



Legislation Text

File #: R-307-22, **Version:** 1

The Clerk Reports

Declaring the intent to designate the building located at 1301 Adams Street, Toledo, Ohio a historic landmark; and declaring an emergency.

SUMMARY & BACKGROUND:

Architectural Significance of the Building for consideration to become a Designated Landmark.

The building at 1301 Adams Street is historically significant for its association with automobile transportation and commerce in Toledo. The building is located on Adams Street. Adams Street became a commercial and retail hub for the neighborhood as Uptown Toledo developed into a mixed-residential commercial district during the nineteenth century.

Constructed in 1914, 1301 Adams Street is a rectangular, three storied building with a full basement. It is of brick construction with a structural grid comprising of wood and iron beams and posts. The building features extensively glazed brick exterior walls. The square shaped building measures 100 feet along each side, thus having a 10,000 square feet footprint. The gross floor area of the building, including the basement, is 40,000 square feet. The building features brick veneers and terracotta ornamentation on its street facades, with the Adams Street façade most extensively treated.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, Uptown, which was well-connected via streetcar lines to distant neighborhoods in the expanding city, also became a hub for automobile retail and service. It also housed light industrial plants that manufactured automobile parts for Toledo's own Willys-Overland company. At least two other buildings in the vicinity of 1301 Adams Street, namely the National Register listed Landers Company Building at 445 Jackson Street and 1401 Adams Street (currently the Toledo School of Art, just northwest of 1301 Adams Street) were associated with the Overland Company for light-manufacture, and sales and service, respectively.

The building at 1301 Adams Street was constructed by the Roberts-Toledo Auto Company in 1914 for their Ford automobile dealership. Roberts-Toledo was established in about 1908 by Stanley Roberts, who had a previous association with the sales department of the Ford Motor Company factory in Dearborn, Michigan. The newly formed business, located elsewhere in Toledo, appears to have met quick success, with a *Ford Times* issue, 1909, reporting that, "It's a pleasure to be able to report the results obtained by this new firm in Toledo." Indeed, Roberts-Auto had expanded its operations throughout northern Ohio by 1910, with branches in towns in the area, as reported in *Automobile Topics* trade journal. In 1914, Roberts Toledo commissioned the construction of 1301 Adams Street, for an estimated cost of \$60,000, as recounted in *Cycle and Automobile Trade Journal* during that year.

The building continued was occupied by Roberts-Toledo at least through the mid-1920s, as illustrated in the Toledo City Directory during the decade. By 1928, the Urschel Phillip Motor Car Company (and its associated Urschel-Murphy Motor Car Company) a Pierce-Arrow and Studebaker automobile distributor in counties throughout the region through the mid-1930s occupied the building, operating there through the mid-1930s as

stated in the trade journal *Automobile Topics* in 1930. From about 1940 through the 1950s, the Commercial Electric Company used the building for its business. By the early 1960s, the building was occupied by the Frumkin Tire Company, thus reverting back to its original association with the automobile industry. City Directories from the late 1960s identified the adjacent lot as vacant, indicating that the attached building to its northwest was demolished, and by 1969 converted to a parking lot used by the tire company. The parking lot remains associated with 1301 Adams Street through to the present day. After being home to the Certified Tire Warehouse during the 1970s, the building was occupied by a different business such as antique dealers, locksmith, security specialist and the Frisch's Big Boy restaurant, its last occupant in the early 2000s before it fell into vacancy.

The association with the automobile business is particularly significant since it was constructed to house an early Ford dealership in Toledo. It later became home to a successful Pierce-Arrow and Studebaker distribution business, serving as its regional headquarter. Later during the mid-twentieth century, it was used by a tire and automobile service company that added the adjacent parking lot to the property boundary. When it was not used for automobile business, the building still contributed to other retail and commercial activity in Uptown Toledo until the end of the twentieth century, when it fell into vacancy.

The building, while exhibiting disrepair, nonetheless exhibit characteristics associated with its original use. It is located in an area where other neighboring buildings that remain standing were also associated with the automobile industry. The decorative wheel motif at the roof-line may have been a reference to the automobile itself. The large display windows fronting Adams Street would have been ideal for exhibiting cars inside. The garage door on the southwest façade and the spacious freight elevator appear ideal for moving automobiles in and out of the building, and for storage on the open planned upper floors. The wide structural grid and open plan in the upper floors appears fit to accommodate parked cars. All these features - the decorative motifs, the floor plans, and the structural elements retain their integrity. The property at 1301 Adams Street is associated with Toledo's transportation history and is thus eligible to for nomination as a Toledo historic landmark. NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the Council of the City of Toledo:

SECTION 1. That this matter be referred to the Toledo City Plan Commission and the Toledo City Historic District for its review, recommendation and appropriate hearing date.

SECTION 2. That this Resolution hereby is declared to be an emergency measure and shall be in force and effect from and after its adoption. The reason for the emergency lies in the fact that same is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety and property, and for the further reason that this Resolution must be immediately effective so that the historic property will be eligible for the federal and/or state historic tax credit as soon as feasibility possible.

Vote on emergency clause: yeas 12, nays 0.

Adopted: June 7, 2022, as an emergency measure: yeas 12, nays 0.

Attest:

Gerald E. Dendinger
Clerk of Council

Matt Cherry
President of Council

Approved: June 8, 2022

Wade Kapszukiewicz
Mayor