

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2006-10207-HCM

HEARING DATE: February 15, 2007
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 7046 Hollywood Blvd.
Council District: 13
Community Plan Area: Hollywood
Area Planning Commission: Central
Neighborhood Council: Central Hollywood
Legal Description: Lot 3 of Block 2 of TR 15314

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
HOLLYWOOD PROFESSIONAL BUILDING

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

**APPLICANT/
OWNER:** CIM/7046 Hollywood, L.P.
6922 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 900
Los Angeles, CA 90028

**OWNER'S
REPRESENTATIVE:** Robert Chattel
Chattel Architecture, Preservation, and Planning
13417 Ventura Blvd
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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Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: December 4, 2006 Historic-Cultural Monument Application
ZIMAS Report

SUMMARY

Built in 1924 and located in the central Hollywood area, this eight-story commercial building exhibits character-defining features of Neo-Gothic style architecture. The subject building is rectangular in plan and located on the southeast corner of Hollywood Boulevard and North Sycamore Avenue. The building has a recessed centered entrance with bronze-framed, glass paneled doors with transoms above flanked by two storefronts. The façade is sheathed in decorative ivory colored glazed terra cotta with the second and eight floors having pointed piers. Windows are groupings of three large, steel sash, hopper-type windows separated by fluted piers as well as windows with decorative trefoils, quatrefoils, and circular tracery. A modified crenellated parapet serves as the capital of the composition. Significant interior spaces include a lobby with four groin vaults, travertine wainscoting, plaster walls, and original fixtures and offices with original paneling and cabinetry.

The proposed Hollywood Professional Building historic monument was designed by architect Richard King (1879-1945). King designed the Chateausque style Villa Riviera building (1929) in Long Beach, a designated landmark. The subject building was constructed as a five-story office building for Herman P. Rehbein (1873-1953) while vice president of the Bernard Oil Company. After transferring ownership to Toberman & Company, the new owners added a three-story addition atop the building. Charles Toberman and his company were important land developers in Hollywood, responsible for several Historic-Cultural Monuments such as the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel (1924), and alongside theater owner Sid Grauman, the Egyptian (1922), El Capitan (1926), and the Chinese Theater (1927).

From 1938-1956, the eight floor of the subject building housed the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), a major contributor to the development of the motion picture industry and labor relations. United States President Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) served as president of SAG from 1947-1953 and had his office in the subject building.

Later alterations to the subject property include the three-story addition, the reduction of the parapet, and alteration of storefronts.

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.

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

IDENTIFICATION

1. NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT Hollywood Professional Building
2. STREET ADDRESS 7046 Hollywood Blvd.
CITY Los Angeles ZIP CODE 90028 COUNCIL DISTRICT 13
3. ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO. 5548007010
4. COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TRACT TR 15314
BLOCK None LOT(S) 2 ARB. NO. 3
5. RANGE OF ADDRESSES ON PROPERTY 7044, 7046, 7048, Hollywood Blvd.; 1678, 1680 N. Sycamore Ave.
6. PRESENT OWNER CIM/7046 Hollywood, L.P.
STREET ADDRESS 6922 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 900 E-MAIL ADDRESS: jcolumbus@cimgroup.com
CITY Hollywood STATE CA ZIP CODE 90028 PHONE (323) 860-4900
OWNERSHIP: PRIVATE Private PUBLIC
7. PRESENT USE Retail/residential (under construction) ORIGINAL USE Retail/professional offices

DESCRIPTION

8. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE Neo-Gothic
(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 Hollywood Professional Building

10. CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1924 FACTUAL: ESTIMATED:

11. ARCHITECT, DESIGNER, OR ENGINEER Richard D. King

12. CONTRACTOR OR OTHER BUILDER Herman Rehbein; Toberman & Company (addition)

13. DATES OF ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPHS 2004

(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 11/20/2006 PREPARER'S NAME Robert J. Chattel

ORGANIZATION Chattel Architecture STREET ADDRESS 13417 Ventura Blvd.

CITY Sherman Oaks STATE CA ZIP CODE 94123 PHONE (818) 788-7954

E-MAIL ADDRESS: robert@chattel.us

9. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE

This eight-story commercial building, rectangular in plan, is located on the southeast corner of Hollywood Boulevard and North Sycamore Avenue. Neo-Gothic in style, it is finished in ivory colored, glazed terra cotta, and is three bays wide on Hollywood Boulevard, and seven bays wide on North Sycamore Avenue. A three story parking garage to the south was constructed in a similar style, using comparable materials.

On Hollywood Boulevard, pedestrian level storefronts fit within each outer bay. Located in the center bay along Hollywood Boulevard, the recessed, main entrance features bronze-framed, glass-paneled doors with glass transoms above. Fluted bronze columns separate each of the three doors, finishing in capitals and a decorative frieze. Storefronts on North Sycamore Avenue include full height, multi-pane windows. A simple frieze of darker terra cotta delineates the first and second floors.

The bays along the terra cotta-clad shaft, or second through eighth floor, are separated by pointed piers, which step out at the sixth floor plate. Three large, steel sash, hopper-type windows, separated by fluted piers, comprise each bay on the north façade facing Hollywood Boulevard. Decorative trefoil distinguishes fifth and eighth floor windows. Quatrefoils are in each spandrel panel, set in a pattern that alternates slightly by floor. Circular tracery above the fifth floor sets off upper and lower floors. A modified crenellated parapet serves as the capital of the composition. A flagpole commands a prominent central position on the flat roof along Hollywood Boulevard.

The west elevation, facing North Sycamore Avenue, is decorated similarly to the north façade, with bays typically three windows wide. On this elevation, each end bay is two windows wide and set apart by pointed piers. The two remaining elevations, the south elevation and the east elevation are partly obscured by the parking garage and are utilitarian in material and style.

On the interior of the building, pointed arches define four groin vaults in the main lobby. Travertine wainscoting gives way to decorative, plaster walls with a stone-like appearance. Wall sconces are located midway between each bay, while pendant lamps hang from the second and fourth bays. A blank triptych is centered within the rear tympanum. The lobby includes the original mail box (with chute) and metal-framed directory. At the rear of the lobby, open stairs to the basement are located directly behind open stairs to the upper floors.

Stairs leading to the upper floors from the main lobby have decorative railings with twisted posts and are enclosed at the landing above the first floor. The mezzanine between the first and second floor includes a small, windowless office with a wood paneled door. Alternating men's and women's restrooms are located at the mid-point between each floor. Restrooms retain original fixtures, such as marble partitions with wood doors, hexagonal tile floors, and high tile wainscoting.

Some upper floor corridors are finished in diagonal, contrasting, marbleized, linoleum squares with a dark-colored marble border. Low, light-colored marble wainscoting with a contrasting, dark-colored marble base appears to indicate the typical corridor's original configuration. Original mail chutes are located south of the enclosed elevator vestibule on each floor. Minimal trim surrounds suite doors while dropped ceilings conceal in-filled transoms, visible from the office side. Limited, remaining historic office fabric, scattered throughout the building, include chair rails and/or picture rails, door trim and single-panel door leaves, as well as full-height cabinets.

The suite at the north end of the eighth floor appears to retain its configuration and finishes from the 1930s-1950s, including a wood-paneled office with wood window trim and wood cabinets (northeast corner).

15. ALTERATIONS

The most significant alteration to the Hollywood Professional Building was a three story addition to the top of the building in 1929, four years after the building opened. This addition was designed in a compatible style and has taken on significance over time. First floor retail stores have reconfigured storefronts. Historic photos show an elaborate quatrefoil frieze between the first and second floors, a canopy over the front entrance, and transoms over the canopy and storefronts, which had integral, operable cloth awnings. These features have since been removed (dates of removal unknown). A plain, tile enframement replaced the highly decorative early base. Lanterns were added to each pier on the first floor, in addition to up-lighting, which was attached to the upper portion of the terra cotta frieze separating the first and second floors. The crenellated parapet at the roofline was reduced, most likely in the late 1940s to comply with the city's parapet ordinance. Gargoyles, in the shape of serpent's heads projecting from each pier above the eighth floor on the north and west elevations, were likely removed at the same time.

On the interior, the original configuration of rooms, as well as portions of the original corridor configuration and details, have been altered numerous times to accommodate tenants over the years. A central air conditioning system was added in 1963. It is likely that dropped ceilings were also added and corridor door transoms infilled at this time. Despite these alterations, the building retains overall integrity of design, workmanship, material, location, setting, feeling and association. Building rehabilitation is currently underway with an approved Part 1 and Part 2 Historic Preservation Certification application for investment tax credit purposes.

18. BRIEFLY STATE HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

The building is a contributor to the Hollywood Boulevard Commercial and Entertainment District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places on January 2, 1985. The district is an intact grouping of architecturally and culturally significant commercial buildings, constructed during the 1920s and 1930s, which exhibit a variety of popular architectural styles and are closely associated with the development of the motion picture industry in Los Angeles. Its appearance has not been significantly altered since the district was listed.

Hollywood Boulevard became a main thoroughfare beginning in the 1920s and 1930s, when the film industry was in its heyday. Hollywood Boulevard developed around three major intersections. These three centers, Hollywood and Vine, Hollywood and Cahuenga, and Hollywood and Highland merged as Hollywood prospered, creating an interesting pattern of low-rise commercial development accented by imposing high-rises.

Located two blocks west of the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue, the Hollywood Professional Building was developed by Herman P. Rehbein (1873–1953) beginning in 1922, when he served as vice president of Bernard Oil Company, Inc. In 1924, with plans prepared by architect Richard D. King, Herman Rehbein constructed a five story building. Born in Tennessee, Richard King (1879-1945) worked primarily in southern California in a variety of eclectic styles. He is best known for his design of Villa Riviera in Long Beach, which was constructed in 1929 in the Chateausque style. The cooperative apartment building was the tallest commercial building in the greater Los Angeles area from the time of its construction until the late 1950s. Richard King is also known for his design of Vernon City Hall, as well as a children's home in Hermosa Beach and for Children's Hospital of Los Angeles.

Prior to transfer of ownership January 29, 1930, Toberman & Company received a building permit for a three-story addition atop the building, which was henceforth known as the Hollywood Professional Building. Toberman & Company held title to the Hollywood Professional Building until 1961.

As founder of C.E. Toberman Company in 1912, Charles Toberman (1880-1981) has been called the “father of Hollywood.” Considered one of the most important real estate developers in the area, Toberman developed 36 buildings in Hollywood, including Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel (1924) and three themed theaters, which he developed with Sid Grauman– the Egyptian (1922), El Capitan (1926), and Chinese (1927).

The Hollywood Professional Building contributes to the Hollywood Boulevard Commercial and Entertainment District for its association with two important organizations of the motion picture industry, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences and the Screen Actor’s Guild. The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, now best known for the annual Academy awards, was founded in 1927 as a professional honorary organization. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences had offices in the Hollywood Professional Building from 1930 until 1935.

The Screen Actor’s Guild (SAG) occupied the eighth floor for nearly two decades (November 1938-April 1956). SAG is a motion picture actors’ labor union founded in 1933. Revolutionary for its time, SAG functioned as a self-governing union with membership open to all. Early development of SAG is representative of a crucial era of labor relations in the United States. SAG represented stars, contract actors, as well as extras, at a time when working conditions were less than ideal.

By 1937, SAG was finally recognized by major motion picture producers, and continues to this day to play a pivotal role in the motion picture industry. SAG is important to the building’s history for its significance in the film industry and labor relations, its long tenancy and because of remaining physical traces within the former SAG offices. As seen in historic photos, the north end of the eighth floor retains the configuration of offices from SAG’s tenancy. Most remarkably, the northeast corner office retains original finishes of wood paneling, window trim and cabinets.

The Hollywood Professional Building also appears significant for its association with United States President Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) served as president of SAG beginning in 1947 for six one-year terms. It was in this role that he showed signs of leadership which would later turn into a successful political career.

While involved in disputes between labor unions connected with the motion picture industry and studios during his tenure as president of SAG, Ronald Reagan also worked to combat Communist infiltration. This struggle with Communism became a theme in his life, continuing through his tenure as governor of the State of California (1967-1975) and two terms as 40th president of the United States (1980-1988), and culminating in the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

The Hollywood Professional Building contributes to the significance of the historic district as it possesses high artistic value for its use of the Neo-Gothic style in an area renowned for a prolific representation of revival designs. Neo-Gothic style is one of the several historical revival styles expressed in the eclectic mix along Hollywood Boulevard. Described in the National Register Nomination Form as “an excellent example of Neo-Gothic commercial design,” the Hollywood Professional Building stands out among other buildings designed in this style in the Hollywood Boulevard Commercial and Entertainment District, which include the Equitable Building (6253 Hollywood Boulevard, 1929) and the Security Pacific Building (6777 Hollywood Boulevard, 1927). As the first important building constructed in this style on Hollywood Boulevard, the Hollywood Professional Building exhibits characteristic features of the style, including exterior use of glazed terra cotta, strong verticality created by pointed piers, decorative spandrel panels and tracery, and a vaulted main lobby. The Hollywood Professional Building is a skillful interpretation of a Neo-Gothic commercial design; its proportions, details and articulation are exemplary.

19. SOURCES

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