

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2009-2860-NR

HEARING DATE: September 17, 2009
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 217-221 E. 8th Street
Council District: 14
Community Plan Area: Central City
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Council: Downtown Los Angeles
Legal Description: Lot 23 of the Resubdivision of the Widow Botiller Tract

REQUEST: Comments to State of California Office of Historic Preservation on proposed listing of Garment Capitol Building to the National Register of Historic Places

APPLICANT: Andrea Galvin and Ben Taniguchi
Galvin Preservation Associates
1611 South Pacific Coast Highway, Suite 104
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

OWNER: 217 E. 8th Street LLC
217 East 8th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014

RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

Adopt the proposed resolution.

S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, AICP, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: A) Resolution

FINDINGS

See Resolution in Attachment A.

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the State Office of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service approved the City of Los Angeles' application to become a "Certified Local Government" (CLG) for historic preservation under the National Historic Preservation Act. This action provided official recognition to the City of Los Angeles for its new comprehensive historic preservation program with the establishment of the Office of Historic Resources. CLG status gives the City of Los Angeles formal authority to comment on nominations of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects to the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources. Both National Register and California Register nominations are ultimately reviewed by the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and presented for approval before the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC).

With input from the Rules and Government Committee and the City Council, the Office of Historic Resources developed a procedure to provide comments from the City of Los Angeles to the SHRC while conforming to the City's Intergovernmental Relations process. Approved in December 2008, this process calls for preparation of a proposed resolution (Support/Opposition/General Comments), for approval by the Cultural Heritage Commission, City Council, and concurrence by the Mayor.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

Criterion 1: Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Criterion 2: Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Criterion 3: Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

Criterion 4: Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

SUMMARY

Built in 1926 and located in the downtown area, this 12-story commercial building exhibits character-defining features of Gothic Revival style architecture. The subject building is rectangular in plan and is situated on Los Angeles Street between 8th Street and Santee Street. The subject building has three primary facades clad in concrete, glazed terra cotta and ruffled brown brick arranged in a classic base-shaft-capital composition. The entrance is a recessed off-center doorway topped by a modern metal awning. The lower levels are defined by modernized storefronts on the ground floor and second floor windows flanked by ornate Gothic-style faux-buttress piers, niches and bands of intricate decorative terra cotta. This decorative work employs traditional Gothic-style tracery forms including trifolios and quatrefoils, as well as shields, foliation, and figureheads. The third through eleventh levels have rows of paired metal casement windows above terra cotta panels with three lancet-style arched forms. The twelfth level has rows of paired metal casement windows flanked by a Gothic-style terra cotta parapet. The final floor has double-height arched metal casement windows separated by alternating faux-buttresses piers extending from the attic level to the twelfth level. A repeated row of paired decorative terra cotta shields serves as the capital of the composition. Significant interior

spaces include a main lobby space with marble and decorative stenciling and moldings visible above portions of a dropped ceiling added at a later date.

The Garment Capitol Building was designed by architect William Douglas Lee. Lee is responsible for the design of the El Royale Apartments (Historic-Cultural Monument #309; 1929), another period-revival high-rise building. Lee designed several commercial and light industrial buildings for Lloyd and Casler Incorporated, who also financed the subject building. This company was led by its president Florence Casler (1869-1954), one of the few women in Los Angeles in that period to head a company in the field of development and construction of high-rise buildings. In 1926, Casler was appointed head of the Peoples National Bank of Los Angeles, making her the only female director of a bank in Los Angeles.

The Garment Capitol Building is located in an area with a high concentration of garment manufacturers and merchants; since the 1930s, the subject building has been used for these purposes.

Later alterations to the subject building include the replacement of main entrance storefronts, covering of clerestory windows, removal of terra cotta parapet finials, and the addition of a dropped ceiling in the lobby space.

BACKGROUND

The City of Los Angeles declared the Garment Capitol Building a Historic-Cultural Monument on July 29, 2008, making it HCM #930

The National Register application was received by the Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning, City of Los Angeles on August 28, 2009.

ATTACHMENT A: Proposed Resolution

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles through the Cultural Heritage Commission and its duties as a Certified Local Government has reviewed the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Garment Capitol Building located at 217-221 E. 8th Street; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles deems that the applicant (Galvin Preservation Associates) submitted a complete application and followed proper notification procedures for National Register of Historic Places nominations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles believes that the application thoroughly provides an exhaustive architectural description, and statement significance; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles declared the Garment Capitol Building a Historic-Cultural Monument on July 29, 2008, making it HCM #930; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles found that the Garment Capitol Building meet three criteria of the Cultural Heritage Ordinance, declaring that a) the building “embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction” as an example of Gothic Revival style commercial architecture; b) that the building is associated with a master builder, designer, or architect, as a work by architect William Douglas Lee; and c) that the property is identified with a historic personage, Florence Casler (1869-1954), one of the first women in Los Angeles in the early 20th century to head a company in the field of development and construction of high-rise buildings and one of the first female directors of a bank in Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, the City of Los Angeles believes that the Garment Capitol Building successfully meets Criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places criteria as an excellent example of the early 20th century Gothic Revival style;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles SUPPORTS the proposed listing of the Garment Capitol Building to the National Register of Historic Places.

REVIEW AND COMMENT REPORT
BY
CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ON AN
APPLICATION FOR LISTING ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Property Name: **Garment Capitol Building**

Name of Certified Local Government: City of Los Angeles

Category of Significance:

Architecture History Archeology
 Other _____

The Commission recommends the nomination of the property by listing on the National Register of Historic Places, with the following comments:

See attached Resolution.

The Commission does not recommend this property for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons:

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

September 17, 2009

Signature of the Chairperson of the
Historic Preservation Commission

Date

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov



August 26, 2009

Ken Bernstein
Planning Department
Cultural Heritage Commission
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-4801

**RE: Historic Preservation Commission Review and Comment on the Nomination of
Garment Capitol to the National Register of Historic Places**

Dear Mr. Bernstein:

Pursuant to the Certified Local Government Agreement between the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and your governmental entity, we are providing your historic preservation commission with a sixty (60) day review and comment period before the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) takes action on the above-stated National Register of Historic Places (National Register) nomination at its next meeting. Details on the meeting are enclosed.

As a Certified Local Government under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, your commission may prepare a report as to whether or not such property, in its opinion, meets the criteria for the National Register. Your commission's report should be presented to the Chief Elected Local Official for transmission, along with their comments, to California State Parks, Attn: Office of Historic Preservation, Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, State Historic Preservation Officer, P.O. Box 94286, Sacramento, California 94296-0001. So that the SHRC may have adequate time to consider the comments, it is requested, but not required, that OHP receives written comments fifteen (15) days before the SHRC's meeting. If you have questions or require further information, please contact the Registration Unit at (916) 653-6624.

As of January 1, 1993, all National Register properties are automatically included in the California Register of Historical Resources and afforded consideration in accordance with state and local environmental review procedures.

Supplemental information on the National Register is available at our website at the following address: www.ohp.parks.ca.gov.

Thank you for your assistance in this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Milford Wayne Donaldson".

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures: Nomination, Meeting Notice

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

DRAFT

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Garment Capitol Building
other names/site number Anjac Building

2. Location

street & number 217 East 8th Street N/A not for publication
city or town Los Angeles N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 90014

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In
my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be
considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
entered in the National Register
determined eligible for the National Register
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other, explain
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Garment Capitol Building
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, California
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/ Manufacturing facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/ Manufacturing facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th century Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK and TERRA COTTA
roof ASPHALT
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Garment Capitol Building
Name of Property

Los Angeles County, California
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1926

Significant Dates

1926

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

LEE, WILLIAM DOUGLAS

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Los Angeles Public Library History and Genealogy Department; Los Angeles County Office of the Assessor; City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety; Inglewood Public Library

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceGarment Capitol Building
Los Angeles County, CaliforniaSection number 7 Page 1**DESCRIPTION***Overall Description*General

The Garment Capitol Building was constructed in 1926 in the Gothic Revival style. The steel framed 81,484 square foot industrial building sits on a northwest-southeast axis at the corner of East 8th Street and Santee Avenue in the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County. The façade faces southwest onto East 8th Street and is 55 feet wide. The elevation facing Santee Street measures 125 feet wide and faces southeast. The Garment Capitol Building is constructed up to the property lines, and therefore has no landscaping features.

The building has a full basement. The lobby is accessed from 8th Street. There are two storefronts on the façade and two on the southeast elevation; the storefront on the right side of the southwest elevation is on the southeast corner of the building with a secondary storefront on the southeast elevation. The second to twelfth stories are used for garment manufacturing.

Exterior

The Garment Capitol Building is a 12-story building designed in the Gothic Revival style that has a rectangular floor plan. The building measures approximately 150 feet from the sidewalk level to its tallest point. There are three bays on the southwest elevation and seven bays on the northwest elevation. The southwest elevation is symmetrical and the building sits on a concrete foundation. The building has a poured reinforced concrete structural system with a southwest and southeast elevation that is clad with 70,000 ruffled brown bricks (from the third to tenth floors) and Gothic Revival style terra cotta (on the second, 11th and 12th floors); the northwest and southwest elevations have indentations in the concrete made from wood concrete forms. It is covered by a flat roof that is likely clad in rolled asphalt sheeting. The southwest and the southeast elevations have shaped parapets with the area just below the roofline clad with square terra cotta panels with lyres cast into the panels. There is a large metal framed electric roof sign (sans letters), likely installed in 1930s. On the southeast elevation there are two metal fire escapes.

The primary entrance is located on the southwest elevation. It consists of a recessed lobby entrance that is sheltered by a marquee supported by angled metal rods and the sides of the roof are clad with non-original metal sheets. It is likely that the entrance roof is original and was clad in metal sheets sometime around the 1940s. The recessed entry doors consist of circa 1960s double metal framed doors that are surrounded by rectangular glass panes; the entrance is covered by a circa 1980s roll up style metal security shutter. The landing is made of light tan colored terrazzo accented with black bordering. There is a corner storefront, measuring approximately 30' wide and 82' deep on the right side of the southwest elevation, which is currently vacant. The storefront entrance is obscured from view by two roll up style metal security shutters, which were likely the entrances. The northwest facing side of the recessed main entrance contains a display window that is covered by a roll up metal security shutter. The northeast elevation side of the southwest elevation storefront has a display window covered by a roll up style security shutter and the rest of the exterior is covered by multi-paneled metal store signs that appear to covers at least four (likely) original display windows. There are two storefronts on the north side of the southeast elevation with circa 1970s single metal framed glass doors with roll up style metal security shutters; one of the entrances are topped by a canvas awning. The original clerestory windows above the southwest and southeast elevation storefronts have been covered with steel paneling. Above the (covered) clerestory are narrow bands of terra cotta panels depicting monks, with eyes closed, and wearing a hood and a smiling man with eyes open and wearing a floppy cap. The figures are spaced by terra cotta panels with leaves. There is also a third entrance on the southeast elevation that consists of a freight entrance that has a roll up style metal security shutter and is topped by a canvas awning. Other entrances to the building could not be observed.

There are a total of 63 windows on the southwest elevation. They are symmetrically spaced and consist of 58

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steel sash windows on the second through 12th story levels with multiple irregularly shaped panes and with double (stacked) awning windows incorporated into the center of the steel casement windows; six windows at the 12th story level are arched. Windows on the second story of both the southwest and southeast elevation consist of sets of large square steel sash fixed windows flanked by primarily circa 1960s louvered glass pane windows or by metal casement windows. There are three sets of second story windows on the southwest elevation and seven sets on the southeast elevation. Metal casings surrounding the second story window sets have decorations pressed into the metal and each set are framed by terra cotta Gothic Revival style paneled bordering. The 12th story windows also have terra cotta Gothic Revival style paneled surrounds.

There are 147 windows on the southeast elevation that are similar to the southwest elevation windows in terms of its type and the window surrounds.

Windows on the northwest elevation consist of 32 steel sash windows stacked in two vertical rows on the right side of the northwest elevation. The windows have 24 square panes and with a single awning window incorporated into the windows. One of the windows has been replaced with a steel sash fixed window. Other northwest elevation windows consist of approximately 41 steel sash awning windows with eight square panes on the center portion of the elevation and approximately 32 paired steel sash windows on the left side of the elevation that have 32 square panes on each paired sets and with single awning windows incorporated into the paired sets. Windows on the northeast elevation consist of 30 paired steel sash windows with 32 square panes on each paired sets; there are single awning windows incorporated into the paired sets.

Other design elements on the building consists of terra cotta Gothic Revival style cladding that covers the entire surface of the southwest and southeast elevation's second and 12th floor levels and there are terra cotta Gothic Revival style panels with tracery, and what appears to be stenciling, below all windows from the second through 10th stories. There are multiple terra cotta oriels and panels containing fleur-de-lys, shields and other figures and designs on the second story. The 11th story windows have Gothic Revival style terra cotta railings in front of the windows and there are several terra cotta shields mounted throughout the building. The southwest and southeast elevation exterior walls of the 11th and 12th story are recessed.

Interior

The building has a below grade full basement where there are electrical and heating systems, as well as storage areas. There are also stairs on the southeast side of the basement that leads to the storefront located on the southeast corner of the building. Storage rooms on the northeast side of the basement contain partitions constructed of cast concrete block with the brick yard name *Caldwell Block Mfg By Wm Smith 9891 Mission Road Alhambra Calif* cast into the blocks. The partitions were likely installed during the 1930s or 1940s.

The first floor lobby is accessed from a set of double doors located at the left side of the southwest (facing E. 8th Street). The walls and floors of the lobby are clad entirely with marble. The off-white marble on the walls and bordering the edge of the floor are not fully polished and thus the surface is textured with shallow dimples and grooves; a dark green marble cladding is used on the baseboard and as a secondary, inner border on the floor. A skin-toned marble that slightly resembles granite is used on the main part of the lobby floor. There are two rows of non-original florescent light fixtures running the length of the lobby ceiling; there are egg crate (drop ceiling), plastic panels covering the light fixtures. The original ceiling is still present underneath the drop ceiling. It consists of a vaulted ceiling with grapevine moldings running length wise on the upper edges of ceiling. There was also stenciling on the rafters, which also have floral molding on the edges. The original stenciling has been painted over and the floral moldings, which originally had either gold leafing or were painted gold, have also been painted over. There is one square stenciled section on the middle rafter that is intact. There are two pedestrian and a freight elevator on the southwest side of the lobby; the freight elevator is located within a corridor located beyond the lobby. The elevator doors are metal, pressed paneled doors, which originally had rosewood (faux) graining. The elevator doors have since been painted over. The elevator car for the freight elevator is the original Otis elevator car and the passenger elevators have circa 1960s elevator cars. On the southeast wall of the lobby

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Continuation Sheet**United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceGarment Capitol Building
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is a brass mail box/receiver for the *Cutler Mail Chute* system. The mail box has a decorative cast brass door and a brass mail slot with a decorative cast brass surround. Also on the southeast lobby wall, towards the southwest end of the lobby, is a message board that is framed by a cast brass frame that has cast lettering which spells out *Garment Capitol Building*. The message board is covered with five, divided, glass panes. On the northwest corner of the lobby are stairs leading to the upper floors. The initial six steps and landing, including the baseboard, are made of the same marble used on the lobby walls. The rest of the stairs are made of concrete, which has been painted. A corridor with one side of the wall clad with white glazed tiles is accessible from the southeast end of the lobby. The corridor angles southeast ward and exists onto Santee Street.

The second to the 12th are occupied by garment manufacturing businesses. These floors are generally distinguished by large open spaces with no partitions and have load bearing rounded concrete columns placed on the center of the rooms. There are also five sided concrete pilasters on all four corners of the floors, including pilasters on the centers of the southeast and northwest sides of the building. The baseboards are wood. The floors are heated by original cast iron radiators ranging in length from approximately 15 feet to three feet. The ceilings are for the most part bare concrete and the interior spaces are illuminated by florescent light fixtures dating from the 1940s to the 1980s. The eighth floor contains original, unpainted, freight elevator doors, an electrical/janitor's closet door and fire hose cabinet door; the closet door and fire hose cabinet door are wood with dark wood staining similar to that of the faux staining on the elevator doors. The rest of the floors contain the original doors, however they have been painted. Restrooms on each floor are located on the northwest corner of the building adjacent to the stair well. The restroom floors are clad with white octagonal ceramic tiles and most of the restrooms have replacement bathroom fixtures. The doors to the restrooms are painted, flush wood doors that appear to be original.

The building retains its integrity of location, setting, association, feeling, design workmanship, and materials. Exterior alterations are limited to the parapet, storefronts and main entrance, which consists of the following: the removal of terra cotta finials from the parapet in 1952 and the replacement of the main entrance and storefront doors. The lobby space and the upper floor space remain relatively intact. Additionally the early 20th century Gothic Revival style building has retained nearly all of its character defining features. Therefore, the Garment Capitol Building retains all aspect of integrity.

SIGNIFICANCE***Summary***

Completed in 1926, the Garment Capitol Building is a high-rise industrial building located in what is now known as the Fashion District. The area at the time of construction was being transformed from a primarily residential neighborhood to a commercial and industrial district with the construction of multi-story garment manufacturing buildings. The building was developed and constructed by Lloyd and Casler Incorporated, a company that specialized in such buildings during the 1910s and 1920s. The building is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as an excellent example of a high-rise industrial building influenced by Gothic Revival architecture. The building is significant in the context of architecture at the local level as one of only a few such buildings in Los Angeles.

Historic Context

The Garment Capitol Building is one of several high-rise industrial buildings that were constructed in downtown from the 1910s through the 1930s. The multi-story industrial manufacturing buildings constructed during this period evolved from long wood or brick one-story utilitarian buildings that were typically on a large plot of land with other similar type buildings; these were located on the east side of downtown near Alameda Street and west of the Los Angeles River. The industries during this period consisted primarily of lumber mills, wineries, granaries and warehouses. Residential areas were being eliminated in downtown by the early 20th century as the population was migrating westward towards areas west of Figueroa Street. The residential areas were thusly

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Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
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transformed into commercial and industrial areas; the industrial sites were established primarily near the southeast side of downtown. Most of the residential lots were not suited for industrial complexes in terms of its size and thus developers took advantage of the available air space in order to construct the manufacturing plants; this method of creating a self-contained industrial plant eliminated the need for constructing multiple plant buildings on a large parcel. The first multi-story industrial plants consisted of brick buildings that were no more than four to five stories tall and utilitarian in style. By the 1920s the manufacturing plants, primarily garment industries, were beginning to be housed in high-rise building of 10 stories or more; these were built likely in an effort to maximize the usage of space. The high-rise buildings borrowed characteristics from revival style high-rise buildings that were being constructed in commercial areas at the west side of downtown during this period. These included having decorative elements on the street facing elevations, including ground floor retail spaces and a public space such as a lobby, which was usually decorated with various design elements; these lobbies were not as lavish or expansive as those found in commercial buildings. The construction of high-rise industrial buildings of 10 stories or more in downtown peaked during the 1920s and essentially came to an end at the start of the Great Depression in 1929. By the post-war (World War II), when construction of industries began to startup, industries were being established in outlying cities and towns as land in downtown had become relatively scarce.

The Garment Capitol Building is located in an area that has a high concentration of garment manufacturers and merchants. This area, which is widely known as the Fashion District, covers several blocks and is the west coast equivalent of New York's Garment District. During the latter part of the 19th and early part of the 20th century the area consisted largely of single-family residences with a few livery stables, lumber yards and mills. Starting in the early 1910s, the area began to transform to a commercial/light industrial (garment) district due in large part to a general shift of the population of the downtown area westward. By the time the Garment Capitol Building was constructed in 1926, the transformation of the area to a commercial/light industrial area was nearly complete; there were still a few residences in the area in 1926, which were likely gone altogether by the 1970s. The garment industry would grow and expand in the newly transformed area during the next two decades. The largest growth of the industry occurred during an eight year period between 1936 and 1944 when the volume of garment production increased 475 percent and the industry employed 35,000 (mostly female) workers. Additionally, 85 percent of the finished products were sold east of the Colorado Rockies.¹ As the number of workers in the garment industry increased during this period, several labor strikes occurred, which often turned violent. The most significant of the strikes occurred in 1948 when the leaders of the A.F.L. International Ladies' Garment Workers, in an effort to unionize the entire Los Angeles garment industry, called a strike that involved 12,000 union workers and 400 union shops. Picketing outside of 197 non-union shops occurred; the key demonstration area was the 700 block of S Los Angeles Street, located north of E 8th Street.²

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the crime rate of the area began to rise and smaller manufacturers were being driven out by large corporate driven plants. And for these reasons a number of plants were forced to relocate to the suburbs. Wages were also kept low during this period for non-union garment workers due to competition from foreign plants located in Mexico, Hong Kong and South Korea; despite past efforts by the trade union, union workers only comprised of about 20% of the entire workforce. The influx of illegal immigrants in the past two decades has kept wages low and thus the garment industry continues to thrive in the city to this day. In the past decade, there has been a gradual gentrification of the area. Manufacturing plants have vacated a number of the high rise buildings and the available space has been converted into "loft" apartments.

The Garment Capitol Building was constructed by Lloyd and Casler Incorporated. Partners Jesse K. Lloyd and Florence C. Casler were responsible for the construction of several high-rise (150 feet or 12 stories) commercial and light industrial buildings constructed in the area from the late 1910s through the early 1930s. In addition to overseeing the construction of the buildings, the company also managed several of the building that they

¹ An excerpt from McWilliams, Carey. *California the Great Exception*. New York: A.A. Wynn, 1949 published in Caughy, John and LaRee. *Los Angeles Biography of a City*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976.

² "Pickets Jam Streets in Campaign to Unionize All Garment Workers." *Los Angeles Times*, 18 February 1948, pg. A1.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Garment Capitol Building
Los Angeles County, California

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constructed.

Casler partnered with Jesse K. Lloyd to form Lloyd and Casler Incorporated starting in the late teens. With her partner, Casler constructed numerous high-rise buildings in downtown Los Angeles. Their partnership would last through the early 1930s. By 1931, she had established her own company, the F.C. Casler Construction Company. Both of her daughters were employed at the company, which like her old company, specialized in the construction of high-rise buildings.³ In addition to running a high-rise construction company, Casler was the director of the Peoples National Bank in Los Angeles, to which she had been appointed in circa 1926.⁴ At the time she was the only female bank director in the city and one of a few in the entire country.⁵ Additionally she was likely the only woman to be involved in high rise construction in California during this time and one of likely only a few in the nation involved in this profession.

Announcement of the construction of the building came on June 20, 1926. Just over two months prior to the announcement, Lloyd and Casler had opened a 12-story building, the Textile Center Building (listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005 under Criteria B and C) located on the northwest corner of East 8th Street and Maple Avenue, just a block west of the proposed building. The planned 12-story building was to be constructed on the northwest corner of East 8th and Santee Streets. Los Angeles architect William Douglas Lee (1894-1965) was commissioned to design the building, which was to cost an estimated \$800,000 to construct. Lee had also been the architect for other Lloyd and Casler buildings which included the Allied Crafts Building (1925) and the aforementioned Textile Center Building (1926), both located in the downtown Fashion District.

An article in the *Los Angeles Times* dated December 19, 1926 describes the new building...

The building is of reinforced concrete construction. Gray predominates in the color scheme of the 70,000 special mix ruffled brick provided by the Los Angeles Pressed Brick Company for facing exterior walls. Divided into lofts, the structure will be utilized almost entirely by the garment manufacturing industry...

In addition to the ruffled brick cladding, the building was to be heavily embellished with Gothic Revival style terra cotta cladding.⁶ The new building, the Garment Capitol Building, was officially opened on New Year's Day 1927.⁷ The building however was sold that same year to Olga Riedeburg. It is likely that Riedeburg also managed the building in that her office occupied a floor in the building.

On the morning of October 17, 1930 at approximately 7:23, an enormous explosion occurred on the fifth floor of the building. The building sustained heavy damage and buildings in the vicinity of the explosion received damage from the concussion of the blast; a large number of the windows on the building, including the storefront windows, were blown out. The fifth floor of the building was occupied by a dress manufacturing plant operated by Hyman Schulman. Schulman had unknowingly triggered the blast when he set a burglar alarm that caused a spark which ignited natural gas that had filled an adjoining business.⁸

The building remained under the ownership of Riedeburg until 1946 when it was sold to the 217 Corp, which was likely a management company. It is likely that by this time the building had been renamed the "217 E 8th Street Building." In 1962, Jack Needleman, who owned a dress manufacturing company, Anjac Fashions, purchased the building. Needleman owned 60 primarily older buildings and several parking lots in downtown during the latter part of the 20th century and became a key figure in the Los Angeles garment industry and was noted for being supportive of the preservation of the historic buildings he owned, which included the Orpheum Theater Building located on Broadway.⁹ Soon after the sale of the former Garment Capitol Building in 1962, it was then likely

³ "Woman Makes Buildings Pay." *Los Angeles Times*, 6 July 1931, pg. A5.

⁴ Hunt, Rockwell D. *California and Californians*, Los Angeles, CA: Lewis Publishing Company, 1926, pg. 145.

⁵ Hunt, Rockwell D. *California and Californians*, Los Angeles, CA: Lewis Publishing Company, 1926, pg. 145.

⁶ "Announce Loft Structure." *Los Angeles Times*, 20 June 1926, pg. F1.

⁷ "Building to Open About New Year's." *Los Angeles Times*, 19 December 1926, pg. E2.

⁸ "Many Buildings Damaged." *Los Angeles Times*, 18 October 1930, pg. 1.

⁹ "Obituary; Jack Needleman; Clothing Executive." *Los Angeles Times*, 4 May 1999, pg. 24.

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renamed Anjac Fashion Building, which by this time housed approximately 35 garment businesses. A majority of the businesses, which were garment manufacturers, took up entire floors of the building.¹⁰ As of 2007, the name of the building has reverted back to the Garment Capitol Building and the use of the building, although largely vacant, has not changed since its construction in 1926.

The Garment Capitol Building was constructed in the early 20th century Gothic Revival style. The style was initially popular in California from the 1860s through the 1890s. However, starting around the late 1910s, there was a resurgence of this style. It was used predominately in the design of libraries, schools (both public and private) and churches; and to a much lesser extent in the design of residential and commercial buildings. The Gothic Revival style buildings from this period had style elements that were usually of terra cotta, which were used to accent buildings that were usually clad in brick. Additionally, entrances and window opening were characterized by wide, slightly arched openings. The Gothic elements are evident throughout the Garment Capitol Building with the extensive use of terra cotta cladding. Other elements of the style are seen in the slight arching of the 12th story windows, metal casings on the second story windows that have decorations pressed into the metal and metal casement windows throughout the building with metal sash hopper windows incorporated into the windows.

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William Douglas Lee (1894-1965)

Los Angeles architect William Douglas Lee designed the Garment Capitol Building. Lee, who by the age of 17, was hired as a supervisor of a construction project, arrived in Los Angeles in the late 1910s.¹¹ By 1918, he was a licensed architect and shared an office with local architect John M. Cooper at the Marsh Strong Building located at 112 W 9th Street in downtown Los Angeles. During the 1920s, Lee designed numerous buildings in the downtown Los Angeles area that housed commercial or light industrial plants. Lloyd and Casler commissioned Lee to design several of their downtown garment buildings, including the Textile Center Building (1926), a 12-story loft building located one block southeast of the Garment Capitol Building, and the Allied Crafts Building (1925) constructed on the northeast corner of Maple Avenue and Pico Boulevard.

Over the next four decades Lee designed several buildings throughout Los Angeles, which included the El Royale Apartments, the Guardian Arms Hotel and the Merchants Exchange Building (1929). By around the 1950s, Lee was joined by his architect son Douglas Everett and together they designed the 22-story Lee Building in 1958. It was the first building to have been constructed after the repeal by the Los Angeles City Council of the height limit ordinance in 1957.¹² The building, located on Wilshire Boulevard near Cochran Avenue, was completed in 1961 and was to be the final building designed by Lee. Lee was an accomplished architect who designed several prominent buildings. However, the influence of his work is unclear; therefore he is not considered a master architect.

¹⁰ *Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company Los Angeles Street Address Directory* (1956 and 1960).

¹¹ "Rites Planned Thursday for Architect W.D. Lee." *Los Angeles Times*, 17 August 1965, pg. A2.

¹² "Rites Planned Thursday for Architect W.D. Lee." *Los Angeles Times*, 17 August 1965, pg. A2.

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Los Angeles County, CaliforniaSection number 8 Page 7***Conclusion***

The Garment Capitol Building is eligible under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The building is one of only a few high-rise industrial buildings constructed in the early 20th century Gothic Revival style in the Los Angeles area. The Textile Center Building was listed on the National Register in 2005 under Criteria B and C and is similar in design with brick cladding, Gothic Revival style terra cotta trim, arched upper story window openings and steel sash windows with integrated awning windows. The Garment Capitol Building is comparable to the Textile Center Building, and arguably exhibits a more liberal use of terra cotta; this is also true when comparing it to the Allied Crafts Building. For example, the exterior walls of the second, 11th and 12th story levels are clad entirely in terra cotta and multiple terra cotta oriels and panels containing fleur-de-lys, shields and other figures and designs are used on the second story. Other distinguishing features of the Garment Capitol Building include the use of Gothic Revival style terra cotta railings in front of the 11th story windows. Despite alterations to the building, which includes the removal of terra cotta finials from the parapet and the modification of the first floor storefronts and main entrance, the building has retained nearly all of its character defining features.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

This building stands at 217 E. 8th Street on a 6,838 square foot parcel located at the west corner of E. 8th Street and Santee Street in Los Angeles, California. It is situated at a northwest-southeast axis and stands on land with less than one acre and with the APN 5145-003-005. The building is 55 feet at the southwest facing East 8th Street elevation and 124 feet at the southeast facing Santee Street elevation.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property's historic and current boundaries are the same.

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-__ except as noted:

Photographer: Stephen Schafer
Date of Photographs: November 8, 2007
Negatives Location: Galvin Preservation Associates
Historic Preservation Planning Company
1611 South Pacific Coast Highway
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Photographic Information</u>
1	View looking northwest at the southeast elevation of the Garment Capitol Building
2	Elevated view looking northeast at the northwest elevation
3	View looking southwest at the northeast elevation
4	Elevated view looking northeast at the upper half of the southwest elevation
5	Elevated view looking northwest at the upper half of the southeast elevation
6	Elevated view looking northwest at the southeast side of the rooftop
7	View looking northeast at the upper right side of the southwest elevation
8	View looking northeast at the second story terra cotta of the southwest elevation
9	View looking northwest at terra cotta figures on the southeast elevation
10	View looking northwest at a terra cotta panel on the southeast elevation
11	View looking northeast at the lobby
12	View looking northwest at a passenger elevator and stairs on the northwest side of the lobby
13	View looking northeast at a brass framed directory board on the southeast wall of the lobby
14	View looking southwest at an intact section of the original lobby ceiling stenciling (color)
15	View looking southwest at a portion of the lobby ceiling molding (color)
16	View looking northwest at the northwest side of the eighth floor at freight elevator doors and a closet door with their original finish
17	General view of the 8 th floor looking southeast
18	General view of the 12 th floor looking north.
19	View looking northwest at the stair well located adjacent to the passenger elevators
20	Contextual view looking northeast at East 8 th Street
21	Contextual view looking northwest at East 8 th Street

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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MEETING NOTICE

FOR: State Historical Resources Commission Quarterly Meeting

DATE: October 30, 2009

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: State Resources Building Auditorium
1416 9th Street, First Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

This room is accessible to people with disabilities. Questions regarding the meeting should be directed to the Registration Unit (916) 653-6624