

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2006-10590-HCM

HEARING DATE: February 1, 2007
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 424 South Broadway
Council District: 14
Community Plan Area: Central City
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Council: Downtown Los Angeles
Legal Description: Ord's Survey Lot FR 8 Arb 2

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
JUDSON RIVES BUILDING

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

APPLICANT/OWNER: David Gray
1548 9th Street, Suite 900
Santa Monica, CA 90401

**APPLICANT'S
REPRESENTATIVE:** Chattel Architecture
13417 Ventura Boulevard
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Take the property under consideration** as a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.125 because the application and accompanying photo documentation suggest the submittal may warrant further investigation.
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Lambert M. Giessinger, Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:

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Dganit Shtorch,
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: November 28, 2006 Historic-Cultural Monument Application
ZIMAS Report

SUMMARY

Built in 1906 and located in the downtown area, this 10-story commercial building exhibits character-defining features of Beaux-Arts style architecture. The subject building is C-shape in plan and wraps around a large, rectangular light court with hipped skylights. The historic main entry is located on the north façade. "ENTRANCE" and "BUILDING 424" are spelled out in the marble and terrazzo finished floor. The building's west façade is clad in glazed terra cotta arranged in the classical base-shaft-capital composition and is six bays wide. The façade composition is separated at the base and shaft by an entablature. Above, the capital consists of the 9th and 10th floors as well as the large cornice. Rough finished stucco clads the ground floor, while an entablature delineates the second and third floors. At the third through eighth floors, ornamentation is scarce with only slightly projecting sills contrasting with inset windows. This main shaft of the building is clad with running bond terra cotta. An egg-and-dart stringcourse separates the ninth and tenth floors. Terra cotta lions' heads are supported by wreaths on piers between the top windows.

The Judson Rives Building was designed by Charles Ronald Aldrich (1866-1939). As architect for the University of Minnesota, Charles Aldrich designed the Armory (1896) and the Physics Building (1901), both contributors to the University of Minnesota Old Campus Historic District. Although Aldrich's training originated in the construction trades, his design of the Judson Rives Building exhibits an understanding of the Beaux Arts style.

The subject building appears significant as a well-preserved example of Beaux-Arts style architecture and for its association with the development of Broadway as the commercial and entertainment center of Los Angeles in the early 20th century. In 1924, the Broadway Theater was added to the ground level of the building. The Broadway Theater was the first of fifteen theaters on Broadway owned by the Metropolitan Theater Corporation. The theater's sign was replaced in the early 1940's and removed at an unknown time.

Later alterations to the subject property include reconfiguration of the first floor retail with open storefronts, contemporary signs, awnings and canopy. The building is currently undergoing an adaptive use change from commercial to loft residential.

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon) building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

FINDINGS

Based on the facts set forth in the summary and application, the Commission determines that the application is complete and that the property is significant enough to warrant further investigation as a potential Historic-Cultural Monument.

SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

Complete One or Both of the Upper and Lower Portions of This Page

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE Judson Rives Building IS AN IMPORTANT EXAMPLE OF
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

Beaux Arts ARCHITECTURE
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE 8)

AND MEETS THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ORDINANCE BECAUSE OF THE HIGH QUALITY OF ITS DESIGN AND THE RETENTION OF ITS ORIGINAL FORM, DETAILING AND INTEGRITY.

A N D / O R

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE Judson Rives Building WAS BUILT IN 1906
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT YEAR BUILT

WAS IMPORTANT TO THE
NAME OF FIRST OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER

DEVELOPMENT OF LOS ANGELES BECAUSE The Judson Rives Building was constructed during a period of rapid
development of S. Broadway as the commercial and entertainment center of Los Angeles in the early twentieth
century. Located on the ground floor, the Broadway Theater opened in 1924 and was the first of what would
eventually become 15 theaters on Broadway operated by the Metropolitan Theater Corporation. In addition, the
building possesses high artistic value for its skillful interpretation of Beaux Arts style with restrained use of
ornamentation particularly at upper levels on the Broadway facade.

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

IDENTIFICATION

1. NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT Judson Rives Building
2. STREET ADDRESS 424 S. Broadway
CITY Los Angeles ZIP CODE 90028 COUNCIL DISTRICT 14
3. ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO. 5149024009
4. COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TRACT Ord's Survey
BLOCK 10 LOT(S) FR 8 ARB. NO. 2
5. RANGE OF ADDRESSES ON PROPERTY 424, 426, 426 1/2, 428 S. Broadway
6. PRESENT OWNER David Gray, FAIA
STREET ADDRESS 1548 9th Street, Suite 900 E-MAIL ADDRESS:
CITY Santa Monica STATE CA ZIP CODE 90401 PHONE (310) 394-5707
OWNERSHIP: PRIVATE Private PUBLIC
7. PRESENT USE ORIGINAL USE Commercial/retail

DESCRIPTION

8. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE Beaux Arts
(SEE STYLE GUIDE)
9. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE (SEE OPTIONAL DESCRIPTION WORK SHEET, 1 PAGE MAXIMUM)
See attached

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT Judson Rives Building

10. CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1906 FACTUAL: ESTIMATED:

11. ARCHITECT, DESIGNER, OR ENGINEER Charles Ronald Aldrich

12. CONTRACTOR OR OTHER BUILDER _____

13. DATES OF ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPHS 7/12/2005
(1 8X10 BLACK AND WHITE GLOSSY AND 1 DIGITAL E-MAILED TO CULTURAL.HERITAGE.COMMISSION@LACITY.ORG)

14. CONDITION: EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE

15. ALTERATIONS See attached

16. THREATS TO SITE: NONE KNOWN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT VANDALISM PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT
 ZONING OTHER _____

17. IS THE STRUCTURE: ON ITS ORIGINAL SITE MOVED UNKNOWN

SIGNIFICANCE

18. BRIEFLY STATE HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE. INCLUDE DATES, EVENTS, AND PERSON ASSOCIATED WITH THE SITE. (SEE ALSO SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET. 750 WORDS MAXIMUM IF USING ADDITIONAL SHEETS)

See attached

19. SOURCES (LIST BOOKS, DOCUMENTS, SURVEYS, PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH DATES) _____

See attached

20. DATE FORM PREPARED 11/28/2006 PREPARER'S NAME Robert J. Chattel (owner's rep)

ORGANIZATION Chattel Architecture STREET ADDRESS 13417 Ventura Blvd.

CITY Sherman Oaks STATE CA ZIP CODE 91423 PHONE (818) 788-7954

E-MAIL ADDRESS: robert@chattel.us

9. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE

This ten-story commercial building is a rectangular C in plan on a rectangular parcel. Beaux Arts in style, the main, west façade, is six bays wide and is differentiated from the other three elevations in that it is clad in glazed *terra cotta* and arranged in the classic base-shaft-capital composition.

The pedestrian level of the west façade has four contemporary storefronts. The ground floor is clad in rough finished stucco, which extends to the sills of the second floor windows. A simple, denticulated entablature delineates second and third floors and separates the base and shaft of the composition. The historic main entrance is located at the north side of the façade. The six second floor windows are grouped in two banks of three windows. Unadorned, painted mullions separate each of the three windows while a simple, wider panel divides the two banks of windows.

The terra cotta-clad shaft, or third through eighth floors are sparsely ornamented with a simple rhythm established by regularly spaced, double hung, wood sash windows. Slightly projecting sills contrast with inset windows and the flat running bond of the terra cotta veneer creates visual interest.

The capital of the composition consists of the ninth and tenth floors as well as the large, projecting cornice. A highly detailed foliate string course separates the eighth and ninth floors, while an egg-and-dart stringcourse separates the ninth and tenth floors. Terra cotta embellishments include lions' heads supported by wreaths located on piers between top windows, which in turn are set atop festoons. The cornice consists of a simple, molded fascia; a denticulated stringcourse; alternating paired, scrolled brackets and unadorned block modillions.

The south elevation wraps around a large, rectangular light court, which includes hipped skylights at the first and second floor roofs. On the third through tenth floors, large, nearly continuous, wood sash clad in sheet metal, four-over-four windows face the light court, providing light to interior offices. Because of the building's plan, only a portion of this elevation is visible from the street. The projecting cornice returns from the west façade while single six-over-six, double hung, wood sash window are centered on the eighth through tenth floors. The east and north elevations are utilitarian in material and style.

At the former main entrance, marble and terrazzo-finished floor in the entrance of the lobby spells out "ENTRANCE" and "BUILDING 424". Dark stained wood trim surrounds the two, first floor elevators. A contemporary door at the rear of the lobby enters into a vestibule with stairs leading both down to the basement and up to the second floor. The barrel vault of the vestibule is divided into five segments with a vaulting course decorated in a dogtooth pattern. Below, blocks of a marble veneer lines a significant portion of the walls. The vestibule includes the original mail collection box (with chute) opposite from the face of a wall clock. In the stairs leading to the second floor, both treads and wainscoting are marble while the wood handrail.

The light court roughly divides the long plan into three sections with elevators and quarter-turn main stair (Stair 1) in the front (west) third, a corridor running the length of the north wall in the middle third, and a secondary, scissor stair (Stair 2) and restrooms in the rear (east) third. Former office spaces consist of areas bordering on the east and west elevations of the building, as well as areas circling the light court. A contrasting colored, painted, chair rail sets off wainscoting of the open stair and is carried over through the chair rail along the north wall of the corridor. The two elevators facing Stair 1 are framed by foliated molding suggestive of the barrel vaulted vestibule and accentuated by square corners and a high plinth block. Stair 1 is illuminated by a large, rooftop skylight. Corridor flooring consists of contrasting, marbleized, linoleum squares. The mail chute anchors the west end of the corridor. Large, centrally located windows along the north wall illuminate the corridors on the sixth through tenth floors.

Restrooms are located adjacent to Stair 2 in the rear (east) section of the plan, and have window openings onto an internal, covered air shaft, covered by a small, vented skylight. The base of the air shaft, on the second floor, retains lockers with mesh doors. Many restrooms contain original paneled doors with contrasting colored, painted molding.

The second floor is distinct from other upper floors with greater floor area and inner rooms looking out onto the roofs of the two skylights illuminating the first floor. These rooms retain historic fabric, including chair rails, baseboard, and coffered wood ceilings. One original door is visible with glazed panels, transoms, and sidelights, while other door openings include original hardware.

15. ALTERATIONS

First floor retail stores have been reconfigured with open storefronts, contemporary signs, awnings, and canopy. Historic photographs show classic storefronts of the period with inset doors and large glass display windows, with either a canopy and sign above, or with no canopy and a neon sign. The most prominent feature of the storefronts was the marquee for the Broadway Theater, located in the southern retail space (installed 1924, replaced circa 1940, date of removal unknown).

On the interior, the lobby and elevators, including doors, trim, and “enclosures,” were “remodeled” in 1929 and were remodeled again in 1973. The original configuration of upper floor office spaces has been altered numerous times to accommodate tenants over the years. A fire sometime around 1966 resulted in significant damage with repairs continuing for the next several years. New steel stud walls were erected, set-in from perimeter walls and now mostly dismantled, leaving the steel frame exposed. The south wall of the corridor is contemporary, likely dating from 1983, when the corridors were remodeled per fire dept order. Despite these alterations, the building retains overall integrity of design, workmanship, material, location, setting, feeling and association.

18. BRIEFLY STATE HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

The Judson Rives Building is significant both for its association with the development of Broadway as the commercial and entertainment center of Los Angeles in the early twentieth century and for its distinctive architectural design in a spare interpretation of Beaux Arts style.

The expansion of Los Angeles’ commercial center began to occur along South Broadway, south of 3rd Street, in the late 1890s. In the first decade of the twentieth century, this commercial development increased with the construction of Hamburger’s Department Store at West 8th Street and South Broadway (1905), which served as the southern anchor of the city’s newly expanded business center. The Judson Rives Building is one of a number of buildings built along South Broadway in the early decades of the twentieth century to house commercial and retail uses in the city’s expanding business core.

When constructed in 1906, the building was known as the Broadway Central Building. It was the second speculative commercial building commissioned by the Trustee Company of Los Angeles and financed by syndication. With offices on the second floor, the board of the Trustee Company of Los Angeles included local businessmen, Loren D. Sale as President, George Hanna as Secretary, and Alfred B. Smith as the Trust Officer. In addition, the illustrious board of “capitalists” included Hobart J. Whitley. With their myriad of business interests, board members of the Trustee Company of Los Angeles were among those both generating and profiting from the population and economic boom experienced by the City of Los Angeles around the turn of the twentieth century.

Title of the property transferred to Judson C. Rives in October 1928. He immediately made “extensive” improvements to the building. Judson Rives also “remodeled” the lobby, installed new elevator enclosures and doors, and new ornamental iron trim. Despite the hoopla surrounding his purchase, Judson Rives only owned the building for six years, until 1934.

Located in the ground floor of the Judson Rives Building, the Broadway Theater opened in 1924 and was the first of what would eventually become 15 theaters on Broadway owned by the Metropolitan Theater Corporation. Started by members of the Corwin family, including Sherrill Corwin, his father Joseph Corwin, and his brother Herman Corwin, the Metropolitan Theater Corporation leased space in the Judson Rives Building for both legitimate theater and motion pictures. By 1931, South Broadway notably had one of the largest concentrations of theaters in the world, with an overall capacity of over 15,000 seats. Although the Broadway Theater was a comparatively modest theater in comparison to other movie palaces along Broadway, it featured an elaborate canopy and blade sign. The theater’s sign was replaced in the early 1940s.

The Judson Rives Building is also significant for its use of the Beaux Arts. The building was designed by Charles Ronald Aldrich (1866-1939) who was a resident of Seattle at the time. With training in construction, Charles Aldrich studied, and later taught architecture at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Acting as architect for the University of Minnesota, his designs included the Armory (15 Church St. S.E., 1896) and the Physics Building (Jones Hall, 27 Pleasant St. S.E., 1901) both contributing resources to the University of Minnesota Old Campus

Historic District. Charles Aldrich opened a private architectural office in 1899 and designed numerous buildings in and around Minneapolis.

In 1905, Charles Aldrich moved to Seattle, where he resumed a private architectural practice. Among his clients was the Trustee Company, which commissioned the Central Building in Seattle and the Olds, Wortman and King Department Store in Portland, which was separately listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991. A continuing theme among Charles Aldrich's designs was his understated and spare use of revival style decorative elements, specifically in a Beaux Arts style.

Charles Aldrich's architectural training originated in the construction trades and he did not have a formal classical training at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, unlike many of his prominent contemporaries. Nevertheless, his designs, and specifically his design of the Judson Rives Building, exhibit a sophisticated understanding of both Beaux Arts style and Chicago's sparse commercial style developed by William LeBaron Jenney and Burnham and Root in the Monadnock Building. The Chicago World's Exposition of 1893 popularized a widespread use of the Beaux Arts style in both civic and commercial buildings.

The first commercial building in Los Angeles constructed in Beaux Arts style was the 12-story skyscraper at 408 Spring Street designed by John Parkinson in 1904. By the 1920s, use of this style was widespread along South Broadway. Constructed just two years later, the Judson Rives Building is a skillful interpretation of Beaux Arts style with its restrained use of ornamentation only at upper levels on the exterior. Its simple manipulation of proportions, details and articulation is exemplary. Despite exterior alterations to the storefronts (a common modification to commercial buildings), the building retains sufficient integrity of design, materials and workmanship.

19. SOURCES

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Valentine, Maggie. *The Show Starts on the Sidewalk; An Architectural History of the Movie Theatre*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 56.

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Brochures

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Websites

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Phone interview with Bruce Corwin, July 14, 2005.

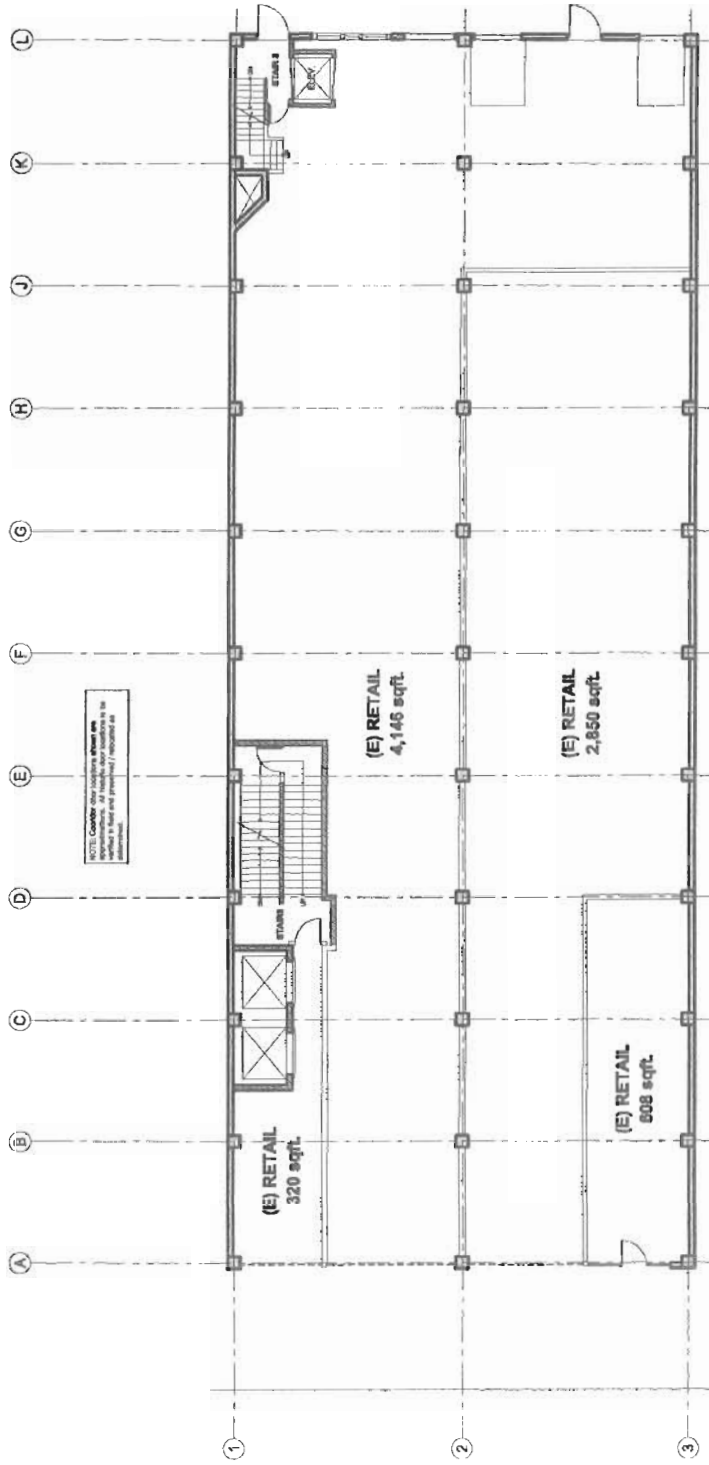
Miscellaneous Sources

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Tess, John M. and Richard B. Ritz. "Olds, Wortman and King Department Store" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, listed February 20, 1991.

University of Minnesota, University Archives Biography File.

Historic-Cultural Monument Application
 Judson Rives Building
 Photograph Key



WALL TYPE LEGEND

	BRICK WALL / COLUMN
	CLAY TILE WALL
	CAST-IN-PLACE CONCRETE WALL
	CONCRETE BLOCK WALL
	MASONRY WALL



FOOTMASTER
ATHLETIC FOOTWEAR - SPORTING GOODS
WHOLESALE RETAIL

Peisak & Dataras & Peisak
Peisak - Pay Day Advance

ALVARADO CLOTHING

MOVING SALE

BROADWAY