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# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

MID-ATLANTIC REGION  
143 SOUTH THIRD STREET  
PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19106

IN REPLY REFER TO:

F78(MAR-PDS)

26 November 1985



Mrs. Sara O. Naples  
Corporation Counsel  
Department of Law, City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mrs. Naples:

We are pleased to inform you as duly authorized representative that the Buffalo Theater Historic District has been certified by the Secretary of the Interior for purposes of §§212 and 214 of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, as amended as meeting substantially all the requirements for listing of districts in the National Register of Historic Places.

Individual property owners of depreciable buildings within this district can qualify for the Federal tax incentives by filling out Parts 1 and 2 of a Historic Preservation Certification Application (sample enclosed) and submitting them to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Additional application forms are available from the SHPO. For optimum results it is important that these applications be submitted as early as possible in the planning of a rehabilitation project.

Review Boards and Commissions should become familiar with the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" (copy enclosed). These standards are used by the Secretary in certifying rehabilitation work for the tax incentives of the Tax Reform Act. Both the SHPO and this office are available to advise individuals and organizations in this matter.

If you have any questions, please call Cynthia MacLeod of this office at (215) 597-5129.

Sincerely,

*Cynthia MacLeod*

Myra F. Harrison  
Assistant Regional Director  
Office of Cultural Programs

Enclosure

cc: NR/WASO  
NY SHPO  
Mr. Clinton Brown, AIA

(DISTRICT)



THEATER HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT  
BUFFALO, ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK

District Information

1. Name: Theater Historic Preservation District
2. Location: Four blocks of Downtown Buffalo centered on Main Street and bounded by Chippewa Street, Pearl St., Pearl St. Connector, Goodell St., and Washington St., as well as a portion of the block bounded by Main St., Burton St., Washington St. and Goodell St. ( More detailed description follows.)  
Buffalo, Erie County, New York
3. Classification: Category - district  
Ownership - both public and private  
Status - both occupied and unoccupied  
Present use - commercial, entertainment
4. Ownership: Multiple Ownership
5. Location of Legal Description: Erie County Clerk's Office  
Erie County Hall  
Franklin St.  
Buffalo, New York 14202
6. Representation in Existing Surveys: Building - Structure Inventory, 1979  
Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Albany, New York

## 7. Description

### Present Physical Appearance:-

Located at the western portion of New York State, at the former terminus of the Erie Canal, and at the eastern edge of Lake Erie, Buffalo was the center of east-west commercial traffic of the northern United States until the 1950's. This unique position had made Buffalo one of the nation's premier cities. The Theater Historic Preservation District represents the heyday of Buffalo's commercial and entertainment pre-eminence between the 1880's and 1940's.

The District's approximately fifty buildings are predominately multi-storey, mixed use structures of masonry trimmed with glazed terra cotta ornamentation of neo-classical and art nouveau styling. They were erected between circa 1880 to circa 1940. While they are generally representative of the various architectural styles popular within those years, these buildings are more nearly uniform in size, scale, materials, richness of ornament and construction than any other Downtown Buffalo blocks.

The buildings are predominately row buildings of bearing wall construction. All but two were designed as "contextual" buildings which entirely fill their lots, have plain side and rear walls, and highly decorated front facades located directly on the street right-of-way line. They have flat roofs, often with skylights, and full basements which extended beneath the sidewalk. The result is a nearly continuous street facade wall on both sides of Main Street for about 2,000 feet that is characterized by highly articulated projecting first story and roof-height cornices.

This Main Street facade wall is ended at Burton St. to the north and Chippewa St. to the south at vacant spaces. The district's boundary of Pearl Street to the west and Washington Street on the east are set by the rear elevations of the Main St. buildings, most of which are through buildings that fill the 200' to 250' east-west dimension of their lots. The buildings usually housed retail use on the ground story and office, light manufacturing, and other commercial use as well as residential use in the upper stories, although general buildings, notably Shea's Buffalo Theater and the Market Arcade, were devoted to singular uses.

Especially outstanding buildings within the district include:

- . Buffalo Courier Express Building - one of Buffalo's finest terra cotta and art nouveau buildings
- . Former Greyhound bus terminal - excellent example of art moderne styling.
- . Shea's Buffalo Theater - Buffalo's magnificent movie palace built at the pinnacle of Mike Shea's movie house career
- . Market Arcade - Buffalo's only surviving nineteenth circa commercial arcade is an outstanding neo-classical design.

A descriptive list of the district's buildings follows.

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BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the Theater Historic Preservation District can be circumscribed by beginning at that point where the centerline of Washington Street intersects the centerline of East Chippewa Street and proceeding from there in a northerly direction for two blocks along the centerline of Washington Street to a point on Washington Street which is approximately 185 feet to the north of the point where the centerline of Washington Street intersects the centerline of Goodell Street. Then proceed in a westerly direction along the north building lot line of the Courier Express Building (795 Main Street) to a point on the centerline of Main Street which is approximately 185 feet to the north of the point where the centerline of Goodell Street intersects the centerline of Main Street. From that point proceed in a southerly direction along the centerline of Main Street to a point where it intersects the centerline of Goodell Street and the centerline of the Pearl Street connector. Proceed from there in a southerly direction for two blocks along the centerline of Pearl Street to a point where the centerline of Pearl Street intersects the centerline of West Chippewa Street. Then proceed in a easterly direction, along the centerline of Chippewa Street to the point where it intersects the centerline of Washington Street, which is the point of origination.

## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

The Theater Historic Preservation District's significance lies primarily in the areas of architecture, commerce, theater, and communications.

The heart of the Theater Historic Preservation District is the 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street. This section of Main Street was originally called Van Staphorst Avenue by Joseph Ellicott when he laid out the City of Buffalo in the early nineteenth century. After the middle of the last century, by which time the name of the street had been changed to the present designation, this portion of the thoroughfare that began approximately one mile to the south at the shore of the Buffalo River was bordered by large individual residences, many of which were in the Italianate style. Some of the residents of the street in this area were prominent in local affairs, including William Glenny (No. 692), Judge Charles Townsend (No. 705), Andrew Rich (No. 727), George R. Potter (No. 730), and Charles Marshall (No. 700). The William Williams house of 1863 at 653 Main (the present site of the Pierce Building) was a particularly important example of High Victorian architecture by the English immigrant architect Jacob Mould.

The commercialization of these blocks occurred in the later nineteenth century, when mercantile development began to creep northward from the downtown business district which was centered around lower Main Street. In the process, elegant mansions gradually gave way to businesses. One of the noteworthy features of these two blocks today is that they preserve many of the structures that were erected during this initial phase of commercialization, which lasted until the 1920's. For this reason, there is a general uniformity of scale, style, and materials that sets these two blocks apart from others in the downtown area.

Here too are buildings that recall the early commercial history of the city. Several structures preserve the memory of some of Buffalo's venerable business establishments. The Thomas and Elizabeth Dickinson Building at 620 Main was for many years the home of Buffalo's oldest and most important jewelry store. Built in 1919, the handsome Neo-Classical stone building contained one of the most extensive jewelry inventories in the country. The Wurlitzer Building at 674-676 Main, one of the larger and more ornate buildings in the district, was for 66 years the major retail outlet in Buffalo for the musical instruments that the internationally known Wurlitzer Company manufactured in its Tonawanda factory. The structure was erected ca. 1896 as the factory and salesroom of the A. E. Perron Company which made carriages, sleighs, and harnesses.

The Pierce Building was erected at 651-661 Main in 1921. It was the last home of the World's Dispensary Medical Association. Adjacent to the present Pierce Building, at 663 Main, stood Dr. Pierce's Invalid's Hotel. The Pierce establishment, which included a convalescent hospital on the west side of the city, was founded in 1867 by Ray Vaughn Pierce, whose son, Valentine Mott Pierce, and grandson, Ralph Vaughn Pierce, continued the business until World War II. By the early twentieth century, Pierce's, which had originally occupied the former Merrill B. Sherwood house at 652 Main, had become one of the country's largest manufacturers of patent medicines. The factory was on Washington Street, behind the demolished hotel and Pierce Building. (The factory is now demolished.)

Significance continued

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The H. L. Peters Company, which is still in business at 671 Main, traces its origins back nearly 150 years to the locksmith Herman L. Peters, who emigrated to Buffalo from Germany in the early nineteenth century. The present building was erected in the 1920's and has been changed very little since that time. The firm maintains Western New York's largest inventory of fishing gear. Finally, the Courier-Express Building at 785 Main was the home of one of Buffalo's oldest and most important newspapers.

In addition to these prominent businesses, the 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street embody the tradition of real estate entrepreneurship that stretches back to the earliest days of the city's history. The Otto Building at 636-644 Main (also known as the Otto-Kent Building) was erected in 1896 by William Otto, the descendent of Jacob Otto who had been a primary agent of the Holland Land Company in Western New York. Likewise, the Sidway Building and adjacent Spaulding Building at 775 and 756 Main, respectively, commemorate early families who gained their wealth, in part, from real estate investment. Charlotte Spaulding Sidway, who erected the Sidway Building, was the widow of Franklin Sidway, great grandson of Jonathan Sidway, who settled in Buffalo in 1836 and later founded the first gas company here. He had also erected the large Sidway Block that once stood on lower Main Street. It was one of the first speculative buildings in the city. A member of the Spaulding family, Charlotte Sidway, who was described at the time of her death as a woman who nurtured "a strong belief in Buffalo and invested money largely in real estate here," acquired the site for the Sidway Building in the early 1900's. The property was adjacent to the 1830's Spaulding mansion, the site of which is now occupied by the Spaulding Building which was erected around 1915.

The 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street were also particularly important in the early history of the automobile business in Buffalo. For many years prior to 1929, the principal showroom and sales and service department of the Pierce Arrow Motor Car Company was at 752-756 Main. This building is presently identified as the Vernor Building. The James Vernor ginger ale bottling works moved here in 1929 when the Pierce Arrow firm transferred its operations to Main Street and Jewett Avenue. Judging from the appearance of the building immediately to the south of No. 752-756, one can presume that it too was part of the Pierce Arrow business here. Its tall central arch gives access to the back of this building for automobiles, and even as late as the 1960's the structure was used to house an auto repair garage. George N. Pierce had had his bicycle store earlier further down Main Street at No. 686. At 634 Main was the showroom of the Roe Automobile Company. Here in 1903 was sold for \$10,000 the Packard car. Perhaps even more important than Roe's showroom was the area behind it. In 1903, Greater Buffalo reported that located there was "an immense yard, which is now being graded and cemented, to be used as storage yard for the machines which users of automobiles may care to leave there while attending to their business further downtown." This was one of the first, if not the first, parking lots in the City of Buffalo. Other automobile showrooms here in the early years of the century were: the John A. Carmer Company, No. 602; the William P. Eigner Company, No. 649; the G. H. Poppenberg Company, No. 670-672; and the Ripper Motor Carriage Company, No. 616.

Significance continued

This stretch of Main Street is also distinguished by the local theatrical history it embodies. Once the location of the Star and Teck theaters, it retains Shea's Buffalo, the city's largest movie house. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Shea's has been the scene of many major performances. Its presence here recalls the once flourishing theatrical life Buffalo enjoyed until the 1950's.

Together with their significance for the commercial, automotive, pharmaceutical, and theatrical history of Buffalo, the 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street possess a large number of architecturally noteworthy buildings. Retaining the character of the wave of commercialization that swept the area from the 1890's to the 1920's, many of the existing buildings share a number of design features. These include relatively low-scale, more or less continuous pedestrian-oriented shop facades, Neo-Classical style, and glazed terra cotta as a building material. These latter two characteristics were typical of American architectural taste from the 1890's to the 1920's, and reflect the fascination with Roman architectural forms first stirred by the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. This movement must have received momentum locally from the Pan American Exposition of 1901. Indeed, three architectural firms who designed buildings at the Pan American Exposition (Green and Wicks, Esenwein and Johnson, and E. A. Kent) also designed buildings in these two blocks.

No two blocks in Buffalo preserve so many good examples of Neo-Classical glazed terra cotta buildings as do the 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street. Typical of the types of structures of the period found here are: 615 Main, with Ionic pilasters framing a facade of light-colored brick; No. 621, with red brick and white glazed terra cotta defining wide bay windows, another feature common to the architecture of the period which was developing the potential for wide openings that steel frame construction provided; Nos. 622-634 and 705 (the Wilson Building of c. 1904), good examples of the type of two-story shop-front building repeated several times in the area; the Pierce Building at 651-661, the two-story facade of which is framed by giant Corinthian pilasters, a pair of which also flank the central entrance bay; No. 678-682; No. 686-688, which like No. 732 displays a particularly aggressive handling of Classical elements; No. 651-661, another two-story shop-front structure; No. 698-702, which has its facade neatly enframed by bands of repeated decorative patterns and a restrained Classical cornice; No. 740, with an impressive Roman arch central entranceway; and the Vernor Building (built as the Pierce Arrow Building) at No. 752-756. Finally, the Market Arcade (also called the Palace Arcade) is one of the finest examples of Neo-Classical design in terra cotta and Roman brick in the city.

Also within this area are terra cotta buildings that depart from the Classical norm. The Ansonia Building at the northwest corner of Main and Tupper streets is one of the rare examples in Buffalo of Art Nouveau design. Covered with a repeated pattern of green leaves against a white background, the building recalls the turn of the century designs of Guimard in France and Horta in Belgium. An exception to the predominantly white exteriors of most of the terra cotta buildings in the district is the Sidway Building. Its reddish brown brick and terra cotta clearly express the grid of the steel frame supporting the building.

Significance continued

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In addition to the considerable number of notable exteriors, the 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street possess two of the city's outstanding architectural interiors. Shea's Buffalo, which was designed by the well-known theater architects, Rapp and Rapp, has the largest and most ornate auditorium in Western New York. The Market Arcade (~~listed on the National Register of Historic Places~~), which was designed by the Buffalo firm of Green and Wicks, is the city's only historic example of the covered shopping arcade, a type of building that was popular in the nineteenth century. Deriving from much more famous examples, such as the Gallery of Victor Emmanuel in Milan, the Market Arcade once linked this stretch of Main Street with the busy market that stood at Washington and Chippewa streets.

In addition to Green and Wicks's Market Arcade, the 600 and 700 blocks of Main Street also contain several buildings that were designed by architects who were prominent locally at the turn of the century. Indeed, the concentration of architect-designed buildings here is further evidence of the district's former importance. Esenwein and Johnson designed in 1908 the building at 700 Main, which is one of the taller structures in the area. They were also responsible for the delicately detailed Ansonia Building (c. 1920). (This firm seems to have been especially interested in glazed terra cotta, for their largest structure in downtown Buffalo, the Niagara Mohawk Building, is also of this material.) The Sidway Building was erected in 1906 to designs by McCrery, Wood and Bradney. Edward Austin Kent drew the plans for the monumental, colonnaded Otto Building in 1896. It is the largest surviving building by this architect, who enjoyed an influential practice before he died on the Titanic in 1912. A student for a time at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Kent was thoroughly familiar with the Classical tradition, as this fine structure demonstrates. It is the fitting centerpiece of the Theater Historic District.

Among the preservation and restoration activities within the district are:

- . Courier-Express Building, 785-795 Main Street - interior renovation underway for reuse as central office of the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo
- . Stokes Seeds Building, 733-737 Main Street - proposed rehabilitation for reuse as night club, restaurant, and apartments
- . 698-702 Main Street - restored to original commercial use
- . Wilson Building, 695-711 Main Street - proposed for restoration of commercial use
- . H. L. Peters Building, 671 Main Street - interior being renovated for offices of Downtown Buffalo Management Corp., operators of Buffalo's Transit Mall
- . Greyhound Building, 666-672 Main Street - interior renovated as police station for district
- . 651-661 Main Street - recently rehabilitated for commercial reuse



Significance continued

- . 618-620 Main Street - Interior recently renovated for advertising company offices
- . Vernor's Building, 752-756 Main Street - proposed commercial, residential reuse
- . Ansonia Building, 712-726 Main Street - undergoing rehabilitation for commercial and residential use
- . Laube's Building, 650-662 Main Street - recent rehabilitation into restaurant
- . Shea's Buffalo Theater, 646-648 Main Street - recent restoration for entertainment use

Theater Place - recently completed rehabilitation of 622-634 and 636-644 Main Street buildings into restaurant, commercial, art gallery, entertainment, and residential use

Market Arcade Project - rehabilitation underway of 10 buildings from 597-649 Main Street into complex of cinemas, commercial and retail space, artisan shops, and hotel

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THEATER HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT  
 BUFFALO, ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK  
 LIST OF CONTRIBUTING AND NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

| SANBORN MAP ADDRESS #           | BUILDING NAME                                | BLUE SHEET ADDRESS # | PHOTO # (s) | YEAR CONST. | ARCHITECT          | CONTRI-BUTING | NOT * CONTRI-BUTING | REASON FOR NOT CONTRIBUTING        |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| <u>EAST SIDE OF MAIN STREET</u> |  |                      |             |             |                    |               |                     |                                    |
| 597 MAIN STREET                 | MORETON BOOK STORE<br><i>6070</i>            | --                   | 2           | c. 1880     |                    |               | X                   | Severe Alteration<br>Deterioration |
| 605 MAIN STREET                 | MARN BRANTI <i>6070</i>                      | --                   | 1&6         | c. 1920     |                    |               | X                   | Modern                             |
| 609-611 MAIN STREET             | MARINE MIDLAND/<br>MAXWELL'S PUB <i>6070</i> | --                   | 6&8&69      | c. 1930     |                    |               | X                   | Modern                             |
| 615 MAIN STREET                 | GEORGE & CO.                                 | - SAME -             | 10          | 1920        |                    | X             |                     |                                    |
| 617-619 MAIN STREET             | MARKET ARCADE                                | - SAME -             | 10&12       | 1892        | E. B. Green        | X             |                     |                                    |
| 621-623 MAIN STREET             | SALTERS                                      | - SAME -             | 11, 13&14   | 1908        | Bethune, Fuchs     | X             |                     |                                    |
| 625-627 MAIN STREET             | RED BRICK                                    | 625                  | 14&15       | 1890        | Esenwein & Johnson | X             |                     |                                    |
| 629-631 MAIN STREET             | SINGERS GYM                                  | 629                  | 14&16       | 1898        |                    | X             |                     |                                    |
| 633-637 MAIN STREET             | FILMART                                      | 637                  | 18, 17&19   | 1892        |                    | X             |                     |                                    |
| 639 MAIN STREET                 | <i>6070</i>                                  | --                   | 19&20       | c. 1960     |                    |               | X                   | Modern                             |
| 643-649 MAIN STREET             | DOLD BLDG.                                   | --                   | 19&21       | 1900        | Sidney Woodruff    | X             |                     |                                    |
| 651-661 MAIN STREET             | PIERCE BLDG.                                 | - SAME -             | 22, 23&25   | pre-1909    |                    | X             |                     |                                    |
| 665 MAIN STREET                 | MCDONALD'S                                   | --                   | 24&25       | 1978        |                    |               | X                   | Modern                             |
| 667-669 MAIN STREET             | NORBANS                                      | 669                  | 26          | 1901        | Green & Wickes     | X             |                     |                                    |

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| <u>SANBORN MAP ADDRESS #</u>            | <u>BUILDING NAME</u>        | <u>BLUE SHEET ADDRESS #</u> | <u>PHOTO # (s)</u> | <u>YEAR CONST.</u> | <u>ARCHITECT</u>            | <u>CONTRI-BUTING</u> | <u>NOT * CONTRI-BUTING</u> | <u>REASON FOR NOT CONTRIBUTING</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <u>EAST SIDE OF MAIN STREET, CON'T.</u> |                             |                             |                    |                    |                             |                      |                            |                                    |
| 671 MAIN STREET                         | H. L. PETERS                | 671-673                     | 27&28              | 1910               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 679-683 MAIN STREET                     | CENTER THEATER              | --                          | 29                 | c. 1920            |                             |                      | X                          | Altered/Modern                     |
| 689-691 MAIN STREET                     | TREND FURNITURE             | --                          | 30                 | 1920               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 693 MAIN STREET                         | KUEHNER                     | - SAME -                    | 31                 | 1910               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 695-711 MAIN STREET                     | WILSON BUILDING             | - SAME -                    | 32, 33&34          | 1905               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 715 MAIN STREET                         | VACANT BANK                 | --                          | 35                 | c. 1960            |                             |                      | X                          | Modern                             |
| 721 MAIN STREET                         | EXOTIC FLORIST              | --                          | 35                 | c. 1960            |                             |                      | X                          | Modern                             |
| 727-731 MAIN STREET                     | CITY LIGHTS/<br>RADIO SHACK | ---                         | 35                 | c. 1960            |                             |                      | X                          | Modern                             |
| 733-737 MAIN STREET                     | STOKES SEEDS INC.           | 737                         | 36                 | 1905               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 739-741 MAIN STREET                     | BROWNIES UNIFORMS           | 741                         | 36                 | 1905               | Kramer                      | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 743-749 MAIN STREET                     | PURCHASE RADIO              | --                          | 36, 37&38          | c. 1920            |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 755-757 MAIN STREET                     | GAS STATION                 | 757                         | 39, 52             | 1940               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 759-761 MAIN STREET                     | STEFFAN'S SONS              | --                          | 40                 | c. 1910            |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 763-773 MAIN STREET                     | SPAULDING BUILDINGS         | 765                         | 40&41              | 1905               |                             | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 775-783 MAIN STREET                     | SIDWAY BUILDING             | 777                         | 42, 50&51          | 1907/13            | McCreary, Wood<br>& Bradney | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 785-795 MAIN STREET                     | COURIER-EXPRESS BUILDING    | 795                         | 44, 46&49          | 1930               | Monks &<br>JOHNSON          | X                    |                            |                                    |

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <u>WEST SIDE OF MAIN STREET</u> |                                    |                             |                    |                    |                    |                      |                            |                                    |
| 606-616 MAIN STREET             | NEMMER                             | --                          | 100-104&106        | 1926               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 618-620 MAIN STREET             | LEVY, KING, WHITE (MARTIN JACOBI)  | 620                         | 98,99              | 1919               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 622-634 MAIN STREET             | TRALFALMADORE                      | -SAME-                      | 96,97&98           | 1902               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 636-644 MAIN STREET             | OTTO-KENT/ THEATER PLACE           | -SAME-                      | 95                 | 1896               | Edward A. Kent     | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 646-648 MAIN STREET             | SHEA'S BUFFALO                     | 646                         | 94                 | 1925               | C.W. & George Rapp | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 650-662 MAIN STREET             | LAUBE'S/ SWISS CHALET              | --                          | 92, 93&94          | 1924               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 666-672 MAIN STREET             | GREYHOUND TERMINAL/ POLICE STATION | 668                         | 90&91              | 1940               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 674-676 MAIN STREET             | WURLITZER/ WASHINGTON SURPLUS      | 674                         | 88&89              | 1895               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 678-682 MAIN STREET             | KARNOSKY TAILORS                   | -SAME-                      | 86                 | 1905               | Pfohl & Smith      | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 686-688 MAIN STREET             | KARNOSKY TAILORS                   | -SAME-                      | 86&87              | 1905               |                    | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 698-702 MAIN STREET             | BYERS/700 MAIN STREET              | 700                         | 85                 | 1908               | Esenwein & Johnson | X                    |                            |                                    |
| 710 MAIN STREET                 | STUDIO ARENA THEATER               | --                          | 84                 | 1967               |                    |                      | X                          | Modern                             |
| 712-726 MAIN STREET             | ANSONIA BUILDING                   | 722                         | 83                 | 1920               | Esenwein & Johnson | X                    |                            |                                    |

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|--|------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>WEST SIDE OF MAIN STREET, CONT.</u> |                  |                      |             |             |             |               |                     |                             |
| 728-732 MAIN STREET                    | POTTER BUILDING  | 732                  | 80          | 1920        |             | X             |                     |                             |
| 734-750 MAIN STREET                    | SCHMIDT'S GARAGE | 740                  | 79          | 1920        | E. B. Green | X             |                     |                             |
| 752-756 MAIN STREET                    | VERNOR BUILDING  | 752                  | 78          | 1910        |             | X             |                     |                             |
| 758-770 MAIN STREET                    | TECK THEATRE     | 766                  | 77          | c. 1945     |             | X             |                     |                             |

BUILDINGS OFF MAIN STREET

|                           |                                     |                |        |         |                    |   |  |                                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------|---------|--------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|
| 588-590 WASHINGTON STREET | WILLMANN BUILDING<br><i>QWMO</i>    | 22 E. Chippewa | 72     | c. 1880 |                    | X |  | Style, Materials, Deterioration |
| 596 WASHINGTON STREET     | BEN'S REST.                         | --             | 69, 70 | c. 1955 |                    | X |  | Modern                          |
| 628-630 WASHINGTON STREET | LOFT BUILDING                       | 628            | 64     | 1888    |                    | X |  |                                 |
| 632-638 WASHINGTON STREET | DOLD BUILDING/<br>WASHINGTON STREET | -SAME-         | 62, 63 | 1905    |                    | X |  |                                 |
| 690-694 WASHINGTON STREET | HERMAN'S GARAGE                     | --             | 58     | c. 1940 |                    | X |  | Severe Alteration               |
| 505-509 PEARL STREET      | SATURN BUILDING                     | --             | 120    | 1909    | Esenwein & Johnson | X |  |                                 |
| 12-20 EAST TUPPER         | DANCE STUDIO                        | --             | 56     | c. 1930 |                    | X |  |                                 |

TOTAL BUILDINGS = 54      CONTRIBUTING = 40      NON-CONTRIBUTING = 14

\* NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES ARE MOSTLY 1 OR 2 STORY COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES BUILT BETWEEN THE 1950'S AND 1970'S, THOUGH SOME ARE OLDER STRUCTURES THAT HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY ALTERED.



## Buffalo Landmark and Preservation Board

October 4, 1983

James R. Militello, Commissioner  
Department of Community Development  
920 City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202

re: Theater Preservation District ✓

Dear Commissioner Militello:

At its last meeting the Buffalo Landmark and Preservation Board unanimously approved recommendation to Common Council that it designate the Theater District as a Preservation District under the Landmark and Preservation Code. This is now in Council's and Committee on Legislation's hands.

This Preservation District application came from the Department of Community Development and the Landmark and Preservation Board is very grateful to you, as Commissioner, for the preparation and submission of this application.

The Board has been informed that, already, the State has received preliminary applications for tax benefits from several property owners anticipating designation and certification of district by Secretary of Interior. And more are expected! This bodes well for the revitalization of downtown Buffalo.

The Buffalo Landmark and Preservation Board thanks you and your Department for your initiative in this Preservation District undertaking.

Sincerely yours

BUFFALO LANDMARK AND PRESERVATION BOARD

*Olaf W. Shelgren, Jr.*  
by Olaf W. Shelgren, Jr., chairman

OWS, Jr.:j  
cc: Secretary - BLPB ✓

THEATER HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DISTRICT

BUFFALO, ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK

REPORT OF THEATER DISTRICT REVIEW COMMITTEE  
to BUFFALO LANDMARK & PRESERVATION BOARD

Sept. 8, 1983

The Theater District Review Committee finds that the District, boundaries as described in the application, merits Preservation District designation and recommends that the Landmark and Preservation Board transmit the application to Committee on Legislation of Common Council for action, together with the Board's recommendation for designation.

The Review Committee finds that the Theater District meets the criteria for Preservation District designation as defined in Article II, Section 4 of the Landmark & Preservation Code. Specifically the Theater District was once the location of the Star, Teck, and Great Lakes Theaters as well as the Town Casino. It still is the location of Shea's Buffalo Theater which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.. The District also commemorates early Buffalo families examples of real estate development, viz. the Otto bldg. at 636-644 Main, Sidway bldg. at 777 Main, the Spaulding bldg. at 756 Main.

The Theater District's buildings have a remarkable uniformity of scale, style and materials which set these two blocks apart from other blocks in the downtown area. Most of the buildings are 2,3 and 4 stories tall and show the development of the Neo Classical style from 1895 to 1925. The common building material is architectural terra cotta, unglazed and glazed. There are examples of important local architects' work, viz. Edward B. Green - Market Arcade at 617-619 Main, Esenwein and Johnson - Ansonia bldg. - 722 Main, Edward A. Kent - Otto bldg. - 636-644 Main.

Respectfully submitted by Theater District Review Committee:

Clyde Helfter  
James Speciale  
Walter Lubelski  
Daniel Sparks  
Michael Todd  
O. W. Shelgren, Jr.  
Peter M. Filim

Claf W. Shelgren Jr.  
chairman

THEATER HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DISTRICT

BUFFALO, ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK