

Perpetual Building, 8700 Georgia Avenue
Correspondence Received to Date
January 3, 2008

OWNERS

Patricia Harris, **Holland + Knight**, 12/28/2007; 9/26/2007

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Hon. Tom Hucker, **House of Delegates**, 12/31/2007

PROFESSIONALS

Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies, **University of Maryland**, 6/18/2007

Robert Nieweg, **National Trust for Historic Preservation**, 6/12/2007

Linda Lyons, **Art Deco Society**, 12/31/2007

Eileen McGuckian, **Peerless Rockville**, 12/28/07

Tyler Gearhart, **Preservation Maryland**, 12/20/2007

Carol J. Dyson, AIA, **Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**, 8/3/2007

Sally Berk, 6/27/2007

Wayne Goldstein, **Montgomery Preservation, Inc.**, 6/15/2007

Dr. Sabrina Alcorn Baron, **Historic Takoma**, 6/13/2007

Christine Madrid French, **Recent Past Preservation Network**, 6/11/2007

INDIVIDUALS AND CITIZENS GROUPS

Donna Cartright, 12/31/2007

Robert Colvin et al, **East Silver Spring Citizens Association**, 12/12/5007

Mark Gabriel, President, **Seven Oaks / Evanswood Citizen Association**, 11/5/2007

Barbara Ditzler, President, **Woodside Park Civic Association**, 10/11/2007

Robert R. Scholz, 12/28/07

W. A. Sarmiento, 9/1/07

Leonard Francine, 6/27/2007

Robert & Jerri Lande, 6/24/2007

NOMINATOR'S ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

December 28, 2007

Patricia Harris
301 215 6613
patricia.harris@hklaw.com

VIA E-MAIL AND UPS

Dr. Royce Hanson, Chair
and Members of the Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Re: 8700 Georgia Avenue (the "Property")
Planning Board Hearing to Consider Amendment to Master Plan
for Historic Designation – January 10, 2008

Dear Chairman Hanson and Members of the Board:

This letter is submitted on behalf of 8700 Georgia Avenue, Inc. the owners of the above-referenced Property. The Property is owned by two long-time Washington area families that acquired the Property in 1985 to serve as the headquarters for the family business, Melart Jewelers.

On January 10, 2008, the Planning Board will consider whether to recommend that the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Designation be amended to include the Property. In order to facilitate the Planning Board's review of this matter, we have provided background from the Historic Preservation Commission ("HPC") proceedings and highlighted relevant portions of the transcript from the HPC August 15, 2007 hearing.

In considering the issue of historic designation, it is important to emphasize that the designation of a property imposes significant constraints on an owner's land use rights and, therefore, the evidence to support designation must be sufficiently compelling to support the designation. In the subject case, the evidence clearly falls short of this standard.

Background

The HPC considered the matter of designation twice – first on June 27, 2007 and then again on August 15, 2007. The HPC's duty was to consider whether the Property satisfied Montgomery County Code Section 24A-3(b) which sets forth in subsection (1)

the historical and cultural criteria and in subsection (2) the architectural and design criteria for determining designation.

During the initial proceeding on June 27th, the HPC concluded that the nominators failed to present adequate information to justify a recommendation of designation for the Property and allowed the nominators another opportunity to make their case by continuing the proceeding to August 15, 2007. Despite being given an unusual "two bites of the apple," the nominators failed to present the HPC with any new compelling information at the August 15th hearing. The HPC's ultimate vote to recommend designation of the Property was ambivalent at best – clearly short of the "sufficiently compelling" standard to justify a loss of property rights. Further, the HPC failed to articulate a rationale for their decision to recommend designation of the Property that clearly related to the statutory requirements of the Code.

We urge the Planning Board to review the transcript of the August 15th HPC proceeding. At the Planning Board hearing on January 10th, the Planning Board will be presented with testimony from the nominators as to why they believe the Property warrants an amendment to the Master Plan and substantive testimony from the owner countering the nominators' contentions. In addition to this information, we think it is important that the Planning Board consider the deliberations of the HPC – the body charged with making a recommendation to the Planning Board as to whether a Property is worthy of designation. The HPC clearly struggled with whether to recommend the designation of the Property and we have set forth below the relevant portions of the testimony which highlight their unquestionable ambivalence. As the testimony suggests, given that the Property did not clearly satisfy the criteria of the Code, the HPC only reluctantly recommended the Property for designation. In the end, the HPC appeared to back into its decision to recommend that the Property be designated.

Excerpts from HPC August 15, 2007 Hearing

The purpose of the HPC's continuation of the hearing from the initial June hearing date to August 15th was to allow the nominators an opportunity to build their case with more substantive data and facts. However, the continued lack of justification for the proposed designation remained evident at the August 15th hearing as indicated by the HPC's questions to the nominators regarding their research.

- * **Commissioner Rotenstein: "I don't fully agree with the research they have provided either. I would have liked to have seen more verifiable historical information, footnoted ideally, placing this building, this institution within its cultural and economic context." (Transcript, at 132).**

Following the testimony of the nominators and the representatives of the Property owner, the HPC commenced its deliberations. The initial comments and discussions by the HPC Commissioners indicate their struggle with how to address a site such as the Property, where the characteristics of the site do not manifestly satisfy the HPC designation criteria.

- * **Commissioner Duffy: "...if I look at the criteria as a checklist, I don't know that's the most appropriate way to use the criteria, because as I go down the criteria as a checklist, I have to say no to a lot of the stuff. And if you give each of these nine or whatever items equal weight, then, you know, my judgment would be the building is not all that significant." (Transcript, at 131).**
- * **Commissioner Duffy: "I'm not convinced the architects were significant." (Transcript, at 131).**
- * **Commissioner Duffy: "But I don't think it's of historical significance for to [sic] banking, and I don't think the architects are important. And so, I'm not exactly sure if that's more than 50 percent or less than 50 percent vote." (Transcript, at 132).**
- * **Commissioner Anahtar: "I worked two blocks away from this building for some years, and I never remember this building as a good looking building or with any architectural significance unfortunately. And when I saw the photographs, I was surprised to see all the fine details, design details. But again, when I went through the criteria it did not meet the criteria to be designated." (Transcript, at 133-134).**
- * **Commissioner Duffy: "I'm not convinced the history of banking, branching, branding is significant." (Transcript, at 131).**
- * **Commissioner Rotenstein: "It does appear to have occupied a place in Silver Spring's history, in the metropolitan D.C.'s history. I don't think we have enough information. We have a lot of information, but I don't think we have sufficiently contextualized information to make that call. Like Commissioner Duffy, I'm kind of on the fence." (Transcript, at 133).**

- * **Commissioner Jester:** "And it may be a transitional property stylistically. But it also may still have, be valuable in terms of community history and what not. I think on that level it's kind of intuitive that it does meet that part of the criteria even if the scholarship and the analysis and the research hasn't really been synthesized yet and pulled together in a way that makes that compelling case . . . So I guess I'm also, feel that some of the criteria are more, is clear that they meet them, and others it's a little bit, I think unsettled at the moment." (Transcript, at 134-135).
- * **Commissioner Duffy:** "I think it's of significance architecturally, not as the work of a master, not representing a style that's clearly defined in books. And if I could point out also that, you know, architectural books and architectural history books tend to deal with high architectural culture, and most buildings live in that grey world between the vernacular and the high culture. This is one of those. It's not, you know, whether call it international style or whatever you call it, it is what it is." (Transcript, at 131-132).
- * **Commissioner Rotenstein:** "I also agree with Commissioner Duffy's comments about architectural styles. They're very good for filling in checklists on National Register forms. They're very good for completing computerized databases of building inventories. But in the real world they don't mean a whole heck of a lot. I too am torn about the significance of this property." (Transcript at 133).

Finally, in an effort to help guide the HPC's deliberation, Acting Planning Director (and former chief planner to the HPC) Gwen Wright offered the following which reflects the ambivalency that the individual Commissioner's demonstrated up to this point in the deliberations:

- * **Acting Planning Director Wright:** "Well, I think we need actually a vote. And I think the best thing to do is make, it seems like there's a diversity of opinions on the Commission. I think we need to have a motion and vote it up or down. I mean, this does need to go forward to the Planning Board. You aren't the final decisionmakers, but I do think we need to have majority, minority vote to transmit." (Transcript, at 135).

- * **Commissioner Rotenstein:** “Do we have to be in agreement on all of the criteria or simply agree that it should go to the Planning Board?” (Transcript, at 135).
- * **Acting Planning Director Wright:** “I think your strongest putting something forward and being somewhat ambivalent about the criteria is probably not a very strong way to put it forward.” (Transcript, at 135).

The Commissioners then proceeded to discuss in a very cursory manner the individual criteria of Section 24A-3(b) in an effort to identify whether the Property clearly satisfied any of the criteria. It appeared that the Chair was trying to persuade one of the Commissioners to make a motion for designation, although up until this point in the HPC’s discussion it was not clear that there was a majority opinion. Based on the discussions that had transpired, the Chair suggested that the Property potentially satisfied only two of the nine criteria set forth in Section 24A-3 – subsections (1)a and (2)e.

- * **Acting Planning Director Wright:** “Because as the Chair you should probably not make the motion unless no one else can.” (Transcript at 136).
- * **Commissioner Rotenstein:** “Right. Is there anyone in a position to make a motion to move this designation forward to the Planning Board based on the criteria that I discussed? That would be 1(a) and 2(e).” (Transcript at 136).

In response to a question from a fellow Commissioner, as to why the building does not meet criteria 2(a), Commissioner Rotenstein responded as follows:

- * **“Because I think it’s one of these commercial buildings executed in a vernacular mode typical of the late 20th Century. It doesn’t typify any one particular period or method of construction because it’s one of these transitional buildings. I don’t think that we have enough elements there to really say that it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.”** (Transcript at 136-137).

Additional relevant comments from the Commissioners included the following:

- * **Commissioner Anahtar:** “It was never a landmark like the Hechts Building in Silver Spring, or any other significant buildings.” (Transcript at 137).
- * **Commissioner Burstyn:** “. . . [T]o me the building is not a significant landmark.” (Transcript at 137).
- * **Commissioner Burstyn:** “So and then you wonder whether a building like this, if it’s not good for a bank anymore, what would be the significance of again adapting the building to a reuse. It’s not our job to talk about how things like that can happen, because we’re just looking at the preservation part.” (Transcript, at 138).

“But to me it is a part of the, like I said, the fabric of development of Silver Spring. And because it’s from the 50’s, it’s not one of those wow buildings because very few buildings in the 50s are wow buildings. So it makes our decision even more difficult.” (Transcript, at 138).

Despite the clear lack of direction in the deliberations, in the end the HPC reluctantly decided to recommend the designation of the Property based on criteria 1(a) (i.e., the Property has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the county, state or nation) and 2(e) (i.e., the Property represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape). While identifying the particular Code sections on which their decision was based (i.e. 1(a) and 2(e)), the HPC failed to articulate the basis for its determination or the manner in which the Property satisfied these two criteria. Certainly, the Property merely being part of the visual fabric of the community for almost 50 years would not distinguish it from many other properties, and does not justify designation. An administrative action which threatens an individual's property rights carries with it the burden of proof that the characteristics of the Property clearly meet the designation criteria. In the subject case, this burden has not been met.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to presenting this case to you on January 10, 2008.

Dr. Royce Hanson, Chair
December 28, 2007
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Sincerely yours,

HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PH' followed by a horizontal line.

Patricia Harris

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Gwen Wright
Ms. Clare Kelly
Mr. Elza Hisel-McCoy
Mr. Bert Foer

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1 of that CBD survey was because we had a certain criteria of
2 being 50 years old and it wasn't that old at the time.

3 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Commissioner Burstyn, do you
4 have any comments regarding the criteria? Commissioner
5 Duffy?

6 MR. DUFFY: My time limit? Well, the question is
7 if I have comments regarding the criteria. Yes, I do. I
8 don't know how appropriate this is but, to me the criteria,
9 how can I put this? I don't know exactly how to put it
10 but, if I look at the criteria as a checklist, I don't know
11 that's the most appropriate way to use the criteria,
12 because as I go down the criteria as a checklist, I have to
13 say no to a lot of the stuff.

14 And if you give each of these nine or whatever
15 items equal weight, then, you know, my judgment would be
16 the building is not all that significant. To use what I
17 would call the spirit of the criterion, if I interpret it
18 correctly, in my view, I'm not convinced the architects
19 were significant. I'm not convinced the history of
20 banking, branching, branding is significant. However, I do
21 think that the building is unique. I think it has a
22 particularly well done skin or facades.

23 I think it's of significance architecturally, not
24 as the work of a master, not representing a style that's
25 clearly defined in books. And if I could point out also
26 that, you know, architectural books and architectural

1 history books tend to deal with high architectural
2 cultural, and most buildings live in that gray world
3 between the vernacular and the high culture. This is one
4 of those. It's not, you know, whether you call it
5 international style or whatever you call it, it is what it
6 is.

7 I think it's a very nice skin, and I think the
8 massing is nice. And I think it would be worthwhile to
9 save it. But I don't think it's of historical significance
10 for to banking, and I don't think the architects are
11 important. And so, I'm not exactly sure if that's more
12 than 50 percent or less than 50 percent vote..

13 MR. ROTENSTEIN: I guess we'll just do it in
14 order. I appreciate Commissioner Duffy's comments. I
15 think they're well reasoned. Going through the criteria
16 listed by staff, I do think it does have character within
17 the Silver Spring community and within Montgomery County at
18 large. And I do think that it is a familiar visual
19 feature.

20 On the other hand, I don't think that the
21 preparers of the nomination or designation form have made a
22 compelling argument that it was the work of a master. It
23 was by all accounts a collaborative effort. I don't fully
24 agree with the research they have provided either. I would
25 have liked to have seen more verifiable historical
26 information, footnoted ideally, placing this building. this

1 institution within its cultural and economic context.

2 It does appear to have occupied a place in Silver
3 Spring's history, in the metropolitan D.C.'s history. I
4 don't think we have enough information. We have a lot of
5 information, but I don't think we have sufficiently
6 contextualized information to make that call. Like
7 Commissioner Duffy, I'm kind of on the fence.

8 I also agree with Commissioner's Duffy's comments
9 about architectural styles. They're very good for filling
10 in checklists on National Register forms. They're very
11 good for completing computerized databases of building
12 inventories. But in the real world they don't mean a whole
13 heck of a lot. I too am torn about the significance of
14 this property.

15 If we can designate based on only one of the
16 criteria, we don't have to designate based on all of the
17 criteria, but on just one of them, I do think that it does
18 have the character, interest or value as part of the
19 development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the
20 county, state or nation. And I do think it represents an
21 established visual feature. The other criteria I don't
22 think have been met.

23 MS. ANAHTAR: I worked two blocks away from this
24 building for some years, and I never remember this building
25 as a good looking building or with any architectural
26 significance unfortunately. And when I saw the

1 photographs, I was surprised to see all the fine details,
2 design details. But again, when I went through the
3 criteria it did not meet the criteria to be designated.

4 MR. JESTER: I could echo a few of the comments
5 made by some other commissioners. I think part of the
6 issue is that we're in general struggling with designating
7 properties from the recent past, and Richard Longstreth has
8 written about this topic, and has written quite often about
9 the issues associated with recognizing and valuing
10 properties from this time period. And I think this is a
11 good example of a property that falls into that category
12 where it's easily overlooked.

13 And it may be a transitional property
14 stylistically. But it also may still have, be valuable in
15 terms of community history and whatnot. I think on that
16 level it's kind of intuitive that it does meet that part of
17 the criteria, even if the scholarship and the analysis and
18 the research hasn't really been synthesized yet and pulled
19 together in a way that makes that compelling case. I think
20 that's the point Commissioner Rotenstein was trying to
21 make.

22 I certainly agree that it doesn't meet the
23 criteria for being work of a master. On the other hand, I
24 think the collaboration between a firm with their corporate
25 architect and a local architect is a very common one, and
26 we recognize properties that may not be designed, that part

1 of the story may be important even if it's not a master
2 architect, like Frank Lloyd Wright. So there's a lot of
3 other properties where that kind of relationship and
4 vernacular properties, that design component is important.

5 So I guess I'm also, feel that some of the
6 criteria are more, is clear that they meet them, and others
7 it's a little bit, I think unsettled at the moment. So I
8 could probably support it based on the number of criteria
9 that I do think it meets.

10 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Are there any other comments
11 from the commission?

12 MS. WRIGHT: Well, I think we need actually a
13 vote. And I think the best thing to do is make, it seems
14 like there's a diversity of opinions on the commission. I
15 think we need to have a motion and vote it up or down. I
16 mean, this does need to go forward to the Planning Board.
17 You aren't the final decisionmakers, but I do think we need
18 to have majority, minority vote to transmit.

19 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Do we have to be in agreement on
20 all of the criteria or simply agree that it should go
21 forward to the planning board?

22 MS. WRIGHT: I think your strongest putting
23 something forward and being somewhat ambivalent about the
24 criteria is probably not a very strong way to put it
25 forward. So, my suggestion to you is that, you know, at
26 least you, Commissioner Rotenstein had recommended a couple

1 of criteria, you know, and an explanation of why you felt
2 it met that criteria. You know, I don't know if you have a
3 majority vote to move forward with that, but you could give
4 it a try at least to sort of move us to some conclusion.

5 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Is there anyone willing to make
6 a motion on --

7 MS. WRIGHT: Because as the chair you should
8 probably not make the motion unless no one else can.

9 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Right. Is there anyone in a
10 position to make a motion to move this designation forward
11 to the Planning Board based on the criteria that I
12 discussed? That would be 1(a) and 2(e).

13 MR. BURSTYN: Which are?

14 MR. ROTENSTEIN: 1(a) is character, interest or
15 value as part of the development, heritage or cultural
16 characteristics of the county, state or nation. More
17 specifically tied to Silver Spring and Montgomery County.
18 and then 2(e) represents an established and familiar visual
19 feature of the neighborhood.

20 MR. BURSTYN: Could we have some more discussion?

21 MR. JESTER: Could you state your, the reason why
22 you don't think it meets criteria 2(a)?

23 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Because I think it's one of
24 these commercial buildings executed in a vernacular mode
25 typical of the late 20th Century. It doesn't typify any
26 one particular period or method of construction because

1 it's one of these transitional buildings. I don't think
2 that we have enough elements there to really say that it
3 embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period
4 or method of construction.

5 MS. ANAHTAR: It was never a landmark like the
6 Hechts Building in Silver Spring, or any other significant
7 buildings, I think.

8 MS. WRIGHT: Let me, again suggest, let me just
9 read the whole criteria of 1(a) and 2(e). 1(a) is, has
10 character, interest or value as part of the development,
11 heritage or cultural characteristics of the county, state
12 or nation. And 2(e) is, represents an established and
13 familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or
14 county due to its singular physical characteristic or
15 landscape.

16 MR. BURSTYN: See, I think especially the
17 criteria in 2(e) is that it is, would certainly have been
18 interesting if the contract or the analysis of the
19 buildings been written a little differently and not
20 arbitrarily set in a 50 year limit. And if they're
21 findings and recommendations would have been different, to
22 me the building is not a significant landmark.

23 It's part of the post World War II Silver Spring
24 fabric and development that now, I guess, probably many
25 people identify with as part of the downtown Silver Spring,
26 and the question is whether any of the criterion allows us

1 to retain that as oppose to having it replaced with a 21st
2 Century building that I think that are taking on an effort
3 to copy everything else in the past. Where the '50s, we
4 all know we looked, I mean when you look at houses, I don't
5 anybody who ever wants to preserve a split foyer house.
6 But at the time it was built and had, I guess, certain
7 utility, but it's not built anymore.

8 So and then you wonder whether a building like
9 this, if it's not good for a bank anymore, what would be
10 the significance of again adapting the building to a reuse.
11 It's not our job to talk about how things like that can
12 happen, because we're just looking at the preservation
13 part.

14 But to me it is a part of the, like I said, the
15 fabric of development of Silver Spring. And because it's
16 from the 50's, it's not one of those wow buildings because
17 very few buildings in the 50's are wow buildings. So it
18 makes our decision even more difficult.

19 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Would you agree, Commissioner
20 Burstyn, that it is a familiar visual feature?

21 MR. BURSTYN: Yes.

22 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Would you agree that it has
23 character, interest or a value as part of the development
24 of Montgomery County?

25 MR. BURSTYN: Yes.

26 MR. ROTENSTEIN: Would you be willing to make a

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September 26, 2007

Patricia A. Harris
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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Royce Hanson
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: 8700 Georgia Avenue (the "Property")

Dear Chairman Hanson:

On behalf of the owners of the above-referenced Property, 8700 Georgia Avenue L.P. (the "Owners"), this letter is in response to the Silver Spring Historical Society's ("SSHS") correspondence to you dated September 17, 2007. Contrary to long standing practice, SSHS requests that the historic designation of the Property be considered by the Planning Board at a hearing separate and apart from the hearing on the Project Plan.

By way of background, at the initial Historic Preservation Commission ("HPC") hearing on July 11, 2007 regarding the application to designate the Property historic, the historic designation application was deferred. At the close of the hearing, HPC informed the nominators that they had failed to demonstrate that the building satisfied the historic designation criteria of Montgomery County Code Section 24A-3 and provided the nominators with a further opportunity to make their case. At the second hearing on August 15, 2007, the HPC voted 4 to 2 to recommend the designation of the Property. This vote occurred only after significant equivocation by the members of HPC and an in-depth discussion as to whether the Property merited a recommendation of designation and satisfied the required criteria. A reading of the transcript will indicate the difficulty that the members had in articulating a rationale for their votes.

The Regional District Act (Art. 28, Section 7-110) clearly provides that the purpose of the various Montgomery County plans (including the Master Plan of Historic Preservation) is to guide and accomplish a "coordinated, comprehensive, adjusted and systematic development of the region and district." Accordingly, in considering a historic designation recommendation from HPC, it is the Planning Board's responsibility to balance

the costs and benefits of the designation and the proposed project's furtherance of other important County policies, including sustainability, affordable housing, economic redevelopment and smart growth. This comprehensive review cannot be accomplished if the historic designation and Project Plan are considered separately. To date, and particularly in connection with projects proposed for Silver Spring, the Planning Board has recognized the critical importance of balancing the various County objectives. Thus, it has been its repeated practice to consider a designation application only in the context of its broader Project Plan application where competing interests can be carefully considered and balanced. The various proposed developments in Silver Spring, including potentially historic sites have all been handled in this matter, including the Silver Spring Armory, the Canada Dry site and the Hecht's Building.

Importantly, it was only in response to the 8700 Georgia Avenue Project Plan application that the historic designation effort was even initiated. The Applicant first learned at the May 7, 2007 DRC meeting that SSHS filed the designation application the previous day. The filing of the designation occurred more than five months after the Project Plan application had been filed and after the Applicant had met with the various Silver Spring civic associations to inform them of the Project Plan. Many of the individuals now involved in the designation process initially expressed concern to the Applicant about the Project Plan in the context of opposing more redevelopment in Silver Spring. Thus, it is only appropriate that the proposed designation be considered in the context of the Project Plan.

Finally, from a practical standpoint, it is in the interest of administrative economy for the comprehensive evaluation of the designation recommendation and the Project Plan application to be considered simultaneously. The piecemeal consideration of two issues relating to the same property, as urged by SSHS, results in an unnecessary duplication of effort by the Planning Staff, Planning Board, Owners, neighbors, and other interested individuals who will have to review, comment, and testify at two public hearings.

There is simply no reason why the subject designation application should be treated any differently than any other Silver Spring historic case that has been considered by the Planning Board in the past. Certainly nothing in the circumstances involving the subject Property suggests that a change in procedure is necessary or warranted. To consider the historic designation separately from the Project Plan is contrary to many years of Planning Board practice and –if designation were granted without consideration of the Project Plan– could lead to a poor public policy decision.

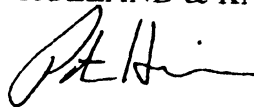
Dr. Royce Hanson
September 26, 2007
Page 3

For all these reasons, we respectfully urge the Planning Board to consider the historic designation case and the Project Plan application simultaneously.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Very truly yours,

HOLLAND & KNIGHT LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Harris', written over the printed name.

Patricia A. Harris

cc: Ms. Gwen Wright
Mr. Bert Foer

4812520, v2

TOM HUCKER
Legislative District 20
Montgomery County

Environmental Matters Committee

Subcommittees
Environment
Natural Resources
Land Use and Ethics



The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Annapolis Office
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December 19, 2007

Royce Hanson, Chairman
Planning Board, MNCPPC
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairman Hanson:

As a representative of District 20, Silver Spring and Takoma Park, I offer my strong support for the preservation of the Perpetual Building at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Cameron.

The building is one of the cornerstones for architecture in the Silver Spring downtown area. It is a Silver Spring (and Montgomery County) landmark and key anchor to the development of Silver Spring's "Financial District." The Perpetual Building continues its tradition as a financial institution with Sun Trust on its first floor.

Also, as I understand its history, it was an equitable, non-discriminatory, pro-active company. It was the first savings/building & loan to provide loans to African-Americans to purchase homes in all-white or partially white neighborhoods, whereas other associations feared to do so. It was the first S/B&L to appoint an African-American to its Board of Directors. It was the lead S/B&L urging other S&Ls in 1968 to take a more active role in solving "urban problems."

I would ask that careful and thoughtful consideration be given to preserving this building in Silver Spring.

Thank you, in advance, for your efforts on Perpetual's behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Huckler".

Tom Huckler



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN STUDIES

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18 June 2007



Jef Fuller, Chair
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801
Silver Spring, MD 20910
E-mail: mcp-historic@montco-md.org
Fax: 301-563-3412

Dear Chairman Fuller:

In 2001, we were asked by the Maryland Historical Trust to conduct a statewide survey of Modern Movement architecture and planning. We have completed five years of research and fieldwork in every county of the Free State. In 2005, we nominated the COMSAT Laboratories building for designation in Montgomery County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Based on our extensive study of the resources of Maryland's recent past, we strongly support the Silver Spring Historical Society's proposal that the **Perpetual Building Association (8700 Georgia Avenue)** be included in Montgomery County's Master Plan as well.

The Perpetual Building Association meets Montgomery County's and the National Register's criteria for designation on the basis of historical and architectural significance. The building epitomizes the commercial entrepreneurial spirit of Montgomery County. From humble local origins in 1881, this savings and loan association prospered until in 1958, it erected the present building, a monumental bank that also provided wonderful amenities to its members and the surrounding community, including its customer's lounge and civic auditorium. This public-spirited building represents the civic-mindedness and commercial ambition with which local entrepreneurs endowed burgeoning post-World War II Silver Spring.

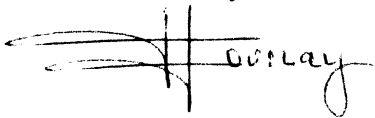
The architecture of the Perpetual Building Association characterizes a specific phase in American corporate design and serves as an important visual anchor to its surroundings. Commercial architecture changed drastically between the 1950s and 1960s in scale, massing and materials. The Perpetual is a particularly original and elegant composition of Modern architecture. The proportions between wall masses, voids, and vertical dividing members are extremely fine, as are the dimensional ratios between the bays. The

asymmetrical placement of the entrance motifs confers to the building a dynamism that complements its overall monumentality. In addition, the craftsmanship, execution, and attention to architectural detail are excellent, making the Perpetual Building Association a unique design.

We assess the Perpetual Building Association as an unusually fine example of what we call suburban Baby Boom Modernism, a form of vernacular Modernism common to the post-World War II suburban Washington to Baltimore to Annapolis corridors. Baby Boom Modernism expresses an important and under-appreciated period in our nation's and the county's history, as the economy recovered, the spirit of entrepreneurship revived, and American households flocked to the suburbs in search of a higher and more democratic standard of living. With chagrin, we note that commercial structures of the 1950s have been altered and demolished to a much larger extent than houses and later Modernist designs. As one of the best examples of commercial modernism from the 1950s in the Mid-Atlantic region and, in our opinion, the best of its kind in the Maryland suburbs, the PAB should be designated and protected.

In our state-wide survey of Modern Architecture in Maryland, we have come across a significant number of bank building designs by the Bank Building and Equipment (BB & E) Corporation of America. They were all of high aesthetic caliber. Unfortunately, many are no longer extant or their architecture has been negatively altered. As a pristine and quite superior example of the statewide and national output of the BB & E Corporation, the Perpetual Association Building should be preserved. We urge you to include the Perpetual Association Building in the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Isabelle Gournay', with a stylized, flowing script.

Isabelle Gournay
Associate Professor
School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mary Corbin Sies', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mary Corbin Sies
Associate Professor
Dept. of American Studies, College of Arts & Humanities

SOUTHERN
FIELD OFFICE



NATIONAL TRUST
for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

June 12, 2007

Jef Fuller, Chairman
Historic Preservation Commission
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairman Fuller: 

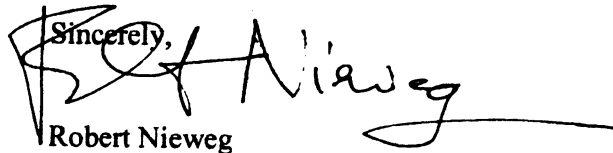
I am writing on behalf of the National Trust for Historic Preservation regarding the preservation and protection of the 1958 Perpetual Building Association Building.

The National Trust joins Preservation Maryland, Montgomery Preservation, Inc., Silver Spring Historical Society, and many others to support the inclusion of the historic Perpetual Building Association Building in the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation and the National Register of Historic Places. In our view, the Perpetual Building meets Master Plan criteria 24(a)(b)1a,c,d, for historical significance; and criteria 24(a)(b)2a, b, c, and e, for architectural/design significance.

This graceful, monumental structure is a Silver Spring and Montgomery County cultural and architectural landmark on a prominent urban corner, and a significant socio-economic icon of the mid-century progressive growth of Montgomery County and Silver Spring. The Perpetual Building Association Building is a fine example of mid-20th Century "Modernized Classicism" commercial architecture and, thereby, represents an innovative and long-lived enterprise whose leader played a seminal role in the local business community.

We urge you to forward to the Planning Board an appropriate amendment to the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Thank you in advance for considering the comments of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Sincerely,



Robert Nieweg
Director, Southern Field Office

Protecting the Irreplaceable



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THE ART DECO SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

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December 31, 2007

Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Resource #36-56

Dear Mr. Hanson:

The Art Deco Society of Washington supports designation of the Perpetual Building Association Building on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Our primary interest in this building derives from its association with architect Robert O. Scholz, whose Art Deco apartment houses in Washington, D.C., are well known to us. After World War II, Scholz collaborated with the nationally known Bank Builders and Equipment Corporation to design and execute innovative and forward-looking Perpetual Building Association buildings that served as the regional headquarters and suburban branches. All were rendered in a distinctive early Modernist style with common details that marked them as up-to-date and part of a distinguished institution. We believe that this particular example of the group has enough integrity to merit its designation.

In addition, we appreciate the importance of this building in the history of downtown Silver Spring, which is the site of several Art Deco and New Deal-era buildings which are designated, or being considered for designation, on the Master Plan. This building and its prominent location emphasize the significance of Silver Spring as a major suburban center in lower Montgomery County and its role in the growth of the Washington metropolitan area.

Very truly yours,

Linda B. Lyons

Linda B. Lyons
Education Chair and Acting Preservation Chair
Tel.: 301-654-3924
E-mail: llyons@adsw.org



HISTORIC PRESERVATION LTD
FOUNDED 1974

December 28, 2007

RECEIVED
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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Via FAX, letter, and email

Royce Hanson, Chairman mcp-chairman@mncppc-mc.org
Montgomery County Planning Board, M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Perpetual Building Association
building, M: 36-56

Dear Mr. Hanson:

Peerless Rockville is pleased to endorse the nomination of the Perpetual Building Association building for inclusion in the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. This handsome commercial building has occupied a prominent site in Silver Spring's business district for fifty years and is an outstanding and rare example of mid-century "Modernized Classicism" in the Montgomery County suburbs. As the masterful research of Silver Spring Historical Society and Traceries amply documents, the Perpetual Building has an impressive design pedigree, a high degree of architectural integrity, and a distinctive urban presence. This imposing structure is representative of a critical period in local and national history - the seminal post-World War II era that brought historic changes to the commercial banking industry and the ascendancy of consumer-oriented bank design and siting.

During the past four years, Peerless has been conducting a survey study of modernist architectural resources in Rockville. In documenting our modernist heritage, we have come to appreciate the importance of mid-20th century design and development to our contemporary built environment and suburban visual culture. The adaptive use of older buildings, whether Victorian-era courthouses or 20th century office blocks, is both commercially viable and environmentally responsible. Equally important, it also ensures a diverse and meaningful historical and architectural environment -- one that informs public memory and sustains community history.

Peerless strongly supports the designation of the Perpetual Building as an architectural and institutional touchstone of commercial banking history and a "perpetual" reminder of 20th century suburbanization and development in our County.

Sincerely,


Eileen McGuckian
Executive Director


Teresa B. Lachin
Rockville's Recent Past

cc: Clare Kelly, HPC Planner, Clare.Kelly@mncppc-mc.org
Gwen Wright, M-NCPPC, Gwen.Wright@mncppc-mc.org
Silver Spring Historical Society, sshistory@yahoo.com



December 20, 2007

Celebrating 75 Years

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07-1575
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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board, M-NCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

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Re: Perpetual Building Association

Dear Mr. Hanson:

I write in support of the designation of the Perpetual Building Association on the Montgomery County *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. As the nomination makes clear, the structure is significant for its architectural and social contributions to the development of modern Silver Spring.

Constructed in 1958, the Perpetual Building Association demonstrates the appeal of traditional bank architecture in a modern financial institution. While the architect Robert O. Sholz largely took his cues from the Modernist trends of the late 1950s, the architectural details and materials of the façade express the sense of continuity, solidity, and tradition that Perpetual hoped to impart on their clients. The choices made in the design of the Perpetual Building Association helped shape the modernity and monumentality that still characterizes Silver Spring's financial district today.

The Perpetual Building Association is worthy of the protections that are provided by the Historic Preservation Ordinance. I urge you to forward the nomination for the designation on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* to the County Council. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tyler Gearhart
Executive Director

TG/jp

C: Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society
Wayne Goldstein, Montgomery Preservation, Inc.
Robert Nieweg, National Trust for Historic Preservation

Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities
24 West Saratoga Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201-4227
telephone: 410-685-2886 e-mail: PM@PreservationMaryland.org fax: 410-539-2182



Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

One Old State Capitol Plaza • Springfield, Illinois 62701-1507

TTY (217) 524-7128

Mr. Jef Fuller, Chair
Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801
Silver Spring, MD 20910

August 3, 2007, 2007

RE: Perpetual Building Association Building at 8700 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring

Dear Mr. Fuller:

We understand that Perpetual Building Association at 8700 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland of 1958 is threatened with demolition. The Perpetual Building is a significant example of modern financial-building design. It perfectly encapsulates the type of progressive Modernism that banking institutions embraced after World War II.

We have been researching modern bank buildings for the past 10 years. In October of 2000, we presented some of our findings at the Preserving the Recent Past Conference in Philadelphia, a national conference devoted to mid-20th-century architecture. Within the context of our research, we discovered that the Bank Building and Equipment Corporation of America (BBC) was a leader in bank building design and construction throughout the middle 20th Century. The firm deftly shaped the architectural character of the banking industry through hundreds of structures across the country.

In the mid-twentieth century, the architecture of the local financial institution dramatically transformed from traditional to Modernist. After the Second World War, a changing economic, regulatory and social climate fueled a new homeowner-based economy and spurred a tremendous growth in the financial industry. The sleek, modern, progressive bank building became a powerful marketing tool. In fact, during the post-war period, well-financed banks embraced non-traditional architectural vocabularies more easily than did some less conservative building tenants.

By breaking down the symbolic barriers between consumer and institution, a new open relationship was achieved. This progressivism was not limited to exterior architectural expression but was fully embraced programmatically on the interior as well. Banks increased the service-orientation of their role in the community with community spaces. They also emulated the customer-focused designs of modern stores with lowered teller-walls and opened-up lobbies.

www.illinois-history.gov

FACSIMILE: 217.524.7525

Architecture and Main Street Design Section

Mike Jackson, FAIA 217.785.5031 mike.jackson@illinois.gov

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Anna Margaret Borntrager 217.782.7534 annamargaret.borntrager@illinois.gov

Darius Bryjka 217.782.8221 darius.bryjka@illinois.gov

The previously closeted functions of banking were brought out into the open. The Perpetual Building fit well into this larger trend by originally offering a customer lounge and a public auditorium, amenities that perfectly represent that new inclusive approach. Bank officers were placed in an open office location accessible to bank customers. Display cases around the main entrance present the bank almost as a retail store, where the latest programs and premiums for new accounts would be put on view.

The Perpetual Building is also an important example of the kind of Modernism that swept the banking industry in the late 1950s. In an attempt to attract customers in a highly competitive market, banks announced their modernity with non-traditional Modernist structures. The Perpetual Building achieves this within a relatively conservative architectural regional context by using a severe overall mass relieved by very tailored, but undeniably modern elements. The two end elevations are symmetrical, and although the overall impact of the vertical window shafts and blank surrounds may be one of a heavily abstracted peripteral Greek temple, one quickly sees the modernity of its sleek design. The window banks and main entrance on the Apple Avenue facade are locked together in a dynamic but tight and satisfying asymmetrical composition topped by an enormous sign (another hallmark of progressive bank design). The bold trapezoidal windows clearly open the banking lobby to the street and announce it as separate and distinct from the shaft of the building. The blue-tinted solar-absorbing glass used throughout not only added color, but also fully embraced (along with the full air-conditioning on the interior) new technologies. What may look unadorned to 21st Century eyes was most likely seen as elegant yet progressive to those of 1958.

Consideration of significance starts with a local context. There are no other BBC banks in Silver Spring that have been discovered. The downtown does not have another building similar in style and execution to this one. The building is nearly 50 years old. Its integrity appears to be extremely good, with original windows, entry and at least some interior spaces surviving. This building is significant to Silver Spring and is, therefore, historic.

Just as pre-Depression fiscal buildings employed historicism to express their position in a community, mid-century banks used a new architecture, equally successfully, to contribute a richly progressive Modernist vision to communities across the country. Over the course of our

research we have concluded that BBC's bank designs, as represented by the Perpetual Building, exemplify one of the most richly dramatic periods of financial-building design. We hope that its demolition can be avoided so that it continues to express the optimism and progressivism of its city for many decades to come.

Sincerely,



Carol J. Dyson, AIA
Senior Preservation Architect
Preservation Services Division
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

and

Part-Time Faculty
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Historic Preservation Program



Anthony Rubano
Project Designer
Preservation Services Division
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

and

Part-Time Faculty
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Historic Preservation Program

cc: Royce Hanson, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
Clare Kelly, Historic Preservation Planner
Gwen Wright, Acting Director, Montgomery County Planning Dept.
J. Rodney Little, Director and SHPO, Maryland Historical Trust
Peter Kurtze, Maryland Historical Trust
Robert Nieweg, Director, Southern Field Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Elizabeth Merritt, Associate General Counsel, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Josh Phillips, Director of Preservation Services, Preservation Maryland
Jerry McCoy, President, Silver Spring Historical Society
Marcie Stickle, Advocacy Chair, Silver Spring Historical Society
Mary Reardon, Preservation Chair, Silver Spring Historical Society
Wayne Goldstein, President, Montgomery Preservation Inc.

SALLY LICHTENSTEIN BERK

Architectural History & Preservation

2214 Wyoming Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20008

vox 202-733-7546

fax 202-328-SAVE

sally@tand.net

27 June 2007

Jef Fuller, Chair
Historic Preservation Commission
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairman Fuller,

As a preservationist who has been practicing in Washington for a quarter century, a former president of the DC Preservation League, and as author of the landmark nomination for the Alban Towers Apartment Building, designed by Robert O Scholz, I want to lend my support to those who have worked hard to bring attention to the significance of the Perpetual Building Association Building, 8700 Georgia Avenue.

I find that the Perpetual Building Association Building merits listing not only on the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation but also in the National Register of Historic Places because it meets several of its criteria. First, the bank is indicative of the suburban building boom that occurred across the country in the first two decades following World War II. Second, it is a superb example of International Style architecture, one that was slow to take hold in the always conservative Washington metropolitan area. Third, it is the work of master architect, Robert O Scholz, who, I discovered in researching Alban Towers, was responsible for the design of more than a dozen apartment buildings in Washington between the years 1922 and 1940. Most of these apartment buildings (only a few have been lost) are located on highly visible thoroughfares – Connecticut Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue, and 16th Street -- where they continue to define Washington's apartment building corridors. Alban Towers is one of the very few apartment buildings in Washington of such exceptional design quality as to have merited interior designation for its lobby and corridors.

In January 2006, the DC Preservation League held a two-day seminar entitled "DC Modern" to bring attention to the significance of those buildings in Washington only now reaching the age of fifty and which have, until recently, been too little understood and appreciated.

As a native Washingtonian who has, since childhood, known, experienced, and loved Silver Spring, I urge you to evaluate and, hopefully, conclude that not only the Perpetual Building but also its neighboring buildings of the same period, are significant in the developmental history of your city and to do your utmost to preserve them.

Sincerely,



MONTGOMERY PRESERVATION

Post Office Box 4661
Rockville, Maryland
20849-4661

www.montgomerypreservation.org

June 15, 2007

TO: Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission

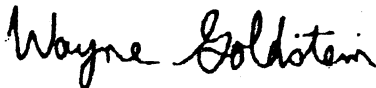
RE: Silver Spring Perpetual Bank Building

While Montgomery Preservation, Inc. (MPI) advocates for historic preservation throughout Montgomery County, we have retained a special interest in the Silver Spring Central Business District (CBD) by virtue of our ownership of the Silver Spring Train Station and the substantial number of historic commercial buildings in the CBD deserving research and possible historic designation. MPI participated in every aspect of the Silver Spring CBD Historic Survey in 2002 and 2003. In a letter we wrote to the Historic Preservation Commission dated 6/4/03, we recommended that a number of additional buildings be considered for possible historic designation, including: "Perpetual American Building 8700 Georgia Ave."

MPI agreed with the recommendation made in 2002 by the historic survey consultant that this building should be evaluated for possible listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as it approached 50 years in age. We have admired the building for its architecture for the last 5 years and are thrilled to learn of the importance of its architect Robert O. Scholz and the Bank Building and Equipment Corp. of America that once supported so much excellent bank architecture across the nation. This very intact building also helps tell the story of the Perpetual Building Association's extremely important role in helping to turn this region into neighborhoods of homeowners.

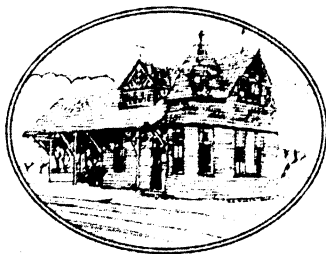
We find that the scholarship for this building to be outstanding so that the HPC should have no difficulty in recommending this building for placement on the county Master Plan for Historic Preservation under seven of the nine historic criteria of Chapter 24A. MPI also believes that this building, like other historic bank buildings across the country designed with the support of the Bank Building and Equipment Corp. of America, would now be found eligible for listing on the NRHP.

Yours truly,



Wayne Goldstein
President
Montgomery Preservation, Inc.
3009 Jennings Road
Kensington, MD 20895
301-942-8079

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Historic Takoma, Inc.

"Preserving the Heritage of Takoma Park-MD and Takoma-DC"

13 June 2007

TO: Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission

RE: Perpetual Building, Silver Spring

Historic Takoma, Inc. supports (and concurs with our colleagues at the Silver Spring Historical Society, Montgomery Preservation, Inc., the National Trust for Historic Preservation, et. al. In that support), on the basis of the nomination submitted by the Silver Spring Historical Society, and our own knowledge and experience of the building, and the historical context of Silver Spring, that the irreplaceable Perpetual Building is indeed worthy of designation on the Master Plan and the National Register, etc.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. Please feel free to contact us if we can provide further information.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Sabrina Alcorn Baron
President
301-891-0626

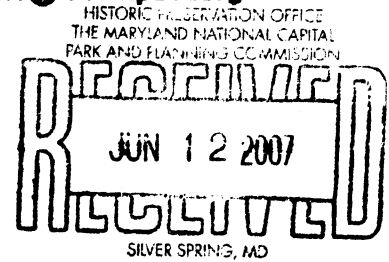
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7328 Carroll Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912
www.historictakoma.org

Recent Past Preservation Network

P.O. Box 1674, Arlington, Virginia 22210 | www.recentpast.org | info@recentpast.org

June 11, 2007

Jef Fuller, Chair
Historic Preservation Commission
1109 Spring Street, Suite 801
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Fax: 301-563-3412



RE: Historic Significance, Perpetual Building Association structure, 8700 Georgia Avenue

Dear Chairperson Fuller and Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Recent Past Preservation Network (RPPN), an international, grassroots coalition working to develop greater public appreciation for historic buildings and sites of the recent past, particularly those built during the last fifty years. Please enter this correspondence into the official record of review for the Perpetual Building Association.

RPPN fully supports the preservation of the 1958 Perpetual Building at 8700 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring, Montgomery County, Maryland. The nationally renowned Bank Building and Equipment Corp. of America designed the savings and loan office in collaboration with prominent Washington, DC architect and builder Robert O. Scholz & Co. BB & E Corp.'s partnership with a variety of talented architects throughout its history resulted in four of the corporation's banks being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Scholz designed three buildings for the Perpetual Building Association: one in D.C., now demolished; one in Bethesda, opened in 1955 and incorporated into a new building; and the Silver Spring structure, the only remaining building with a high degree of original integrity. The St. Louis-based BB & E Corp. built a reputation on the construction of high-quality and stylish structures that generated pride in the community and, in this case, established a prosperous "financial district." At Silver Spring, Scholz and BB & E Corp. created a center for civic dialogue by incorporating a public auditorium into the design, as well as bringing the best of modern banking practices to this area. The new building included air conditioning, a customer lounge for women, and an open plan for the bank officer's desks, a new method meant to inspire consumer confidence in the financial process.

The building is, for all practical purposes, fifty years old and should be considered as a significant historic building in Silver Spring. We feel that any debates regarding the building's future should be undertaken with the utmost consideration for its place within the rapidly diminishing numbers of notable mid-century buildings in Maryland and nationwide.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Christine Madrid French
President
Recent Past Preservation Network

Subj: Perpetual Bank Building
Date: 12/31/2007 1:19:54 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: donnacartwright@earthlink.net writes:
To: mcp-chairman@mncppc-mc.org
CC: Clare.Kelly@mncppc-mc.org, Gwen.Wright@mncppc-mc.org, sshistory@yahoo.com,
marciopro@aol.com, mareardon3@yahoo.com

Dec. 31, 2007

Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Hanson:

I am writing to support historic designation for the Perpetual Building on Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring. I feel such designation will be beneficial to the public based on aesthetic, historic and environmental concerns.

The elegant 1958 Perpetual Building is a graceful reminder of Silver Spring's recent past. Its Art Deco features alone make it worthy of preservation. Far too few buildings remain from the period when Silver Spring achieved its distinctive character.

In addition, Perpetual's leading role in the development of the cooperative building and savings-and-loan movement in the United States should be honored by preserving this fine building. As the largest savings-and-loan in the D.C. area for 60 years, and the largest in the nation for 18, Perpetual enabled working-class and middle-income savers in the Washington region to pool their money to finance home ownership by tens of thousand of people like themselves.

The impact of the demolition of this building, and its replacement by a high rise condominium building is also of concern for environmental reasons. Not only would an architectural treasure be lost, but the construction of another high-rise in an already densely-populated area would contribute to traffic congestion and emission of pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Although I am a resident of Baltimore City, I have been a frequent visitor to Silver Spring and nearby parts of Montgomery County, both for business and social reasons, since the early 1980's. I quickly came to appreciate its distinctive character, far different from the dreary sameness of so many suburbs. But much of Silver Spring's character is being lost or endangered; thus it is all the more important to preserve what remains.

I ask you to approve designation to the master plan for historic designation for the Perpetual Building Association building.

Sincerely,

Donna M. Cartwright
116 W. University Parkway, #1210,
Baltimore, Md. 21210

Wednesday, January 02, 2008 America Online: MarciPro

East Silver Spring Citizens Association, Inc

December 12, 2007

Royce Hanson, Chairman
Planning Board, MNCPPC
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: The Perpetual Building

Dear Mr. Hanson,

The Executive Board of the East Silver Spring Citizens Association, Inc. voices our unanimous support for the preservation, designation and continued use of Silver Spring's treasure of the financial district. Located at 8700 Georgia Avenue, the Perpetual Building built and housed itself as a pristine example of post-war International style architecture.

The Perpetual Building Association was a leader and innovator in the cooperative Building/Savings and Loan movement., an equitable, non-discriminatory, proactive, and community-oriented company. They were responsible for funding many of the businesses and residences in our community. Montgomery County has every right to be proud of this elegant building, both historically and architecturally.

Built in 1958 using modern classicism style and spearheading the "Thrift" movement, the Perpetual Building deserves its rightful place in the American fabric of progressive post-war commerce. The current and future residents of Silver Spring should not be denied this important architectural and historic symbol for the sake of a few additional floors of office space.

We, the executive board of the East Silver Spring Citizens Association, Inc., ask that the Planning Board take the necessary steps to preserve this building.

Best Regards,

Executive Board, East Silver Spring Citizens Association, Inc.
Robert Colvin, President
Russell Shew, Vice President
Elizabeth King, Treasurer
Jane Gorbaty, Corresponding Secretary
Nancy Gurganus, Recording Secretary
Karen Roper, Chairman/Planning, Zoning and Public Works Committee

Mark Gabriele, President
Seven Oaks / Evanswood Citizens' Association
831 Woodside Parkway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

November 5, 2007

Mr. Royce Hanson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
VIA FACSIMILE to (301) 495-1320

Dear Mr. Hanson,

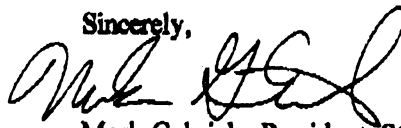
On October 30, 2007 the Seven Oaks / Evanswood Citizens' Association (SOECA) passed a resolution strongly in favor of preserving the historic Perpetual Bank building, located at 8700 Georgia Avenue. The concern of SOECA is that the historic character of this building be preserved as a historical resource for Silver Spring. This building, which must have been startlingly modern when it opened in 1958, has many unique architectural features such as marble and brushed aluminum interior details, trapezoidal windows, and limestone on all 4 sides for the upper 3 stories. The most aesthetically pleasing aspect of this building is the red carnelian granite which adorns the street level. The thick slabs of granite have not lost their lustre over the 49 years of this building's history. This building is solidly constructed and it has preserved its aesthetic character over the years without any significant deterioration since its dedication.

The loss or major modification of this building would have a significant negative effect on the historic character and architectural landscape of Silver Spring. We strongly support the efforts of the Silver Spring Historical Society to save this building and to have it designated as an historical structure.

SOECA is an association of homeowners representing approximately 700 households with most members residing in the area south of Sligo Creek Park between Wayne Avenue and Colesville Road, bounded on the south by Cedar Street. At our October 30, 2007 meeting, a resolution passed by acclamation with no dissent requesting that the Association make our views known in support of the historic designation and the preservation of the Perpetual Bank Building. This historic designation will contribute immeasurably to the character of Silver Spring and it will act as a favorable contrast to more recent commercial and residential development.

Thank you very much for allowing us to share the views of the Association.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Gabriele', is written over a horizontal line.

Mark Gabriele, President, SOECA



Woodside Park Civic Association

1225 Noyes Drive
Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910

October 11, 2007

Mr. Royce Hanson
Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
mcp-chairman@mncppc-mc.org

Dear Chairman Hanson:

The Woodside Park Civic Association endorses the preservation and historical designation of the Perpetual Bank Building on the corner of Georgia Avenue and Cameron Street. We believe it has distinctive architectural and historical significance and should be designated on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

A number of people in our neighborhood were surprised when the notification sign of intent to build was installed in front of the building. Initially, it was thought that the building would become the cornerstone of a new structure that would be largely preserved, but enlarged in an aesthetically pleasing way. This was viewed as acceptable and expected. When it was later learned that it was to be demolished for condominiums, many were unhappy. Preserving this historical structure on Silver Spring's "Wall Street" is much more desirable and important than new condominiums without distinction.

We, the Woodside Park Civic Association, therefore endorse the efforts to add the Perpetual Building to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Sincerely,

Barbara Ditzler
President, Woodside Park Civic Association

cc: Clare Kelly, Historic Preservation Commission Planner
Gwen Wright, Acting Director, Planning
Jerry A. McCoy, Silver Spring Historical Society
Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society

W. A. Sarmiento

404 SAN VICENTE BOULEVARD * SANTA MONICA, CA 90402 * (310) 451-0495 * FAX (310)394-5855

September 1, 2007

Mr. Royce Hanson, Chairman
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20912

Mr. Chairman:

At the request of Ms. Marcie Stickle, of the Silver Spring Historical Society, I am writing this letter to join my petition with those of many personalities who wish to see the Perpetual Building placed in the Master Plan for Historical Preservation.

My name is Wence Sarmiento. I personally knew the designer of this bank building: Architect Earl Davenport (deceased) who was Director of Design for the Bank Building and Equipment Corporation, the company which designed, built and furnished the Perpetual Building.

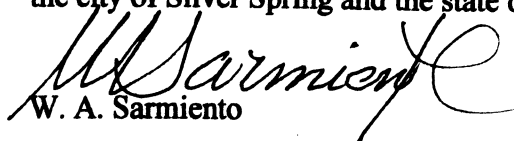
As you know, it takes the efforts of many experts (designers, artists, engineers, draftsmen, specifiers, estimators, builders, fabricators, decorators, installers, etc.) to develop a building from conception to completion; but it is the design conception in the creative inspiration of its designer which makes and preserves its standing in the community.

Earl Davenport was an excellent architectural designer well versed in neo-classic architecture with a sense of mass proportions and effective use of materials combinations as attested by his Perpetual Building.

Fortuitous circumstances led me to join the BB&EC in 1951 giving me the honor to meet its Founder and CEO: Mr. Joseph B Gander, and outstanding industrialist permanently recorded in Who is Who in America. Consequently I also had the honor to meet Architect Earl Davenport, Director of Design, who retired in 1955.

I became Director of design in 1955 with the mission to promote Contemporary Architecture in the banking community, which I did from 1955 to 1965 when I left to direct my own firm after Mr. Gander died. During this decade I had the opportunity to design several bank buildings in USA and Central America; of them, the First Security Bank in Salt Lake City, is preserved by the Utah Heritage Foundation and the Conservation of Los Angeles is seeking preservation status for the Glendale Federal Savings in Glendale, CA

I firmly believe that the preservation of the Perpetual Building shall be a historic asset to the city of Silver Spring and the state of Maryland.


W. A. Sarmiento

PS/ Attached please find a brochure of my Firm, now closed.

Sarmiento

QUALITY



SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE
LEADS TO SATISFACTION
OF BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

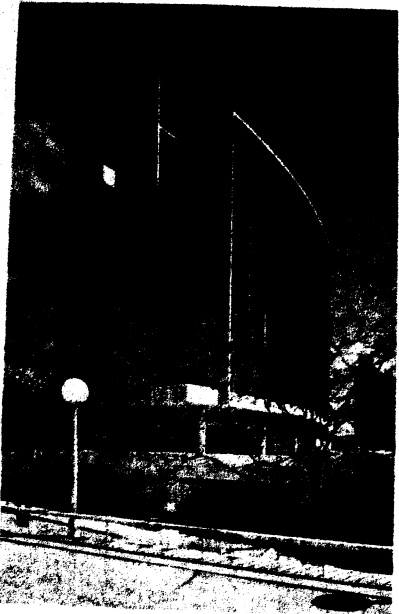


ARCHITECTURE
IS THE ART TO SHELTER
MANS ACTIVITIES
WITH A BALANCE
OF ENGINEERING
AND SCULPTURE.



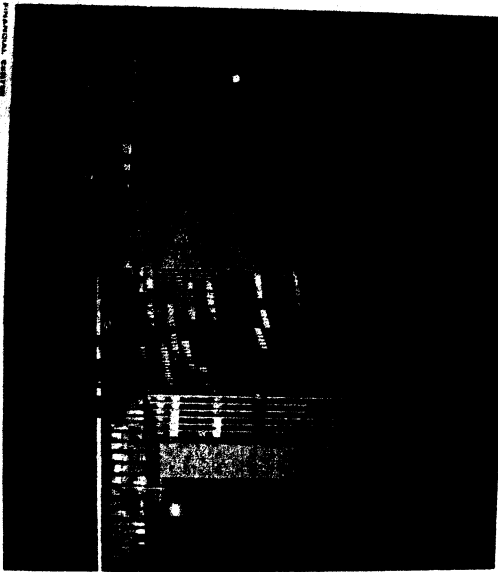
Sarmiento is a firm of architects and engineers, located at 1212 North 4th Street, St. Louis, Missouri. The firm has been in business since 1912 and has a reputation for high quality work.

DESIGN



CLAYTON FEDERAL SAVINGS ST. LOUIS

SPECIALIZATION



Q U

Robert R. Scholz
Nephew and Namesake of Architect Robert O. Scholz
Son of the (late) Prominent Builder Oscar Scholz
"Perpetual Building in Silver Spring," 4/5/07, 12/28/07

I am the nephew of Robert O. Scholz, the architect of the 1958 Perpetual Building, now Sun Trust Bank, at 8700 Georgia Ave., that you [Jerry A. McCoy, SSHS President] wrote about, in February 2007. I strongly support your position to preserve this building for architectural as well as personal reasons. As I drove down Georgia Avenue yesterday, I once again enjoyed the beauty and lines of the 1958 building. It should be preserved. I support your efforts. Sincerely, Bob Scholz

I want to share with you some current architectural activities in DC involving buildings of Robert O. Scholz that might suggest resources you can use to support the Silver Spring Historical Society's position about the building.

First, a project funded in part by a U.S. Dept. of the Interior National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund grant administered by the District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Office has access to a database which lists all of his buildings in DC. This is useful because George Washington University is proposing to establish an historic district on a portion of their campus.

Included in this district are three of Robert O. Scholz's buildings: 2222 Eye Street, 2150 Pennsylvania Avenue, and 2212 Eye Street. (See "Northwest Current Newspaper," August 9, 2006).

Second, the DC Historic Preservation Office is planning to add to the Greater 14th Street Historic District several areas which include the Eddystone Apartments, 1301 Vermont Avenue, designed by Robert O. Scholz. (See "Northwest Current Newspaper," November 29, 2006).

Finally, the Art Deco Society of Washington in their annual bus tour, "Washington's Wonderful Art Deco Architecture" which I took on March 21, 2004, and led by Linda B. Lyons, includes 2212 and 2222 Eye Street, 2150 Pennsylvania Ave., 1701 Massachusetts Ave., and 1 Scott Circle. Perhaps these resources can be helpful in your quest.

Robert R. Scholz
3900 University Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20016-5622
202-686-0471

Kelly, Clare

From: Leonard Facine [uncountablenoun@yahoo.com]

Sent: Wednesday, June 27, 2007 1:57 PM

To: Kelly, Clare

Subject: Perpetual Building - my statement

Here is the statement I would like to have read at the meeting regarding the Perpetual Building. I was told to email it to you.

I must first say that the fact that we are even having this conversation is a bit baffling to me. I look around Silver Spring. I see many of historical buildings. I also see new structures as well. What I don't see is... a contradiction. When I look around and see many open spaces and lots, I think to myself, well, this is where the new structures can go. There is a new condo going up on the corner of Filder Lane and Ramsey Avenue, behind Cubano's restaurant. It is taking up what was a flat, underused parking lot. I imagine that the owners of that lot got a fair price and are happy and I'm sure the developer is going to profit from this project. And, Silver Spring will have more residents to patronize local businesses. This is how it's done right, everyone benefits.

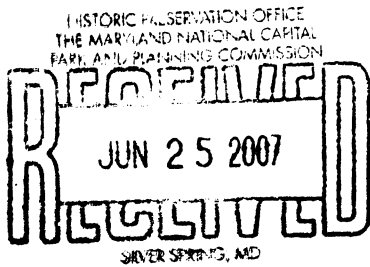
Then I hear that rather than choose another open lot with no historical structures on it, the developers have chosen to knock down a fully functional unique building and the only thing that comes to mind, **"The illogic of waste!"** "They are incapable of finding another location?" I was taught as a child by every adult I knew that wasting things is not a good value. Or do we just throw that out once we get old enough to make money?

I admit I don't know a lot about the process of zoning and development, though I now know I need to learn more, before every short sighted quick profit scheme knocks down everything historical in the community that's "in the way" and Silver Spring becomes "Anywhere, USA" and anything but Silver Spring. I have yet to hear a single resident say anything other than "I hope they don't knock it down." The people in positions to approve or disapprove projects need to take in mind the will of the people and the character of the town, including the historical character, more than some developers, who for all we know have corporate headquarters not in Silver Spring. Are we just going to let outsiders say that our genuine concern over loss of our history is just not keeping up with "progress?" Nice cliché, but that is all that it is, a cliché. Keeping our historical character and allowing for development in places that are better to be developed is what real "progress" should be. Otherwise, a quick buck for a developer, for their McProject, but long time residents and the city itself are the losers.

Sometimes when a building is run down or obsolete, and has no historical value it is razed and replaced. This is NOT one of those times. So, when you vote, please keep Silver Spring and its residents in mind, not the money that goes to developers who are probably outsiders, and vote against destroying the Perpetual Building and let the developers find a legitimate location for their project.

Leonard Facine
10127 Green Holly Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20902
(301) 593-0844

6/27/2007



1211 Ballard St.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

June 24, 2007

Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission
Clare Kelly, Historic Preservation Planner
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms Kelly:

We understand the Commission is considering designating 8700 Georgia Avenue as a historic landmark. In our opinion this would be a mistake. This is one of the most ordinary looking and forgettable buildings in downtown Silver Spring. The area would be much better served if this building were replaced by a larger, more modern structure that would take advantage of the building's location right on Georgia Avenue near both the Metro and the new downtown Silver Spring. Ideally, a new building in this location would bring to Silver Spring a large number of middle class jobs and with it the employees who would live in Silver Spring, shop in local shops, and eat in local restaurants.

We have lived a few blocks away from 8700 Georgia Avenue since 1981 and have walked past it many hundreds of times. Never once did we say to ourselves, "what a neat looking old building". It's just a bland and boring box.

There are many terrific old buildings in Silver Spring, and we benefit from their proximity. For example, earlier today we walked to a Heritage event at the wonderful old firehouse a half mile south on Georgia Avenue. This is precisely the type of building that should be preserved. But not 8700 Georgia Avenue. Get rid of it.

If we can provide any additional information, please contact us at rothland@erols.com or at 301-585-5229.

Sincerely yours,

Robert & Jeri Lande

Kelly, Clare

From: MarciPro@aol.com
Sent: Monday, December 31, 2007 7:18 AM
To: Kelly, Clare; Manarolla, Kevin
Cc: sshistory@yahoo.com; mareardon3@yahoo.com; kprothro@starpower.net; kim.williams2@dc.gov
Subject: Perpetual Building Designation Hearing Materials Faxed 12/31/07

TO: Clare Kelly, HPC, 12/31/07

FR: Marcie Stickle, SSHS, 301-585-3817

RE: Perpetual Building Designation Materials Faxed 12/31/07;
Other Perpetual Items Faxed Friday, 12/28/07, Please Confirm Receipt, thanks!

- (1) Maryland Historical Trust National Register Eligibility Opinion, 6/20/07
- (2) District of Columbia Preservation Office Historic Resources Inventory, Building and Structures Data Sheet, 7/12/1989, Updated 6/3/1991
Re: Perpetual Savings & Loan Bldg., 1111 E St., N.W., 500 11th St., N.W.
Note: Includes information from 1951 Building Permit, 2 pps.
- (3) Information on Bank Building & Equipment Corporation of America, "75 Years of Innovation," 1988, & Joseph Gander, "Maryville You," Winter 2002, Vol. 7, # 2, Maryville University of St. Louis, Mo.
- (4) Information on Robert O. Scholz, and his Alban Towers, "Gothic & Tudor Revival w/ aspects of Art Deco" architecture; on the National Register for its exterior and interior.

See AOL's [top rated recipes](#) and [easy ways to stay in shape](#) for winter.

Kelly, Clare

From: MarciPro@aol.com
Sent: Monday, December 31, 2007 7:04 AM
To: Kelly, Clare; Manarolla, Kevin
Cc: sshistory@yahoo.com; mareardon3@yahoo.com
Subject: Perpetual Building, Maryland Historical Trust NR Eligibility Opinion, 6/2...

Forwarded Message ----

From: R Little <RLittle@mdp.state.md.us>
To: mary reardon <mareardon3@yahoo.com>; P Kurtze <PKurtze@mdp.state.md.us>
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2007 5:42:06 PM
Subject: RE: Perpetual Building Association, 8700 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring

To be exactly, technically correct, you should say "It is eligible for the NR *in the opinion of the Maryland Historical Trust*"

----- Original Message -----

From: P Kurtze <PKurtze@mdp.state.md.us>
To: mary reardon <mareardon3@yahoo.com>
Cc: R Little <RLittle@mdp.state.md.us>
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2007 2:18:41 PM
Subject: Perpetual Building Association, 8700 Georgia Avenue , Silver Spring

Ms. Reardon, thank you for your inquiry regarding the potential eligibility of the Perpetual Building Association for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on the information you provided, it is my opinion that the Perpetual Building Association meets National Register Criterion C as a representative example of commercial Modern architecture of the 1950s period in the Washington suburban region.

I hope this information is useful to you; please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions. Thank you for your interest in the National Register program.

Best regards,

Peter E. Kurtze
Administrator, Evaluation & Registration
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
(410) 514-7649
pkurtze@mdp.state.md.us

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES DATA SHEET

LAST UPDATED: 06/03/1991
CREATED: KW 07/12/1989
PAGE 1

SQ/LOT/SU: 0321 0800- 805,814+15 Name: Perpetual Savings & Loan Bldg.
Address: 1111 E Street N.W.

STATUS: D BUILDING TYPE: Bank/Commercial/Offc

ALTERNATE SQ/LOT/SU: 0321 0826
OLD SQ/LOT/SU: _____

ALTERNATE NAME: _____

ALTERNATE ADDRESS: 500 11th Street N.W.

USE: (Demolished) / Offices/Bank/Commercial
(present) (historic)

EVENT	Original Construction	Second Significant Event
DATE:	1951	_____
SOURCES:	P	_____
PMT #:	A20241	_____
PMT DATE	05/23/1951	/ /
ARCH:	Knoeble, W.G. & Scholz, Robert O.	_____
BLDR:	Bank Bldg and Equip Corp of America	_____
OWNER:	Perpetual Building Association	_____
DEVL:	_____	_____

SUBDIVISION: _____ SQ FTG BLD: 0 LOT: 0
STORIES: 8 H: _____ FPRINT: Rectangle REL TO OTH BLD: Corner-attached
MAT. MAT : Limestone/Granite STRU. MAT: Brick,Concrete,Steel
MAT. MAT. 2: _____

DERIV: _____ XREF: _____
CORP LISTING: _____ NRHP #: _____

HISTORIC DISTRICT(S): _____ CONTRIBUTING: _____

SURVEY(S) CONDUCTED: Downtown
Traceries Bank Survey

CRITERIA: _____

ASSOCIATED INDIVIDUALS	DATE	ASSOCIATION
Scholz, Robert O.	1951	Supervising Arch.
Bank Bldng and Equip Corp -St Louis	1951	Designs and Bldrs

PHOTOGRAPHS: CODE ROLL FRAMES

REHAB: _____ TAX ACT: -
VOL: 0 UNITS: 0 STUDY UNIT: _____

NOTES: (LAST UPDATE: 11/20/1989)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES DATA SHEET

LAST UPDATED: 06/03/1991
CREATED: KW 07/12/1989
PAGE 2

=====

SQ/LOT/SU: 0321 0800- 805,814+15 Name: Perpetual Savings & Loan Bldg.
Address: 1111 E Street N.W.
=====

PRIMARY EXTERIOR MATERIAL: Limestone and granite

SECONDARY EXTERIOR MATERIAL:

STRUCTURAL MATERIAL: Steel columns and beams

FOUNDATION:

CORNICE:

PROJECTIONS:

FOOTPRINT DIMENSIONS:

HEIGHT INFORMATION:

ALTERATIONS:

PERMITS:

ROOF TYPE:

ROOF MATERIAL:

PHOTOGRAPHS:

PUBLICATIONS: The Washington Post- 10/4/1953, 10/6/1953; The
Evening Star- 10/6/1953

ILLUSTRATIONS/DRAWINGS:

Originally there were three entrances to the building - one
each on 11th and 12th Street, and one on E Street. The
building was considered the first major financial structure
of pure modern design in the Nation's Capital.

RAZED 6/1990

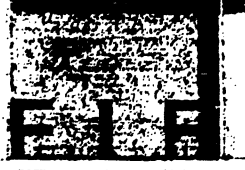
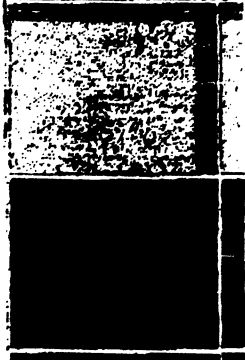
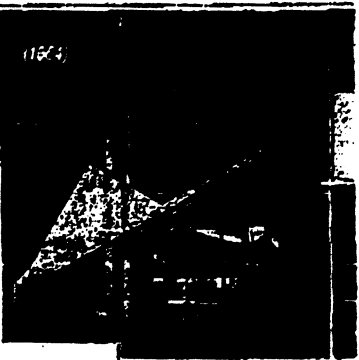
LOCAL NOTES: (LAST UPDATE: / /)

NATIONAL

Queen's Bank of San Diego - San Diego, New Mexico



(1924)

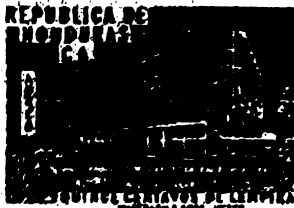


The Birth of the Branch

Financial services, particularly transaction services, and convenience are inseparable in the eyes of today's customer ...and branch banks, drive-up facilities and automated teller machines are as much a part of the landscape today as gas stations or convenience stores. In Bank Building first began working with the concept of satellite banking facilities during the Second World War. The company, to survive, was at the time designing and constructing cocktail lounges and bars for the hotel industry, including a series of regional offices for a brewery. In Bank Building Chairman Joseph B. Gauder recognized that satellite locations promised immediate advantages of increased market penetration through improved customer convenience. The concept was not entirely new, but had not gained widespread consideration in the financial services industry. Following the war, Bank Building actively advocated the development and found the thrift industry to be most responsive. In Branch design has always varied according to the purpose the facility was to serve. At one extreme, branches are little more than financial service stations, drive-ups or a mini branch set in a grocery store. At the other extreme is the full-service facility, staffed with a complete set of bank officers. In The key consideration for the future in the development of satellite systems may well be flexibility, a concept explored by Bank Building in its 1981 "Branch of the Future" program. In The systems will necessarily be more and more tailored to serve specific marketing goals, with units in the system varying from full service institutions to ATMs, and from lavish marble-and-bronze installations to more simple facilities suited to more modest local conditions.

"Bank Building & Equipment Corporation, 75 Years of Innovation, 1968"

New Concepts, New Architecture



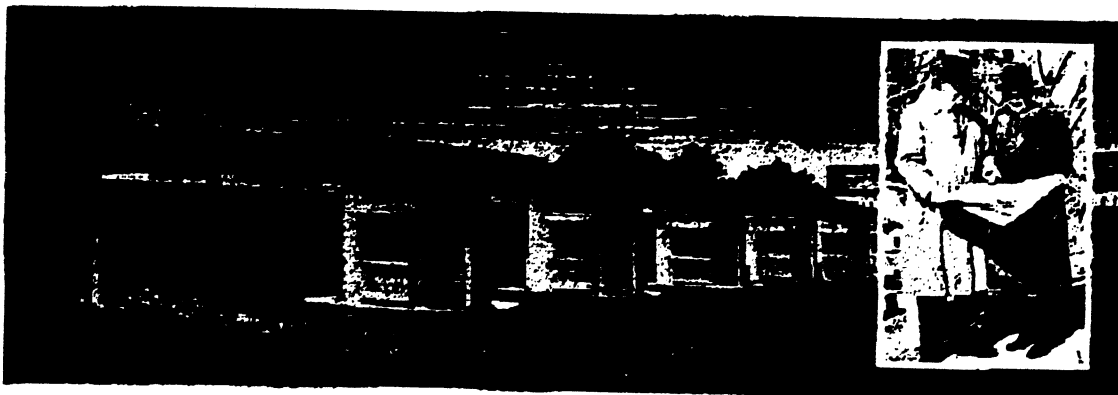
The Banco Central de Honduras, one of many facilities built by Bank Building in Central America, was featured on an air mail stamp. (1958)

The quest for increased efficiency and customer convenience quickly moved Bank Building drive-up design from simple window arrangements to systems of manned, free-standing teller islands.

While savings and loans arguably took the lead in embracing the new concepts, the traditional banking community was not far behind. Both new and remodeled projects stressed customer convenience, with well-lit, open lobbies, multiple teller lines, etc. In keeping with the prevailing style of the day, fixtures were simple, streamlined, contemporary. The architecture of financial institutions rapidly became less monumental in outward appearance, as the conventions of the bank-as-financial-temple were cast aside in favor of operationally efficient space. Bank Building architects found themselves more free to work with the new architectural styles and ideas of the day, seeking always to project an image to the community consistent with the unique philosophy and personality of the board and management.

Innovation and the Automobile

Bank Building innovation went beyond the open lobby concept. The automobile has had a profound impact on American life—and how Americans bank. Again a pioneer in anticipating these changes, the company's research led to installation of the first drive-up teller unit and contributed to the widespread proliferation of the full-service branch bank. In 1963, on the occasion of Bank Building's 50th anniversary, then president Louis J. Orabka observed, "Changes in customer habits, plus the continued applications of automation, are major forces altering bank operations and in turn planning and design. Decentralization of service delivery is with us now and destined for much wider application in the future." The past 26 years have proved Orabka correct. They have been years of deregulation, the growth of the "nonbank bank," the rapid centralization of banking and savings and loan industries, and the maturation of the credit union movement into full-service financial institutions.



Joseph Gander



Ruth Gander Pfeiffer stands next to a portrait of her father, Joseph Gander.

In the late 1950s, **Reverend Mother Helen Rex**, then the honorary president of Maryville, placed a phone call that ultimately changed the college forever.

The call was to Joseph Gander, a longtime benefactor of the college and owner of Bank Building & Equipment Corp., which was once the world's largest designer and builder of banks and lobbies, numbering the Hilton, Sheraton and Howard Johnson chains among its clients.

Reverend Mother Rex wanted Gander's advice on how best to proceed with plans for a new dormitory on the Meramec and Nebraska campus. She was unprepared for his response, said his daughter, **Ruth Gander Pfeiffer** ('34A).

"He said we can do it but if we do, you will close your doors anyway within 10 years," Pfeiffer said. Joseph Gander knew then what college officials soon would realize: that Maryville had outgrown its existing campus and a new one was needed. Gander also had the foresight to realize that the growth area in St. Louis over the next several decades would be West County.

"Daddy was very good at locations and he always wanted to be moving west," Pfeiffer noted, adding with a laugh that if her father had lived longer, "we'd have been in Kansas City by now."

Based largely on Gander's advice, Maryville, in 1958, purchased an 124-acre tract of land in West St. Louis County and decided to relocate the college from South St. Louis. Construction began in late 1959 at the "new Maryville" on an administration building, two classroom buildings and a dormitory. Cardinal Joseph Ritter

dedicated the new campus on April 23, 1961, with the first classes being held later that fall.

Pfeiffer recalls the dedication ceremony as a "mixture of pride and joy, a great occasion, a thrilling afternoon." It was slightly bittersweet, however, as her father was not in attendance. Months earlier, Joseph Gander had lost his 18-month battle with cancer.

He worked up until the end, with his final project being plans for a Chancery Office for the St. Louis Archdiocese on Lindell Boulevard, Pfeiffer recalled.

Shortly before his death, Pfeiffer took her father on a drive around the new campus. He expressed his displeasure with the path leading to the campus from Conway Road.

"He saw the entrance. It went straight up," Pfeiffer said. "He said that's no way to

enter a place like this. He said the entrance should follow the path the construction trucks take." That was cut into the hillside the winding road entrance that still exists today. Pfeiffer recalls trudging up that hillside one winter's day, along with college administrators and board members, during construction to put nickels in the ground as a sign of good luck.

Also a concept of Gander's was the wheel-shaped design of the sidewalks in the quadrangle area. To him, it represented the wheel of life and the future.

Pfeiffer noted that she played a small part in modifying a design feature of the new campus. While looking up at the balcony of the administration building—which was still under construction—which also served as the nuns' living quarters, she noticed that the balcony wall was too high.

"It was a wall like a prison," she laughed.

Pfeiffer said her father was a generous and caring person and a very capable businessman.

"He was very sharp but also very loyal to his employees. No one worked for Joseph Gander. They worked with him."

Pfeiffer said her father embodied many of the same traits possessed by the Sacred Heart nuns who educated her.

"They believed that every child was as important as the other and everything they did was for the good of the child."

She thinks her father would be pleased with how the Maryville campus looks today.

"I think he'd be happy to see how it has grown." ☺

Washington, Past and Present, A History, John Clagett Proctor, LL.M. Editor in Chief
(Chairman of the Permanent Committee on Marking Points of Historical Interest in the District
of Columbia; Chronicler of the Columbia Historical Society; Vice-President and Chronicler,
Association of Oldest Inhabitants; former President, Society of Natives, D.C.; Member of the
Bar, Supreme Court of the District of Columbia), Volume III, Lewis Historical Publishing Co., N.Y. 1930).

ROBERT O. SCHOLZ--The beauties and grandeurs that belong to Washington, so uniquely
among the cities of America, have never failed in their attraction to the artist, and particularly
is this true of architects, who find here vistas comparable with those of Paris.

One who has found inspiration in the national capital for many years, Robert O.
Scholz, is accounted by confreres in architecture to be a leader in this notable
profession. Not only as architect has he served the community and District but also as a
citizen of loyal public spirit, who has taken part unstintedly in general affairs. However, it is
in his profession that Mr. Scholz's absorption lies, and to it he has given the force and
vision that have brought him a fair degree of renown at an age when architects
usually bend over the drafting boards for a firm other than their own. None is worthier
than he of a place in this contemporary history. . . .

"In 1922 he set up for himself in independent pursuit of architecture, with offices in the
Edmonds Building [D.C.], where he has continued to be engaged with mounting
celebrity through the years succeeding to the present time (1928). Mr. Scholz has
designed several of Washington's principal hotels, among which the Blackstone is notable as
an achievement, and has designed still more in the category of residences. Many of the
finest homes in the District of Columbia bear the mark of his art. He has designed
several apartment buildings, among which is Alban Towers, occupying almost an acre of
ground at Mass. and Wisconsin Ave. . . .

"He is popular in the circles in which he moves, esteemed warmly for his genial personality,
hearty manner, and admired sincerely for his uprightness and reputation as architect. .
.."

0010000017
P.3
D.C. HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD

APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION

APPLICATION TO:

- ☒ Designate
☐ Rescind
☐ Amend

PROPERTY NAME: Alban Towers (exterior, lobbies, and hallways)

ADDRESS: 3700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

SQUARE AND LOT NUMBER(S): Sq. 1929; Lots 12, 802, 803, 805, 810

PRESENT OWNER: President & Directors, Georgetown University

OWNER ADDRESS: 37th & O Streets, N.W. Washington, D.C.

ORIGINAL USE: Apartment House

PRESENT USE: Apartment House and Dormitory

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1928 (Permit to Build #6054 & 6036)
1929 (Permit to Build #127222)

DATE OF MAJOR ALTERATION(S):

ARCHITECT(S): Robert O. Scholz

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE/PERIOD: Gothic & Tudor Revival w/aspects of
Art Deco

NAME OF APPLICANT: Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3-C

ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE OF APPLICANT:
2737 Devonshire Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
202-232-2232

NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:
Pat Wamsley
Commissioner, ANC 3-C

Pat Wamsley
SIGNATURE

7/1/80 ✓
DATE

310.21 A STATEMENT OF THE PREHISTORIC, HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL,
AND/OR CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPERTY PROPOSED
FOR DESIGNATION.

In a decade characterized by buildings of superior design, construction, and craftsmanship, Alban Towers stands out as an exceptionally good example of the luxury apartment buildings that were constructed in Washington during the 1920s. Located at the intersection of two of the city's most prestigious and well-traveled avenues, Massachusetts and Wisconsin avenues, Alban Towers has been a familiar landmark since its completion in 1928. Claiming one of the highest points in the city, diagonally across the intersection from Washington Cathedral, Alban Towers provides views of not only the Cathedral, but also the city and the Potomac River beyond.¹ Its siting is further enhanced by a city park on one side and a wooded lot on another. Designed in the Gothic Revival style to complement the Cathedral, its exterior is ornamented with stone tracery and bas-relief. The lobbies and hallways are finished with materials and motifs that reinforce the building's Gothic theme.

Alban Towers is representative of the changes that took place in the apartment house form after World War I. Built outside the original boundaries of the city of Washington, it has a rambling configuration in a park-like setting. The individual apartments, while more modest than those constructed before the war, are compensated for by luxurious lobbies and hallways. Providing such amenities as beauty shop, valet, grocery store, and garage, Alban Towers is one of the few remaining apartment buildings to house a restaurant.

Designed by Robert O. Scholz and built by David A. Baer, Alban Towers was the product of one of Washington's more prominent architect/developer teams constructing apartment buildings in the 1920s.² Together they built at least eight apartment buildings between the years 1922 and 1940. Baer is responsible for at least thirteen additional apartment buildings and several rows of houses, while Scholz is responsible for at least twenty other apartment buildings, two rows of houses, and several commercial buildings.

¹ The complete name of Washington Cathedral is: the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

² "Business Romance Hidden in Building, Meteoric Rises to Fame and Wealth are Represented in Big Operations," Evening Star, August 30, 1930.

Alban Towers is the second apartment building to be constructed on Massachusetts Avenue west of Wisconsin Avenue after the 1925 decision by the Zoning Commission to allow them.³ As such, it reflects the development pattern of the Washington apartment building in the second quarter of the twentieth century. For this embodiment, as well as for the calibre of its design and construction, and the amenities it provides, Alban Towers is worthy of historic landmark designation.

The D.C. Apartment Buildings Survey, conducted by the D.C. Preservation League and Traceries during 1985-1987 (funded by the D.C. Office of Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Grant Program, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the National Endowment for the Arts), has gathered data on nearly 3,000 purpose-built apartment buildings in the Nation's Capital. The survey encompassed the development of the building type from its introduction in Washington in the 1870s through World War II. The historic context (as delineated in the December 1987 draft to the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Listing, "Early Apartment Buildings in the District of Columbia, 1870-1935," and developed as a product of the survey effort) provides a basis for evaluating individual apartment buildings and their architects, and affords the opportunity to assess their merits for listing as Landmarks in the District of Columbia and for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Alban Towers, including lobbies and hallways, qualifies for landmark status in the District of Columbia by meeting the following criteria as established in the final rules of the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board appearing in the D.C. Register on April 12, 1985:

a(3). It embodies the distinguishing characteristics of architectural styles, building types, types or methods of construction, landscape architecture, urban design or other architectural, aesthetic or engineering expressions significant to the appearance and development of the National Capital or the Nation; and

a(4). It has been identified as a notable work of craftsmen, artists, sculptors, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, engineers, builders, or developers whose work have influenced the evolution of their fields of endeavor or the development of the National Capital or the Nation.

³ Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Washington, D.C., Vol. 3, Pt. 2, Plan 24, 1931.

Further, the Alban Towers Apartment House also qualifies for listing on the National Register of Historic Places because it satisfies the following criteria as set forth in The National Register Bulletin:

A. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;

C. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, and represents the work of a master, possessing high artistic value.

Perpetual Building: Architect W.A. Sarmiento,
 Bank Building & Equipment Corporation of America
 Director of Contemporary Architecture/Design
 Interviews With Silver Spring Historical Society, July, August, September 2007

Architect W.A. Sarmiento was Bank Building & Equipment Corporation of America Director of Contemporary Architecture/Design from 1950s into the 1960s. His designs were built in the United States as well as in Central America; including the Banco Central de Honduras, celebrated with an Air Mail Postage Stamp in 1958, photo below. BB&EC built many banking facilities in Latin America. (Sarmiento was protege of Oscar Niemeyer, a United Nations' Building architect.) In Silver Spring Historical Society interviews 7, 8, & 9/07, he shared many interesting points about our Perpetual Building; BB&EC; and his award-winning restored historic 1955 Salt Lake City, Utah, bank, below:

(1) **Charles "Chuck" Jost** was the "architect of record" for the Perpetual Building not Perpetual's designer. The process was a **collaboration between BB&EC, the local client, and the local architect, in this case, Robert O. Scholz, also on Perpetual's Board.** Jost was the BB&EC architect assigned to Perpetual and to Mr. Scholz to make certain that all specifications from the working drawings were met and within the estimated cost.

(2) **Earl Davenport**, BB&EC Director of Design and top Design Architect until 1952, was well versed in the Classical, Neo-classical, Beaux-Arts, and Bauhaus. The Director created the original design for the buildings. **[As Mr. Sarmiento's 8/3/07 submitted statement indicates, local architect Robert O. Scholz (architect of D.C.'s National Register Alban Towers and other National Register and notable works) contributed elements to Perpetual's design.]**

(3) **Joseph B. Gander**, President, founder, and owner of BB&EC, a "complete company," was a "great gentleman, a pioneer, with tremendous vision," and appeared in "Who's Who in America." He bought companies; he bought quarries. BB&EC owned its own marble quarries, and its subsidiaries owned granite quarries; these companies also cut and polished the materials to BB&EC specifications.

(4) BB&EC, with offices in different locations in the country, including New York, employed its "**Sales Force**," the "**eyes and ears**" of the company, to go out and diplomatically gather in friends, they acted like diplomats and lobbyists, "dining and wineing"! Robert O. Scholz interacted with their office in Bethesda, Md.

Air Mail stamp, 1958, of Sarmiento's Banco Central de Honduras, Central Bank of Honduras; which he designed for BB&EC, the stamp:



The Banco Central de Honduras, one of many facilities built by Bank Building in Central America was featured on an air mail stamp (1958)

"The Banco Central de Honduras, one of many facilities built by Bank Building in Central America was featured on an air mail stamp. (1958)"

(5) The saving, protecting, restoring, historic designation of his 1955 First Security Bank Building, Salt Lake City, Utah, on National Register as of 2003, winning a National Trust for Historic Preservation award in 2006, parallels the current Perpetual Building scenario. The owner needs to understand that he will get important tax credits for preservation and restoration, etc. Click on:

http://www.nationaltrust.org/news/2006/20061102_npa_first_security.html with photos

<http://www.utahheritagefoundation.com>, "First Security Bank Building Re-opens with 1955 Fanfare," 12/13/04, "Don't call me square . . . I have international flair." This catch-phrase adorned T-shirts with an image of the First Security Bank Building at 400 South Main Street at the building's grand re-opening on November 10, 2004."

"Following World War II, Sarmiento helped transform the architectural idea and experience of a bank while giving cities a whole new set of visual references. As lead architect of the Bank Building and Equipment Corporation of America, he was one of the nation's leading designers of banks at a time when banks were anxious to leave references to the Great Depression behind and evoke a new modern, efficient image."

Marcie Stickle, SSHS, Advocacy Chair, MarciPro@aol.com, 301-585-3817,
8515 Greenwood Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20912, 11/9, 12/16/07

Architect W.A. Sarmiento, Director of Contemporary Architecture/Design,
Bank Building & Equipment Corporation of America
Perpetual Building Statement to Historic Preservation Commission, 8/3/07

TO: HPC Chairman Fuller & All Commissioners, 8/3/07, Clare Kelly, HPC Staff
FR: Marcie Stickle, Silver Spring Historical Society, Advocacy Chair, 301-585-3817
RE: **Perpetual Building Nomination: W. A. Sarmiento Statement, Submitted to the Record, Supporting Perpetual Historic Designation Nomination**

Wenceslaus Alfonso (W. A.) Sarmiento was Director of Contemporary Architecture, from 1952 until 1961, for the Bank Building & Equipment Corporation of America, headquartered in St. Louis; a number of his buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places; and the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** awarded him and other restoration partners in 2006 with its **National Preservation Honor**

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Award; Sarmiento was on hand to cut the ceremonial ribbon re-opening day for his & BB&EC's First Security Bank Building, Salt Lake City, Utah, placed 2003 on the National Register,

http://www.nationaltrust.org/news/2006/20061102_npa_first_security.html

The Silver Spring Historical Society submits Mr. Sarmiento's statement to the record, and in support of Perpetual's designation to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Silver Spring Historical Society interviewed Mr. Sarmiento in July [& August] 2007.

Note: We do not include Mr. Sarmiento's email address since at 84 years of age he is currently recuperating from a serious ailment.

In a message dated 8/3/2007 2:13:49 AM Eastern Daylight Time, W. A. Sarmiento writes:

"Thank you Marcie Stickle for your informative and descriptive statements on the Perpetual Building and its accompanying photographs. Your "florid description" is a good measure of the building design and specification. After studying the photographs, it defines the building as an Earl Davenport's architectural design. Yes, he was a top Design Architect and Director of Design of BB&EC until 1952. The perpetual Building is one of his many achievements.

"The elegant proportions of the "Art Deco Egyptian motif trapezoidal/pyramidal windows", as you properly describe them, indicates the collaboration of an Art Deco artist: Architect Robert O. Scholtz, who besides being the local Architect resolving the City Bldg. Dept. regulations and inspections, a public relations system developed by BB&EC to solve the logistic demands of its long distance operations; but more important, he was a member of Perpetual's Board of Directors. Hence, it was "a must" to have him as the liaison Architect. Mr. Scholtz went beyond his duty, he was generous to provide his artistic talent to the building design. And it improved.

"I have to close now

Wence Sarmiento"

* * * * *

National Trust Press Release

http://www.nationaltrust.org/news/2006/20061102_npa_first_security.html

National Trust Presents National Preservation Honor Award to First Security Bank Building in Salt Lake City, Utah

Pittsburgh, Pa. (November 2, 2006) – Today, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation** presented the First Security Bank Building in Salt Lake City its prestigious **National Preservation Honor Award**. The project was one of 21 **national** award winners honored by the **National Trust** during its week-long 2006 **National Preservation Conference** in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Completed in 1955, First Security Bank was the first addition to Salt Lake City's

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downtown skyline in nearly 30 years and Utah's first major modern building. The sleek steel and glass tower heralded the city's renewed prosperity, and local newspapers quickly likened the bank building to the United Nations' headquarters in New York City.



Ribbon

But by 2002, the First Security Bank building was up for sale and many were concerned that it would be subject to insensitive alteration or even demolition.

Happily, the building wound up in the hands of an owner, Wasatch Property Management, willing to go the extra mile to keep its mid-century look intact. The owner gutted the tenant floors down to the steel, removed the asbestos and upgraded the exterior to maintain the feel of the original, internationally-influenced architecture.

cutting ceremony marks the opening of the First Security Bank.

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"With its glass-and-steel facades recalling an optimistic era not so long ago, the First Security Bank building heralds a bright future for a piece of the recent past," said Richard Moe, president of the **National Trust for Historic Preservation**. "This project is a model for the successful rehabilitation and continued use of recent past architecture across the country."

With the help of a **National Register** listing, federal tax credits, advice from preservationists, the newest technologies and plenty of determination, the building was rehabbed with such finesse that its original architect, W.A. **Sarmiento**, says it looks as good as the day it opened. Today, the building is almost fully leased, anchoring and supporting the ongoing revitalization of downtown Salt Lake City.



Co-nominees honored today for the First Security Bank Building **Preservation Award** are Wasatch Property Management Inc., Big D Construction Corporation, Edwards and Daniels Architects, Utah Division of History, Office of **Preservation** and Utah Heritage Foundation.

The **National Preservation Awards** are bestowed on distinguished individuals, nonprofit organizations, public agencies and corporations whose skill and determination have given new meaning to their communities through **preservation** of our architectural and cultural heritage. These efforts include citizen attempts to save and maintain important

First landmarks; companies and craftsmen whose

Security Bank Building work restores the richness of the past; the vision of
 download large version public officials who support **preservation** projects
 and legislation in their communities; and educators and journalists who help
 Americans understand the value of **preservation**.

Media interested in learning more about the National Trust's 2006 National Preservation Award Winners or in attending future conference events should contact the National Trust Communications Office at 202-588-6141. Registration is free to the media, as are the Awards Ceremony, field sessions, educational sessions, and special events. For more information and images of the 2006 National Preservation Award winners, visit www.nationaltrust.org/npa2006/.

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Factors Cited In Perpetual's Leadership

By S. Oliver Goodman

What made Perpetual Building Association of Washington the largest savings and loan institution in the nation?



Beltz

Two major factors, according to an article in the August issue of *Savings and Loan News*, published by the U. S. Building and Loan League. The winning combination was listed as:

1.—A flexible management policy devoted to taking good care of the customers, with an eye to keeping net earnings high and never treating the savings and loan institution as a "movement" rather than a business.

2.—President E. C. Beltz ("Eddie" to practically everyone) who has been at the Perpetual helm for more than 30 years.

The fiscal story of Perpetual's growth from 30 million dollars in assets in 1923 to the present total of more than 134 million dollars has been told at intervals.

The human side of Perpetual's story isn't so well known. Mrs. Josephine H. Ewalt in her *Savings and Loan News* article tells some of this side.

"In Washington business circles," she writes, "Eddie Beltz is a power not only because of savings and loan leadership, but in other activities as well. He helped start Hamilton National Bank, which ranks fourth in deposits after not quite 19 years of operation . . . He is the kind of business leader who is always getting the jobs heading drives and influencing other business men toward specific community ends . . ."

Perpetual as an institution is described as a "blend of wide-awake business operation and traditional conservatism."

"For instance," the article points out, "Perpetual's 134 million in assets are handled with just 97 people on the payroll—and these people are informal and easygoing, reflecting generally the ways of a southern city which has never been 'titled.' Internal operations are not formally departmentalized. The association follows no personnel theory set forth by management experts, but it maintains a steady policy of picking up likely young ladies and likely young men, putting them on the payroll and fitting them into responsible spots when opportunities come. Its turnover in staff personnel has been remarkably low."

Organizational details, anecdotes and some of Perpetual's pioneering ideas round out the article which is entitled "Perpetual—It Has Grown Great Graciously."