale, manufacturing to auto repair.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### The development of the South Lake Union neighborhood

The subject building is located in what is today called the South Lake Union neighborhood, as it merges into the Lower Queen Anne neighborhood to the west (sometimes called the Uptown neighborhood), and the Denny Regrade neighborhood to the south. The 2005 South Lake Union Historic Survey and Inventory for the Department of Neighborhoods considers the South Lake Union area to be bounded by Fairview Avenue to the east, Aurora Avenue to the west, Mercer Street to the north, and Denny Way to the south. The older Cascade neighborhood is considered to generally be the area east and southeast of South Lake Union, traditionally having a closer relationship with Capitol Hill until the construction of the Interstate 5 corridor. All of these areas share common and overlapping histories due to topography and land use patterns over the decades.

The blocks around the subject site were originally part of the 320-acre 1853 land claim of David T. Denny, one of the original pioneer settlers of Seattle, which encompassed the south end of Lake Union westward to Elliott Bay, from Mercer Street to Denny Way. In David

Denny's time, his land was nestled in a valley between Denny Hill to the south and Queen Anne Hill to the north. Prior to the Denny settlement, the area was noted for a large meadow and several Duwamish encampments, particularly where a small stream (today the course of Westlake Avenue) met the shore of Lake Union. The Denny's modest home was located at 8th and Republican. Nearby Denny Park at Dexter and John Street—one block south of the subject site—originally was six acres donated by David Denny in 1864 for use as a city cemetery, but was rededicated as a public park in 1883, becoming Seattle's oldest park. In the 1860s, a north-south military road was cut through the area, following an Indian trail (today's Dexter Avenue). David Denny subdivided his land into 500 building lots in 1872, but the area was relatively slow to develop, compared to the Belltown area to the south.

The area owes most of its character to transportation systems that developed around Lake Union and early rail corridors. Coal and lumber were transported via the lake from around the Lake Washington area, through a combination of boats, portage, and later, rail. A large sawmill was established at the foot of Lake Union in 1882, which was purchased by Denny shortly thereafter. From the 1880s to 1900, several industries developed in the area, including additional mills, several brickyards, a furniture company, and so forth. Also in the 1880s, horse-drawn streetcars were established in the vicinity, to connect the area to downtown. In 1883, the Denny claim had developed enough to be annexed by the City of Seattle. The area developed single family houses, churches, a few apartment buildings, and a school as the residential population grew—mostly workers for the nearby industries, through the turn of the century.

The 1909 extension of a rail spur and associated freight depot at Terry and Thomas Streets, connecting south Lake Union businesses to the Northern Pacific Railway, facilitated the continuing growth of industries in the south Lake Union area. The 1917 opening of the Ballard Locks and the Lake Washington Ship Canal (connecting Puget Sound to Lake Washington via Lake Union) spurred further growth. Over time, maritime industries developed, such as ship-related building and repair, particularly in response to the US entry into World War I and World War II. The large Naval Reserve Armory was established at the southwestern shore of the lake in the early 1940s, which today is in the process of being occupied by the Museum of History and Industry.

Transportation-related companies established in the area as well. From 1913 to 1932 the first Ford assembly plant west of the Mississippi operated at the south shore of Lake Union (today's Shurgard Storage headquarters at 700 Fairview Avenue). Kenworth Trucks, founded in 1923 after the purchase of an existing 1917 truck factory located at Valley Street and Fairview Avenue, was located first at 506 Mercer Street, then 1263 Mercer Street until 1946, when it moved to a location south of downtown.

The 1888, 1893, 1905, and 1917 Sanborn fire insurance maps show the surrounding blocks around the subject site slowly filling in with single-family houses, churches, and scattered small-scale commercial and civic buildings. The 1912 Baist map shows the immediate neighborhood as primarily residential, with some spotty commercial activity along the larger streets south of Denny Way, farther west along Denny Way, or east along Westlake Avenue.

The most significant nearby civic building shown on the 1912 Baist map was perhaps the Denny School, about four blocks southwest in the block bounded by Battery and Wall Streets, and Fifth and Sixth Avenues. This large 1884 Italianate structure was demolished in 1928, but the ornate tower cupola was retained and relocated at some point to Denny Park, where it functioned as a garden ornament until the early 1940s. Less than three blocks to the north, the Seattle Lighting Company's two large cylindrical gas tanks at 8th Avenue and Republican Street were probably the most significant, or at least most visible, nearby industrial structures shown on the 1912 map. The nearest streetcar lines to the subject site ran four blocks to the west along 5th Avenue (connecting downtown to Queen Anne Hill) and three blocks east (connecting downtown to the west shore of Lake Union and Fremont).

By far, the most dramatic alteration to the immediate area around the subject site was the second phase of the Denny Hill regrades, which occurred in two parts during 1906-11 and 1929-31, resulting in the flattening of the existing Denny Hill. The first phase of the project had been completed in 1899, and consisted of the area along 1st Avenue between Pine and Denny. The City of Seattle had already undertaken other regrades in the downtown area (notably raising the grades around the waterfront and tideflat areas, and lowering the grades around Jackson and Madison Streets) at the turn of the 20th century. The primary advocate for the regrades was Reginald H. Thomson, who was the longtime City Engineer from the 1890s to 1911, and again briefly in the 1930s. The main purposes were to encourage development in parts of the city plagued by steep street grades (a problem in an age of horse-drawn vehicles, although soon to be a moot point with the advent of combustion engines), and to improve water and sewage systems in the city. The 1929-31 regrade work covered the approximately 20 blocks from Denny to Harrison, and 5th to 9th Avenues, as well as a half-block on either side Dexter up to Mercer Street. This phase of regrading included Denny Park, and the subject site. The completion of the grading of the subject site was probably late 1930 or early 1931.

The 1906 and 1929 regrades essentially obliterated the remaining Denny Hill neighborhood. Although buildings were moved by their owners where possible, most were demolished. In the intervening years of this nearly 25-year process, the neighborhood declined as the uncompleted but expected regrading dragged on over the decades, isolating the area physically, and making these blocks less attractive for investment in the near term than booming neighborhoods elsewhere.

For a time, Denny Park was left ungraded, rising abruptly 60 feet above the surrounding streets, with dirt cliffs along Denny Way and 9th Avenue. By 1930, the park had been leveled and replanted with trees and vegetation. Although the regrades were intended to provide an attractive tabula rasa to draw new development, the area grew slowly, and vacant lots were common.

In the early 1930s, Highway 99/Aurora Avenue was constructed in a below-grade right of way through the immediate neighborhood, substantially cutting the area off from the Queen Anne neighborhood several blocks to the west.

By 1951, the Sanborn fire insurance map shows evidence that low-scale light industrial service and sales buildings, automobile-related buildings, and construction-related buildings had begun to fill in the neighborhood. Automobile-related businesses, usually only one story in height, were especially prevalent along the arterials Dexter and Westlake Avenues.

In 1951, businesses in the blocks immediately surrounding the subject property included numerous automobile gas and service stations; several used car lots; several auto body shops; tire stores; motels; apartment buildings; single family homes converted into duplexes and triplexes; laundry and dry cleaners; small warehouses, often for the construction trades; refrigeration and machinery repair; a large number of paint stores and warehouses; ornamental iron works; several electrical supply companies; many plumbing supply shops, some with a pipe yard and cutting area; a printer; an upholsterer; a roller bearings supplier; several general storage buildings; offices of Pacific Telephone and Telegraph; and a few restaurants. Interspersed between these buildings on the 1951 map are wood frame single-family houses, which presumably were either untouched by the regrades (if outside the boundary of the work), or were lifted and moved back into place after the regrades.

Around 1960, several blocks west of Broad and north of Denny—several blocks west of the subject parcel—were chosen to be the site for the 1962 World's Fair. This area had already been developing as a civic center since the 1920s. Existing buildings on the site which were to be adapted to Fair uses included the 1928 Civic Auditorium (today's Opera House), the 1939 Armory (now the Center House), and the 1948 Memorial Stadium. The city was also interested in encouraging redevelopment of the area, which was untouched by but just northwest of the regrades, and which was by that time perceived to be "blighted." As part of the development, several streets were closed off, blocks were agglomerated, and the World's Fair site—today's Seattle Center campus—became the primary western neighborhood edge and traffic obstacle in the immediate area. In anticipation of the 1962 World's Fair, nearby blocks west of the subject site were developed with hotels, motels, restaurants, and other draws to attract the tourist dollar.

Since the 1960s, the nearby Lower Queen Anne and Belltown neighborhoods have seen increasing development, particularly during the economic prosperity of the 1980s and 1990s and changes in the city's land use code. In the Denny Regrade neighborhood south of Denny, several modern residential or mixed-use towers were developed, creating an increasingly denser neighborhood. More restaurants and neighborhood shops and services were introduced into the area, so that the traditionally densely residential Lower Queen Anne area has begun to merge seamlessly with the Regrade/Belltown area between Denny and Broad at Western, 1st, and 2nd Avenues. The Seattle Center campus has remained an integral and key component of the city's civic and tourist resources, with improvements and additions made over the decades to the Pacific Science Center, the Space Needle, Seattle Children's Theater, the International Fountain and former Flag Pavilion areas, and the Center House. In addition, two significant modern buildings and institutions have been established in the neighborhood in the past several years: the Experience Music Project (Frank Gehry, 2000) and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (NBBJ, 2010), both about six blocks from the subject site. However, the Seattle Center and Gates Foundation are located on the west

side of Aurora, so although only a few blocks away, they have less of an impact on the subject site's neighborhood than might be expected.

In the 1990s, a proposal for a huge, Olmsted-like park called Seattle Commons was proposed for an area approximately from 9th Avenue to Terry, and from Denny to Lake Union, connected to downtown via Westlake Avenue. The project would have involved demolition of multiple blocks and closure of rights of way. The idea, which captured the imagination of the public and elected officials alike, ultimately failed at the voting booth, but it directed attention to the then-seemingly-underutilized South Lake Union area.

Since that time, the blocks east of the subject site along Westlake and Terry Avenues, north of Denny, have been the focus of carefully planned mixed-use and office development, attracting new technology-based industries. Similar development may occur along 5th, 6th, and 7th Avenues below Denny Way to the south of the subject site, as a result of upzoning and the increased development along the Westlake corridor. At present, however, many of the blocks west of Westlake and south of Denny remain surface parking lots, a legacy of the slow development following the early 20th century regrades. The blocks near the subject property, between John and Republican Streets, and Dexter and 9th Avenues, also remain primarily the same low-scale, light industrial or office buildings that developed after the regrades.

Beginning in 2008, the Seattle Department of Planning and Development instigated a series of public meetings and studies to consider rezoning portions of South Lake Union, in order to increase building height and density, in keeping with its designation as an Urban Center. At present, the pending South Lake Union rezone proposes three blocks of 8th Avenue N. to be a residential enclave, due to its proximity to Denny Park.

**Building owners and occupants**

King County Tax Assessor information was used to determine the most recent owners, and historic tax information was used to determine likely owners in earlier decades. Polk's Directories were scanned in order to determine residents of the property (beginning with the 1938 reverse directory).

The property is one block from Denny Park, the oldest park in the city. The site was occupied by a wood frame, single-family residence, with yard and outbuildings, by 1893. Between 1905 and 1912, another frame structure, apparently a single-family house, was built in the back yard along the alley. At that time, the nearby blocks were characterized by similar structures. These original buildings on the subject site were presumably demolished when this block and surrounding area were regraded during the final part of the Denny Hill regrades in 1928-30. The owner prior to 1931 was not discovered.

The property appears to have been owned at least by the 1930s by the Pigott family. Tax records show that the fee owner from 1931 until at least 1937 was Ada E. Pigott "et al." The Pigotts were prominent in Seattle as owners of two major companies, the Seattle Steel Company and the Seattle Car Manufacturing Company (later known as PACCAR). Ada Pigott was the widow of William Pigott Sr., the philanthropist and former head of the Seattle

Steel Company. Ada died in 1941, but her husband had died in 1929, so the subject property may have been one of William's investment properties, perhaps purchased during the regrades, and inherited by his widow and heirs.

In 1931 the subject building was constructed as an automobile service building for W. C. Lewis, who appears to have been a real estate businessman and developer, who may have owned the adjoining parcels. No additional information could be found on Lewis. A newspaper article described the building as a "$15,000 project" and that it was to be occupied by the Gabulson Motor Company. Gabulson was an automobile service and sales company that had existed in Seattle since at least the early 1920s, and was located at 4th Avenue and Madison downtown. They serviced Cadillacs in the early 1920s, then sold and serviced new and used Packards by 1924 when they moved to a new location at 4th Avenue and James Street. For unknown reasons, Gabulson may not have moved into the subject building in 1931, but instead moved to another address down the block at 4th and Jefferson Street, based on newspaper advertisements. However, phonebook listings show Gabulson Motors located at the subject building for 1931-32. In any event, Gabulson's automobile repair shop was located in 1933 at 228 Dexter, then from 1934 to 1937 at 515 Dexter. After that year, Gabulson disappears from the listings, presumably closed or bought out during the Depression. Gabulson died in 1959.

Whether or not Gabulson used the building as a garage in 1931 is unclear, but for at least fall and winter of 1931, newspaper articles state that the building was used as an art gallery. The space, called first the Elizabeth Service Studio, then the Gabulson Studio, showed paintings and drawings, with at least two feature shows advertised.

Little information could be found regarding the building during the Depression years of the mid to late 1930s. A newspaper article mentions that the building had been leased by the Colfanite Products Company, manufacturers and distributors of paint and varnish lines. In 1938, Polk's Directory lists the property as vacant.

From late 1938 to 1940, the building was used by the Independent Petroleum Company and Consolidated Oil Products of Washington Co. Inc., presumably as office space. Part of the building in 1938 was also leased to the King County School Board as distribution space for school books.

In 1943, the owner of the property on the tax records is listed as Seattle First National Bank.

From late 1940 to 1957, the building was used as by the Johns-Manville Company for their asbestos home building supplies sales offices and showroom. In the 1930s, the Johns-Manville sales office had been located in the elegant White-Henry-Stuart office building downtown (part of the Metropolitan Tract developed by the University of Washington), with another location at 1247 6th Avenue S. (probably the materials warehouse).

The Johns-Manville Company has its roots in two mid-19th century businesses: The H.W. Johns Manufacturing Company was founded in New York City in 1858, an early pioneer in the development of asbestos as a fire-resistant building material; and the Manville Covering

Company, founded in 1886 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which developed asbestos as a heat-insulating material. In 1901 the two companies merged, added to the product line were asbestos cement, and acoustical and magnesia products. In the late 1920s, the company was purchased by financier J.P. Morgan, became a publicly traded company, and was selected to join the Dow Jones Industrial stock listings. In 1939, the company began to gear up for wartime production; by 1945, the federal government mandated the production of asbestos-containing insulation products to insulate Navy vessels, as well as products for other war purposes. In 1958, the company expanded into fiber glass insulation; by 1971 it was the leading developer of fiber glass mat. In the early 1970s, Johns-Manville moved their headquarters from New York to Denver, had sales exceeding $1 billion, and was one of the nation's leading manufacturers of fiber glass, asbestos-cement pipe, and PVC pipe. In the 1980s, over growing health concerns and lawsuits over asbestos-related illnesses, Johns-Manville declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy and established a trust to handle the large number of personal injury and class action lawsuits filed against them. Today, the company has 45 factories in North America, China, and Europe, and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate holding company. Johns-Manville manufactures building insulation, mechanical insulation, commercial roofing, and roof insulation, as well as fibers and nonwoven materials for commercial, industrial, and residential applications. Their products are used in the fields of aerospace, automotive and transportation, air handling, appliance, HVAC, pipe and equipment, filtration, waterproofing, building, flooring, interiors, and wind energy. Today they employ 7,000 people and have annual sales of approximately $2.5 billion.

By 1958, Johns-Manville had moved out of the subject building to 4304 Stone Way, at the north end of Lake Union. From 1958 to the mid-1960s, the building was occupied by several small home appliance sales and service concerns.

By 1967 the fee owner of the building, and apparently by 1971 the property owner, was Boris V. Korry (1904-1970). Korry was an early Boeing employee who in 1937 invented the first lighted cockpit controls for the developing military and commercial aviation industry. His firm, Korry Manufacturing Company, is currently owned by the Esterline Company, headquartered in Everett, and makes aviation electronics and controls. Korry had begun his company in a nearby building down the block, at 223 8th Avenue N., in the mid-1950s. He expanded his company into nearby buildings as it grew. In 1967, the subject building became "Plant #3" for the Korry Manufacturing Company, which eventually occupied a total of four buildings in the immediate area, making electronic aircraft controls using plastic injection molding machinery. Based on drawings on file, the interiors were reconfigured with partition walls to create manufacturing and office space. A review of several histories of the Boeing aviation company could find no reference to Korry at all, or the impact of his inventions on Boeing or on aviation.

By the late 1980s, the Korry firm had moved to Dexter Avenue. In 1988, the building was occupied by Jerry's Body Shop. Permits are on file that year to install a painting spray booth, and change of use from office-wholesale-manufacturing to auto repair, interior alterations, and a new entry. The building since that time has housed an automobile repair garage use, including Fat City Motors and German Motor Specialists.

In 2011, the Korry family sold the property to 8th & Thomas LLC, the current owner. 8th & Thomas LLC also owns adjacent parcels directly south of the subject building.

**The architect, George Wellington Stoddard**

The building was designed in 1931 by George Wellington Stoddard (1896-1967), a prolific Seattle architect who was active from the 1920s to the 1960s. Stoddard earned an architectural engineering degree from the University of Illinois in 1917, and served in France with the US Army during WWI. After the war, Stoddard worked at his father's architectural practice in Seattle; most of the work followed the historical revivalist styles popular at the time. In 1929, he formed his own firm, George Wellington Stoddard & Associates. During these early years, work included the first Metropolitan Press Building at 2107 3rd Avenue, aka Brasa Restaurant, a city of Seattle landmark (1923); the Winthrop Hotel at S. Broadway and S. 9th Street in Tacoma (1925); the Dutton residence at 3355 E. Laurelhurst Drive (1926) and the Wallace Bowles residence (c.1929).

The subject building, dating from 1931, would have been a relatively early work in his independent career. Stoddard designed two other Art Deco buildings in 1931, both extant: the second Metropolitan Press Building at 2603 3rd Avenue in Belltown (today a Rite Aid pharmacy), and the Builder's Hardware Supply Company in South Lake Union at 227 9th Avenue N. Another example of a light industrial building from this period is the Williams Potato Chip plant aka the Harlan Fairbanks Company (1931), at 1405 Elliott Avenue W.

Stoddard is primarily known for post-WWII and mid-century modernist designs for educational buildings, medical buildings, banks, retail, and apartment buildings. One source describes this work as follows: "Stoddard's early work utilized the Moderne style, such as the Harlan Fairbanks Company (1931) on Elliott Avenue. However, after the war, he became fully committed to the tenants of modernism, and often pushed the architectural envelope." For example, he invented the concept of a "transportable school" which was built around a core with classroom structures that could be added or removed as needed. Three were constructed in the Seattle area in 1949; they were believed to be the first of their kind in the nation.

In 1955, he formed a partnership with Francis E. Huggard, naming their firm, George W. Stoddard-Huggard & Associates, Architects and Engineers.

Works by Stoddard include the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1920-30s | Many custom houses throughout area |
| 1927 | Winthrop Hotel, Tacoma |
| 1930s | Many houses in Blue Ridge, Sheridan Beach, Broadmoor subdivisions (for Puget Mill Co.) |
| 1930s | Many custom houses throughout area |
| 1931 | Harlan Fairbanks Company |
| 1934 | Harbor Island fire station |
| 1936 | Normandy Arms apartments |
| 1936 | Grace Episcopal Parsonage |

1938 "Quintec" modular house company
1938 Queen City Yacht Club
1940s Renton Highlands public housing development (primary architect)
1940s Yesler Terrace public housing development (team member, with William Bain, J. Lister Holmes, et al.)
1943 Doctor's Hospital in Seattle
1946 Overlake High School in Bellevue
1946 Renton Hospital
1946 King County Juvenile Home
1947 Memorial Stadium (at Seattle Center)
1948 Deaconess Hospital Nursing Wing (Ellensburg)
1949 "Transportable" elementary school" model for Genesee Hill, Arbor Heights, Briarcliffe districts
1950s National Bank of Commerce (NBC) branches throughout Seattle and the state
1950 Green Lake Aqua Theater (perhaps Stoddard's most cited work)
1950 UW Stadium South Stands
1958 Chapel at Veterans Hospital on American Lake, south of Tacoma

Stoddard's work was published repeatedly in the Seattle Times and Post-Intelligencer, the local Pencil Points journal, Architectural Forum, and other trade publications.

Stoddard was also active in many professional and civic organizations, including the State Hospital Advisory Council Executive Committee (1948 - 1949), the Seattle Civic Arts Committee (appointed as chairman in 1947), the King County Educational Advisory Committee (1950 - 1951), the King County Juvenile Advisory Committee (1952), the Rainier Club, the Seattle Art Museum, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce and the Municipal League. He also served on the board of the Seattle Symphony for many years. A member of the Washington State Chapter of the American Institute of Architects since 1922, Stoddard served as president of the chapter in 1946-1947.

Stoddard retired in 1960, and died in 1967 at the age of 71.

**Art Deco architecture in Seattle**

Art Deco was a popular style in Seattle in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and was a term applied to a style that appeared first at the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes held in Paris in 1925. It is technically not a "modernist" style, because it primarily decorative in nature, whereas modernism shunned applied decoration entirely.

The style refers to a wide variety of designs, including everything from household goods and furniture, to graphic arts, to fashion, to architectural design. Art Deco buildings generally have richly textured surfaces including inlays, castings, polychromy, cut glass, and so forth. Art Deco was influenced by Art Nouveau, the Vienna Secession movement, the Bauhaus, industrial design, and ancient or exotic forms, usually heavily stylized. Popular patterns were derived from American Indian, Egyptian, and Mayan sources, to name a few.

The style was popular in the late 1920s, and these examples are generally "high-end" and richly detailed. After 1929 and the start of the Great Depression, buildings were often more spare in design.

In Seattle, excellent examples of Art Deco exist, including the Seattle Tower, Macy's (former Bon Marche), the Exchange Building, the Seattle (Asian) Art Museum, the Seattle Times Building, and several apartment buildings such as the Baroness on First Hill. These designs often use locally-derived patterns from nature for geometric inspiration—for example, marine plants or animals such as seaweed or starfish; or local flower forms such as rhododendrons and tulips; or ferns, or mountains, waves, or clouds. Both the interiors and exteriors of these buildings often create an appearance of rich materials and luxurious surfaces, frequently concentrated at entries, lobbies, around windows, or at parapets.

"Zigzag" is a subset of Art Deco marked by primarily geometric patterns, especially chevrons and zigzags, which could be done at relatively less cost and for buildings with smaller budgets—for example, simply by careful brickwork could such designs be effected. Cast stone details were also available to order from catalogs, or could be custom made. A fine example of Zigzag Art Deco is the Mt. Baker Apartments (today condominiums), by John Graham, 1930.

The subject building can be considered to fall into this category. The architect of the subject building, George Wellington Stoddard, designed two other "Zigzag" Art Deco buildings in 1931, the Metropolitan Press Building at 2603 3rd Avenue in Belltown (today a Rite Aid pharmacy), and the Builder's Hardware Supply Company in South Lake Union at 227 9th Avenue N.

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***The features of the Landmark to be preserved include:*** the exterior of the building.

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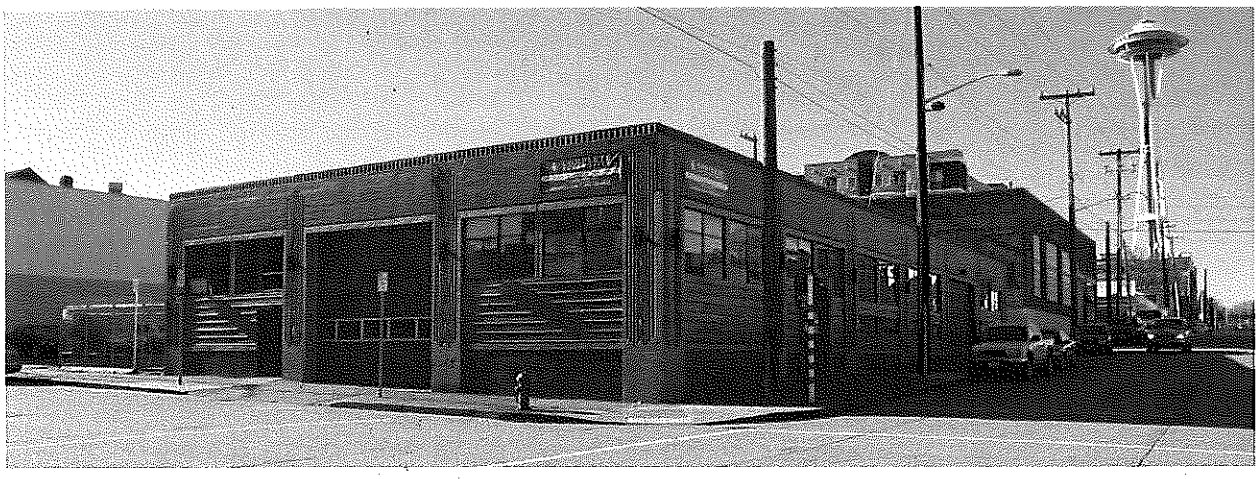
Karen Gordon
City Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Susan Smartt, 8th & Thomas LLC
Jessica Clawson, McCullough Hill PS
Meredith Wirsching, Vice Chair, LPB
Diane Sugimura, DPD
Alan Oiye, DPD
Ken Mar, DPD



777 Thomas Street, current

777 Thomas Street, c. 1937