

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:
9343
CULVER BLVD.

DATE:
1930

STYLE:
MODERNE

SOURCE: **RATING:**
E B

ALTERATIONS:
F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

The building at 9343 is attached to the taller Moderne structure at 9355 and was added to the original building a few years after the building at 9355 was constructed. The scored masonry facade and stepped back base, with the scroll design, match those of the main building. A row of red clay tiles edge the shaped parapet, which hides the flat main roof. The main entrance is recessed in the center, with large storefront windows on each side. The present storefront windows have replaced the original windows.

SIGNIFICANCE:

According to the National Register application for the building at 9355 Culver Blvd., the building at 9343 Culver Blvd. was commissioned by Eugene Donovan to house the State Employment Office. Due to its design relationship to a significant historical building and its association with locally noteworthy persons, this building is considered individually significant on a local basis. (See significance statement for 9355 Culver Blvd.)

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:
9355
CULVER BLVD.

DATE:
1929

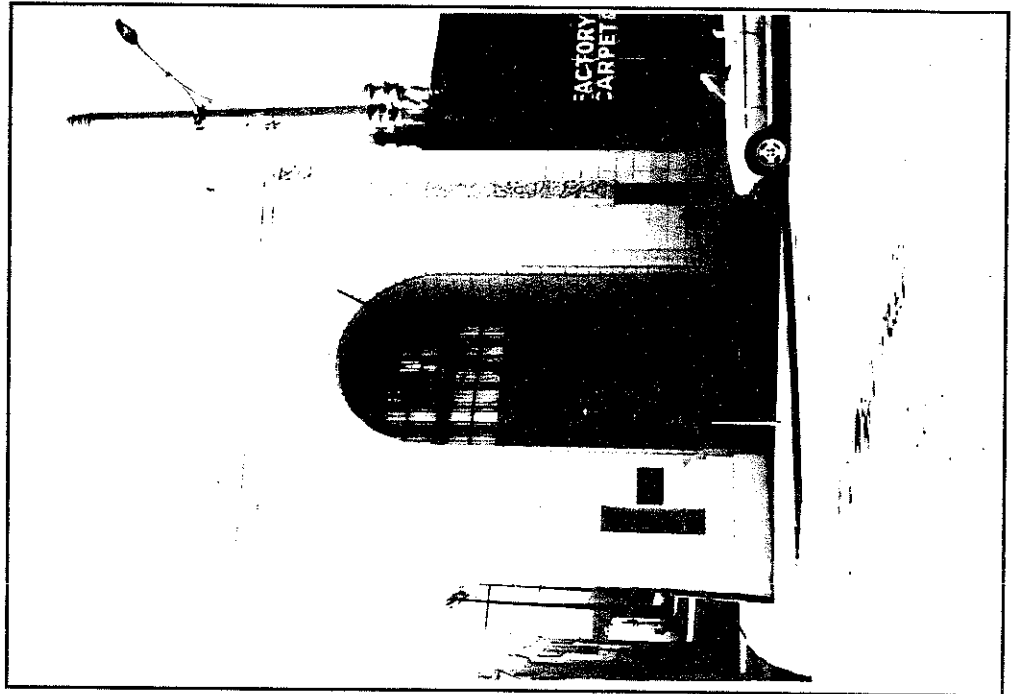
STYLE:
MODERNE

SOURCE: RATING:
P A

ALTERATIONS:
F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:
CITY SITE #4



DESCRIPTION:

This fine example of Art Deco/Moderne architecture is constructed of red brick with a cast concrete front facade. The flat roof that covers the rear nine-tenths of the building is hidden by a two-level rectangular parapet with a vertical emphasis. The cast concrete facade is scored with a pattern resembling modern concrete blocks. Cast concrete trim, in a classical design, projects from the front facade and forms a border on each side of the impressive recessed entry way. The decorative trim continues on to the second level of the parapet and extends to the top. A row of chevrons forms a straight border across the top of the parapet. Cast concrete rectangular forms add interest to the second level of the parapet. The stepped-back base of the front facade is accented with scrolls in the corners of the top level. The 13-foot-high arched recessed main entry is edged with cast concrete trim with a floral motif. The recessed multi-paned doors are topped with an arched multi-paned transom. The original Art Deco light fixture hangs from the center of the entry.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Citizen Publishing and Printing Company, which occupied this building, was formed in 1929 by Eugene Donovan and his son Roy E. Donovan. The building has been designated as Culver City Historic Site #4 and has recently been placed on the National Register of Historic Places (2/12/87). The newspaper produced by the Citizen Publishing and Printing Company ("The Citizen") was a strong influence in the early development of the City. The Publishing Company is also noteworthy as a major printing operation and an expert in historical newsprinting practices, providing dummy newspapers for use in films. The building is significant in architectural design and as the work of locally prominent architect Orville Clark, who also designed the City Hall for Culver City.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

9400

CULVER BLVD.

DATE:

1923

STYLE:

NEO-CLASSICAL HOTEL

SOURCE: RATING:

P A

ALTERATIONS:

F

RESIDENCE:**COMMENT:**

CULVER HOTEL

**DESCRIPTION:**

Six stories high and shaped like a wedge, the Neo-classical Culver City Hotel is noteworthy not only for its fine architectural character, but also for its significance in the history of Culver City. Closely-spaced carved brackets decorate the wide cornice at the top of the building. The sixth floor, with rows of 6-over-6 recessed double-hung windows, is trimmed in light-colored terra cotta tiles. A matching beltcourse runs below the windows, forming a wide light colored band that is attached visually to the fifth floor with decorative tile stems. The second through fifth floors are clad in dark tan and gold brick and feature recessed 6-over-6 windows on all facades. The second floor windows are edged with wide terra cotta surrounds. Simulated terra cotta quoins form a light-colored vertical band that runs from the second floor to the fifth at each corner. The first floor windows and doors are capped with graceful arched transoms, topped with keystones. The windows are recessed and multi-paned. The building retains almost all of its original architectural integrity.

(continuation of significance:)

The Culver Hotel is one of the most significant buildings in Culver City. Large and imposing, it is a very fine example of Neo-classical architecture. This building appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, on the basis of its architecture, its relationship to persons significant to world history, and the part it has played in the social and economic patterns of Culver City and Los Angeles County.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Harry H. Culver built this hotel in 1923-24 (building permit 11/24/23), when Culver City was in its heyday as the headquarters for some of the world's most prominent movie studios. The Winter Construction Company was the contractor. Located only a few blocks from three major studios, the hotel was built to provide accommodations for visiting movie stars, directors, and others connected with the movie industry. Harry Culver owned the building for several years, but by the 1940's Edna and Red Skelton had purchased the building. In 1947 they took out a permit to install a neon-lighted sign for the top of the building which read "Culver City". They owned the building into the 1950's. John Wayne was another well-known owner. The hotel appears in several silent movies, notably those featuring Laurel and Hardy. In the early 1930's the dwarfs who played the "Little People" in the Wizard of Oz were headquartered here. The book and 1979 film "Under the Rainbow" told of the adventures of the small actors and actresses, using replicas of the hotel's interiors. The building is still seen in some of the television programs filmed at the nearby studios, including "Dallas" and "Highway to Heaven".

HELMS MODERNE DISTRICT

The buildings in the Helms District form one of the finest groups of Moderne commercial buildings in Southern California. The district includes four buildings: 1) the Main Plant at 8703-35 Washington Blvd.; 2) the Helms Garage (3210 Helms Avenue) across Helms Street from the Main Plant; 3) the Beacon Laundry (8695 Washington Blvd.) east of the Helms Building and south of the Garage; and 4) Helms Hall (8758 Venice Blvd.) north of the Helms Garage. The first three form a triangle of large impressive Zigzag moderne buildings. The fourth building is related historically, but not architecturally to the district.

Zigzag Moderne buildings are uncommon and Zigzag commercial are rare in California. As most Moderne buildings were built during the Depression, they tend to be public buildings, built with public funds. Few businesses were prosperous enough to construct new plants in the early to mid 1930's. To build a facility this grand in such economically harsh times illustrates the remarkable success of the Helms Bakery Company. The company provided the baked goods for the 1932 Olympics, and were very proud of having done so. Both the Bakery and the Beacon Laundry, built at the same time, provided employment for hundreds of local residents during the Depression. The Helms Hall was built in 1936 as Helms Hostess House, and housed the Helms Athletic Foundation, founded by Paul Roy Helms. The Helms family devotion to athletics helped many young people during the Depression.

This grouping is significant architecturally as a fine example of a rare architectural style, Zigzag Moderne commercial. The district is historically significant from an economic standpoint since the Helms company was one of the earliest major industries, distinct from the movie/entertainment industry, to diversify the local economic base. The district is also historically significant since it reflects the significance of the 1932 Olympics in supporting the economy of the state.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

3800
INCE BLVD.

DATE:

1924

STYLE:

1920'S INDUSTRIAL

SOURCE: RATING:

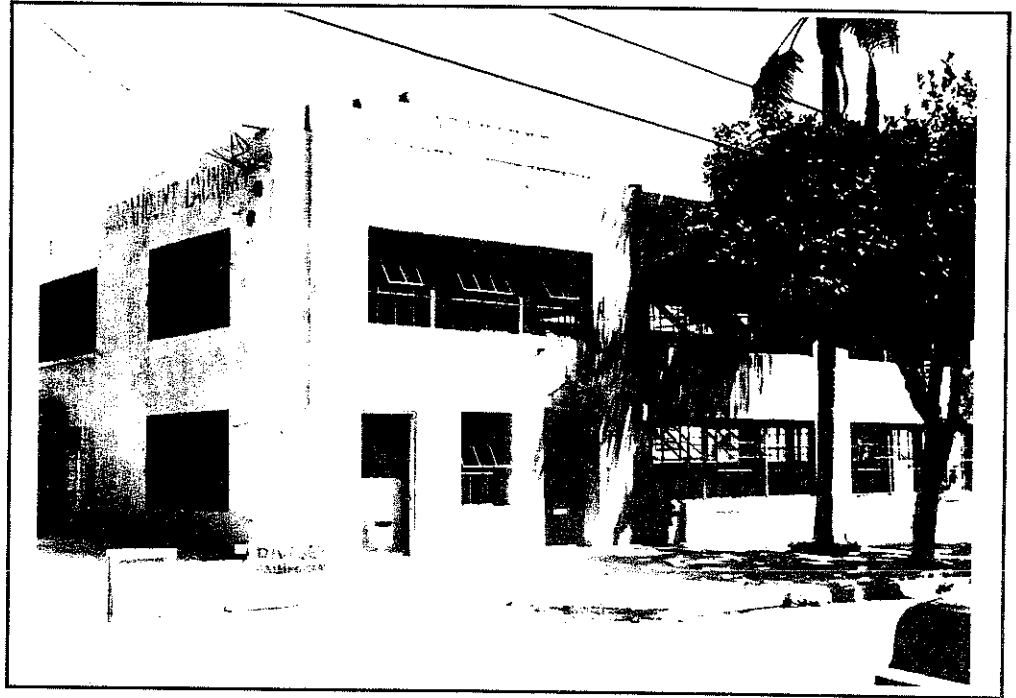
P B

ALTERATIONS:

F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

A large sign etched in the stucco-clad parapet of this large two-story, flat-roofed industrial building proclaims PARAMOUNT LAUNDRY COMPANY. The stepped front parapet tops a whole section of the front facade which extends forward approximately 2 feet from the rest of the facade. A row of three recessed metal-framed multi-paned windows, with a decorative stucco frame on all sides, are centered below the stepped parapet. A pair of walk-in doors, accented with stucco scrolls at the top, are located on either side of a centered metal-framed multi-paned window. To the right of the main entrance is a large section of the building which features two rows of the same style metal-framed multi-paned windows. The pattern is repeated on both sides and on the rear of the building.

Since the survey was conducted, this building has undergone substantial interior and exterior alteration (original building facade incorporated).

SIGNIFICANCE:

John McBain was the contractor for the Paramount Laundry Company building when it was constructed in 1924. It was 110' wide and 125' long. Four years later a 20' by 30' garage was added to the rear. The laundry plant is unusually large and appears to have been built with the idea of servicing the Ince studio across the street. It is presently being cleaned and rehabbed. It is significant for its architectural integrity and for its possible connections with the movie studios.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

3927
VANBUREN PLACE

DATE:

1923

STYLE:

MODERNE

SOURCE: RATING:

P B

ALTERATIONS:

F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:

WASH. HOTEL



DESCRIPTION:

Stucco covers all faces of the three-story Zigzag Moderne-style Washington Hotel. Most of the Moderne decoration is located at the top of the unusual parapet. Ledges outline both the bottom and the top of the stepped parapet. Vertical projections form Egyptian-influenced zigzag forms in the center and in the corners of the parapet. Double-hung, wood framed windows line the second and third floors on the front and sides. An elaborate cartouche is centered between the second and third floors, above the main entrance. The first floor of the front facade contains three deeply recessed spaces. The arched recess in the center leads to the double wooden doors of the main entrance. The recesses on each side contain large sliding doors with wrought iron railing along the front. The building side facades are plain, with a few double-hung windows on the second and third floors.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Three stories high, with 53 hotel rooms, the Washington Hotel was built by R.P. Davidson in 1923. The original owner was Jesse M. Lewis. In 1927 the large electric sign on top of the building was erected. An awning, now gone, was added over the front entrance in 1929 by the Lewis family. In 1937 then-owner J.C. Johnson built an addition. The Washington Hotel, constructed in 1923, gains historical significance because of its probable relationship to the movie industry and the contribution of the technical persons who once stayed there. The building retains most of its original integrity and is architecturally significant for its Zigzag Moderne style. This is a very early example of the style, which was not used extensively until 1930.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:
11300 -04
VENICE BLVD.

DATE:
1920

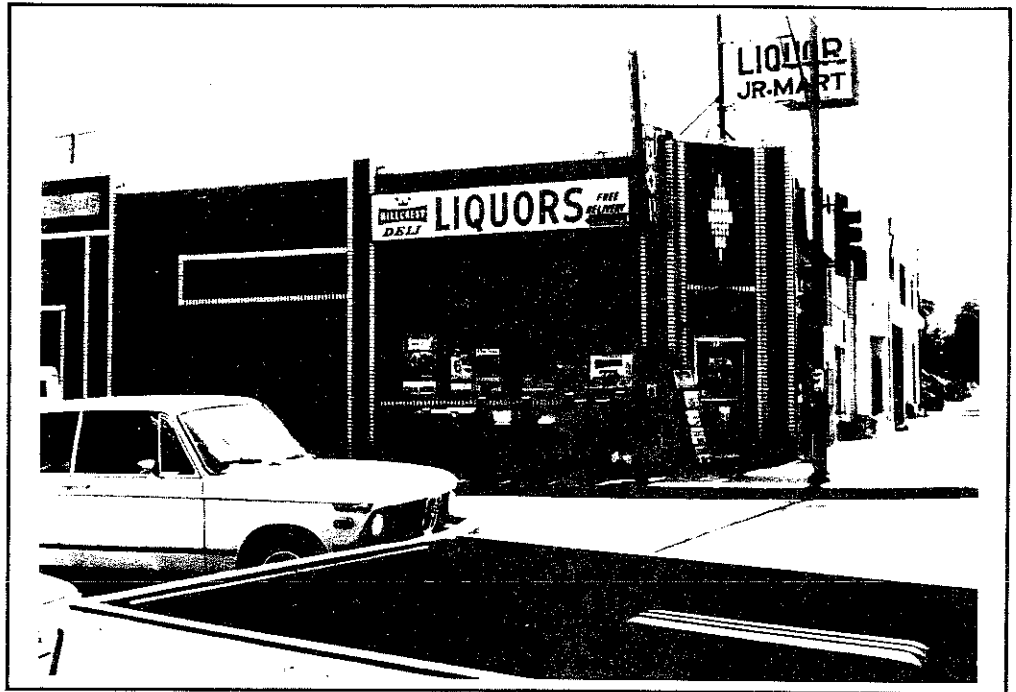
STYLE:
1920'S BRICK COMMERCIAL

SOURCE: RATING:
E B-

ALTERATIONS:
F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

Red brick, edged with cream-colored facebrick, covers the exterior of the single-storied commercial building at 11300-04 Venice Blvd. A flat roof is fronted with an unbroken parapet, punctuated by the tops of the pilasters. A diagonally-placed entrance occupies the corner. The cream-colored brick is used to make a Moderne-style diamond pattern above the entrance. A single metal-framed commercial door, topped with a transom with vertical panes, leads into the market. The original vertical-paned transoms are used elsewhere on the side facades of the building. However, the glass-paneled storefront windows are new. A side entrance, edged in cream brick, is topped by a matching cornice. The building is well-placed on a prominent corner, and maintains a substantial amount of its original architectural integrity.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The most obvious significance of this attractive building is in its architectural character and integrity. Constructed in 1920 for commercial/retail use, the building has had a variety of owners and uses throughout the years. It is known as the Rempsey Building, and is a dressed-up version of the corner store that played an important part in the daily lives of those who lived in the surrounding neighborhoods. Before the advent of the two-car family and the shopping center, which became prevalent in the early 1950's, the neighborhood store provided a vital service to nearby families.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

5788 -90

WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:

1925

STYLE:

NEO-CLASSICAL COMMERCIAL

SOURCE: RATING:

P B

ALTERATIONS:

F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

A side-facing gabled roof, clad in red-clay tiles, crowns the single-storied brick Neo-classical commercial building at 5790 Washington Blvd. Square pilasters, topped with cast concrete caps, emphasize the corners of the front facade. A triangular pediment, also in cast concrete, crowns the center section of the three-bayed store front. Two groups of large multi-paned windows flank the front door, which is topped with a transom. A freight door occupies the eastern-most bay. The awning holders visible above the windows are not original. Behind the side-facing gabled front section, the building has a flat roof, red brick walls, and a row of double-hung windows down each side.

SIGNIFICANCE:

H.M. Waterman was the first owner of the brick store building located at 5788-90 Washington Blvd. Various businesses, including the F.W. Shrader Company in 1954, have occupied the building. It is architecturally significant because it is a good example of the style of Neo-classical brick commercial buildings built in the 1920's in California and because it retains much of its original architectural character.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

5812

WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:

1923

STYLE:

NEO-CLASSICAL COMMERCIAL

SOURCE: RATING:

P B

ALTERATIONS:

M-'35,'37,'51

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

This unusual wedge-shaped building is located on the corner of Hines Street and Wasingington Blvd. Although the windows of this elegant, single-story, red brick Neo-classical building are covered with wood panels, it still retains the majority of its architectural integrity. A stepped Mission-style parapet crowns the main entrance on Washington; the roof is flat with the parapet edged along the top with a concrete ledge. A cartouche is centered in the stepped parapet. The red brick of the building contrasts effectively with a row of small concrete arches below a concrete cornice, approximately one foot below the parapet. Concrete panels with a inset pattern decorate the brick pillars which are used between each section of windows. A secondary entrance on the Hines Street side is flanked by brick pilasters with the same inset pattern. The original transoms, consisting of a row of square glass panels separated by carved balusters, is still uncovered on the west side. The back has a wood addition along the alley.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Built in 1923, this distinctive brick building was owned by Gilroy Sign Works and used as a carpenter shop. The building was soon sold to Saul Martin Lumber Co. and used for a store room, in 1925. A later owner was the California Cabinet Company in 1935. A long-term owner was the National Wholesale Dye company which owned the building from the 1950's through the 1970's. The building has retained its integrity of design and has local historical significance for its early and long term association with the economic growth of the City.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

5837
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:

1928

STYLE:

SPANISH ECLECTIC

SOURCE: RATING:

P B

ALTERATIONS:

S - '34

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

Clad in stucco, this commercial building features an elongated "v" - shape with a flat roof. Spanish style piers accented with recessed stuccoed arched panels are placed at the corners. The original main door, in the center of the Washington facade has been covered over with stucco. Small windows on each side are covered with shutters. The windows across the diagonal of the "V" are also covered with louvered windows. The red tile-clad portico above the entrance is supported with stucco-clad brackets. A small square second story section is located near the rear and supports a large hexagonal tower. The tower features a red tile-clad roof, arched openings and a wrought iron balcony on all sides. A large stucco-clad shed style addition is located on the east side.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Although this building has been somewhat altered, the prominent tower is still a striking feature. It is significant as an important building during the 1920's nightclub era.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:
5879
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1928

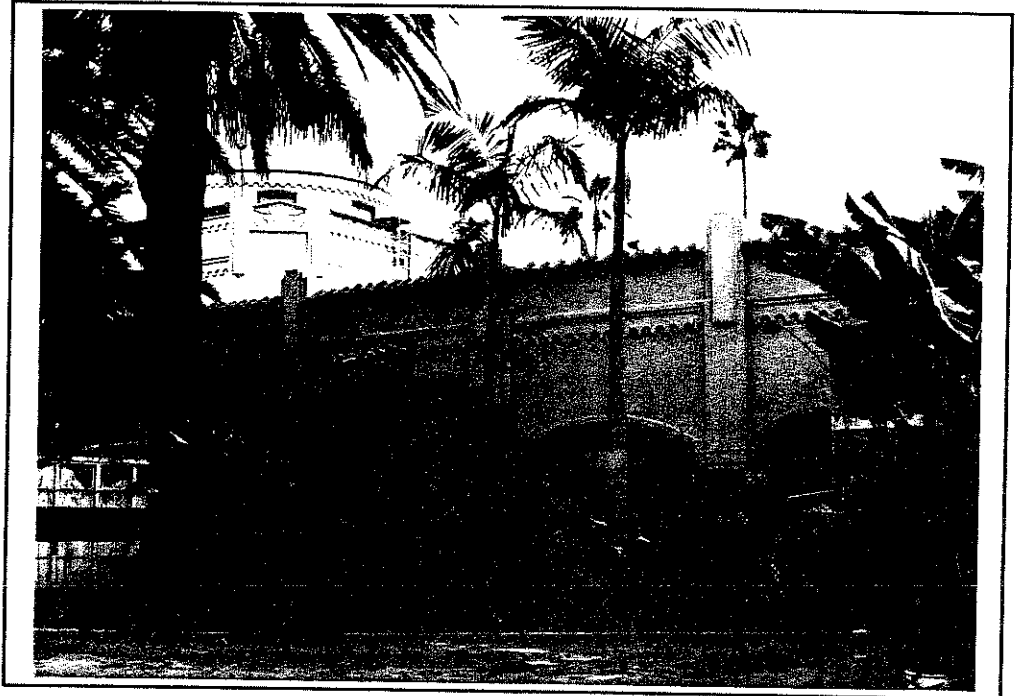
STYLE:
BYZANTINE

SOURCE: **RATING:**
E A

ALTERATIONS:
F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:
KING'S TROPICAL INN



DESCRIPTION:

The Byzantine architecture of this unusual domed building adds a fairytale quality to its exterior. The large rear portion is single story with high ceilings, but the front section features a second story. The large stucco clad dome is accented with insets of colorful tiles and capped with a minaret. The two story entry below is flanked by slanted corners. Rows of cutout Byzantine trim run below both the cornice and frieze. This theme is used throughout the rest of the building. The main entry is recessed in a large arch and consists of wooden doors with an arched multi-paned transom above. Pairs of recessed multi-paned casement windows are used on the remainder of the entry facade. Vivid tiles on the entry sides and heavy wrought iron hinges on the doors add visual character to the entry. Rows of 3-sectioned plate glass windows along the north, east and west sides are topped with arched transoms filled with random-patterned stained glass. The pilaster between each bay are topped with a Moderne-patterned crown and flank red clay-tile shed style hoods. A square tower on the west end has a door accented with heavy wrought iron hinges, and a window. A shed style addition is attached to the west end, but is not overly noticeable. There are lots of palm trees and vegetation surrounding the building.

Since the survey the City has approved a permit for conversion of this structure to a church which entails interior and exterior modifications.

SIGNIFICANCE:

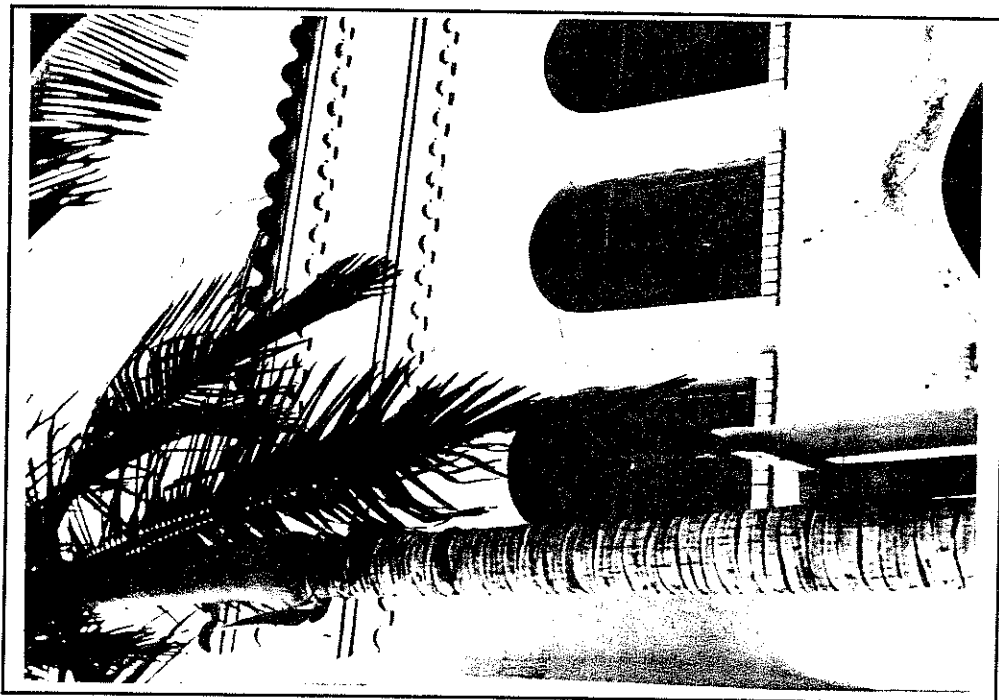
Significant for its unusual and glamorous Byzantine architecture, this building played an important part in the broad pattern of the 1920's night club scene. The landscaping is also significant because it provides a atmospheric setting for the building and fits the tropical theme.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

second page of photos

5879

WASHINGTON BLVD.



CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:
8695
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1931

STYLE:
ZIGZAG MODERNE

SOURCE: **RATING:**
P A+

ALTERATIONS:
F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:
HELM'S DISTRICT



DESCRIPTION:

The Beacon Laundry building, still in use as a laundry, relates in style and age to the Helms Building and Helms Garage to the north and west. It has strong zigzag lines, in the use of vertical pilaster with pointed, projecting caps. Vertical scoring adds to their strength. The building consists of 14 matching bays on the west side and three matching bays on the south side. Multi-paned metal-framed aluminum windows are used between the projecting pilasters. The main entrance is in the middle bay on Washington Blvd and consists of a recessed walk-in door, no longer in use. The tall triangular Beacon Laundry sign on the top of the building can be seen for blocks and fits the zigzag theme. Alterations consist of aluminum framed doors on the west sides, near the corner, with an aluminum awning and a canopy above, and take very little from the strong integrity of the building.

SIGNIFICANCE:

Not only the Zigzag Moderne architecture is significant here, but also the economic impact of this large business during the Depression, when employment opportunities were at a premium. The Beacon Laundry has continued to provide employment and a strong visual Moderne statement for over 50 years.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:

8703 -35

WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:

1930

STYLE:

ZIG-ZAG MODERNE

SOURCE: RATING:

P A+

ALTERATIONS:

F

RESIDENCE:**COMMENT:**

HELM'S BAKERY, SEE N

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Helms Bakery Building, with its myriad of rectangular volumes, is one of the finest Zigzag Moderne buildings in Southern California. It fronts on both Washington and Venice Boulevards, occupying the entire block between these two major arterials. Constructed of concrete, scored to resemble large stone blocks, the building retains almost all of its architectural character. All sections are flat-roofed except the corner towers at each end of the Washington Boulevard frontage. A border of stylized tulips runs along all sides of the buildings. Cartouches with "Helms Olympic Bread" in the center or with sheaves of wheat and a wheat border accent the parapet area on all sides of the building. An emblem on the east side shows a copy of the State of California seal and notes that Helms Bread received an award from the State Agricultural Society for the best loaf of bread. All of the windows are recessed, multi-paned, and set in metal frames. Plain pilasters form a vertical design between each window and door section. A row of fluted dentil trim forms a border across the top of each window frame and a row of zigzag trim, with an elaborate floral motif, decorates the lintels of the windows.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Helms Bread building was constructed for the Helms Bakery Company in 1930 which occupied the building in 1932. Helms provided the bakery products for the Olympics and gained a reputation which helped to sustain the company through the later years of the Depression.

The two Helms buildings are significant both historically and architecturally. The Helms Bread buildings are superior examples of the Zigzag Moderne style. The remarkable attention to detail and arrangement of the volumes which create the horizontal lines of the building are unusually fine. Additionally, it is quite unusual to find major commercial/industrial buildings which were built during the Depression.

CULVER CITY HISTORICAL SURVEY

ADDRESS:
9050
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1920

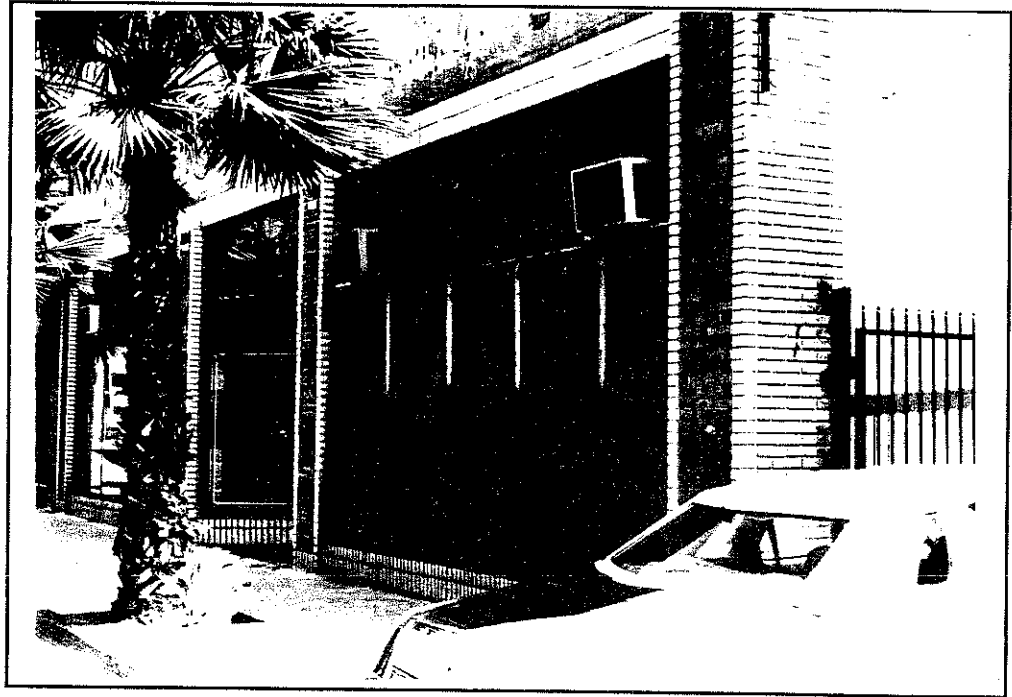
STYLE:
NEO-CLASSICAL COMMERCIAL

SOURCE: RATING:
E B

ALTERATIONS:
F

RESIDENCE:

COMMENT:



DESCRIPTION:

Tan brick walls contrast with white face brick trim to form patterns on the single-storied commercial building located at 9050 Washington Boulevard. Neo-classical in style, the building retains much of its original integrity. The original vertical-paneled transoms still exist along most of the front facade and a large plate glass window on the east side appears to be original. On the west side, the original plate glass windows have been replaced with wood. Square white ceramic tiles, along with the white brick, form patterns along the unbroken parapet. Two large recessed stucco-clad panels accent the front of the parapet. The transom in the middle is original, while the others have been replaced with jalousied windows or air conditioners. The centered entrance consists of diagonal storefront windows on each side of a wood-framed glass entry door which is accented with a large window. The tile and brick work on the front facade of this building are good examples of 1920's decorative brick work and add to its architectural significance.

SIGNIFICANCE:

City permit files do not include early permits for this building. Collins Engineering Corporation was the building owner in the 1950's and 1960's. The building is significant for its contribution to the early economic growth of the City and, more importantly, for its architectural design, since there are few examples of neo-classical architecture in the City.