

### Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024

## **INTRODUCTION**

Z-117-23-7 is a request to establish Historic Preservation (HP) overlay zoning for the property located approximately 450 feet north of the northeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Van Buren Street [333-337 North 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a.k.a. 332-334 North 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue], known historically as Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning (a.k.a. Milum Textile Services). Maps and photos of the subject property are attached.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that rezoning request Z-117-23-7 be approved but notes the property owners are opposed to the request.

### BACKGROUND

The subject property was first recommended eligible for historic designation in 1984 as part of the *Historic Phoenix Commercial Properties Survey* commissioned by the Junior League of Phoenix, Inc., and conducted by Janus Associates, Inc. It is not currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In October 2023, the property owners, Craig & Marilyn Milum of Milum Textile Services, submitted a request to demolish the subject property. Because the property was commercial and over 50 years old (as well as historically eligible and in the Downtown Code area), the request was subject to a 30-day hold, which started on October 31, 2023. During the 30-day period, HP staff researched the property and confirmed it was eligible for HP zoning, concurring with the previous recommendation of eligibility from 1984.

On November 20, 2023, prior to the expiration of the 30-day hold, the HP Commission initiated HP zoning for the northern portion of the property. The Commission agreed to exclude the southern portion of the property, in order to allow redevelopment on that part of the site. This action was approved by a 4-1 vote.

Once the HP zoning was initiated, the HP Officer revisited the demolition requests under Section 806 of the Zoning Ordinance and denied them, since the property was deemed to have historic value. A hearing was then scheduled, per Section 806.E.3 of the Zoning Ordinance, to allow the applicant to dispute the historic eligibility of the Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 2 of 8

property or to establish that an economic hardship exists. The HP Hearing Officer heard the case on December 8, 2023, and denied the demolition requests, finding that the applicant had failed to establish that the property was ineligible or that an economic hardship existed.

The property owners appealed the HP Hearing Officer's decision, and the case went to the HP Commission on January 8, 2024, with the Commission upholding the hearing officer's decision by an 8-0 vote. The following day, the owners filed an appeal for the City Council to hear the demolition request; the City Council hearing is scheduled for February 21, 2024.

Meanwhile, this HP zoning case is moving forward on a parallel track. The postapplication meeting took place on January 10, 2024, and hearings and meetings before the HP Commission, Central City Village Planning Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council are scheduled for February 12, 2024, March 11, 2024, April 4, 2024, and May 1, 2024, respectively.

### **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & HISTORY**

The subject property (as initiated for HP zoning) consists of one parcel in its entirety (111-41-028) and portions of two other parcels (111-41-024C and 111-41-029). The gross acreage for the property is 1.31 acres. The property owned by Milum Textile Services extends further to the south and includes 12 more parcels with additional structures slated for demolition, but the southern portion of the property was not initiated for HP zoning.

Within the proposed HP overlay is a single building that fronts both 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenues. It has an irregular plan and varies from one to two stories in height. The entire building is painted brick, with a roof that is generally flat, although there are two vaulted sections with wood lamella roofs. The primary façade, which faces 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, is designed in the Streamlined Modern style, while the east façade is representative of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century brick commercial architecture.

The building was originally constructed in 1924 by A.H. & G.H. Lawrence as Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning Company, which occupied the site since 1909. However, the 1924 building was almost entirely rebuilt in 1935 following a devastating fire at the site. Portions of the original 1924 exterior walls are extant, and the interior layout is similar to the original 1924 layout. The rebuilt facilities incorporated new wood lamella roofs—a roughly 3,000 sq. ft. roof on the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue side of the building, and an approximately 10,000 sq. ft. roof on the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue side.

Boyd Milum purchased Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning Company in 1956 and founded Milum Textile Services, which first appeared in Phoenix city directories in 1974. Milum Textile Services provided textile cleaning services to medical facilities and restaurants.

Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 3 of 8

Boyd's son, Craig Milum, took over as president of the company in 1985 and is the current owner of the property, along with his wife, Marilyn. Milum Textile Services remained in operation until 2020.

Over the years, several improvements have been made to the property. Permit records show a concrete block addition in 1937, a new show window in 1939, and a brick addition in 1941. Awnings and canopies were installed in 1939, 1949, and 1954. It is unclear when the addition to the north was constructed or when the second vertical element at the front of the building was added, but they are present in a 1957 oblique aerial. The inventory form photo from the 1984 *Historic Phoenix Commercial Properties Survey* shows a canopy at the front of the building, which has since been removed, and an infilled window at the north end of the original building, which remains filled in today.

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

The eligibility criteria for HP overlay zoning and listing on the PHPR are set forth in Section 807.D of the City of Phoenix Zoning Ordinance. To qualify, a property must demonstrate significance in local, regional, state, or national history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture, according to one or more of the following criteria:

- A. The property is associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. The property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. The property has yielded or may likely yield information integral to the understanding of our prehistory or history.

In addition to the significance requirement, the property must also be at least 50 years old or have achieved significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance. The property must also possess sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its significance.

### **EVALUATION**

In this case, the Phoenix Dry Cleaning & Laundry property qualifies for historic designation under Criteria A and C. It is significant for its association with commercial development in early Phoenix and for its architectural style and method of construction.

It is an excellent representation of the property type "New Deal Era Industrial Architecture, 1933-1942" set forth in the historic context report *Commerce in Phoenix,* 

Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 4 of 8

*1870-1942*, prepared by Janus Associates, Inc. for the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office. The following information is taken from the historic context report:

As the economy of Phoenix slowly recovered from the Depression during the latter half of the 1930s, new businesses and industries related to rail transportation increased.

While the number of new businesses rose significantly, especially at the end of the decade, the number of buildings constructed was comparatively small. Many businesses occupied subdivided portions of earlier warehouses and industrial buildings. This is particularly true of producerelated wholesale and shipping businesses.

The physical characteristics of industrial architecture from this period are distinguished by their design, use of building materials, and location. Masonry included brick, hollow clay tile, and the newest material, concrete block. Walls were rarely stuccoed, instead painted surfaces were common. Steel truss roof systems almost completely replaced the use of wood trusses, and sheet metal, either corrugated or crimped, was the dominant roof sheathing.

Cast-in-place concrete continued to be used as a structural system, primarily as columns and beams. Experiments with pre-cast wall panels were rare but can be found.

The designs for the industrial architecture of the 1930s and early 1940s were distinctively progressive. The buildings no longer reflected the eclectic period images popular in the 1920s. Rather, their designs were based on the concepts of modernism that dominated the era. Modernistic and Streamlined Moderne Styles were most frequently used, with simple, smooth walls and facades, punctuated by groupings of steel casement windows. If no reference was made to the contemporary styles, the designs were utilitarian. The location of warehouses and other industrial buildings of the period is another distinguishing characteristic. Some buildings were built as infill in the already dense warehouse district between 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The majority, however, were located on the fringes of the district and along outlying major thoroughfares. The New Deal Era buildings can be found outside of the original townsite boundaries along Jefferson, Buchanan, and Lincoln Streets, as well as north and south 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Interestingly, the *Commerce in Phoenix, 1870-1942* report lists eight examples of this property type, including the subject property. However, only two of the eight examples remain intact today.

Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 5 of 8

The Phoenix Dry Cleaning & Laundry building is also significant for its use of two separate lamella roofs. The following is an overview of lamella roof construction:

Lamella roof construction had a relatively short life. It began with Friedrich Reinhart Baltasar Zollinger, who was Town Building Advisor at Merseburg, Germany from 1918 to 1932. It was widely adopted in both its timber and steel form, but by the 1950s it had effectively become history.

At Merseburg in 1918 Zollinger was faced with a crisis in house building. No houses had been built during World War I, and the area saw the arrival of thousands of new laborers for the new ammonia works and the coal mines. In 1922 Zollinger planned a new town area and founded the Merseburg Building Company, which constructed 1,250 residences. The residences were built using the "Zollbau Lammellen Dach" (timber lamella), for which on October 3, 1921, he had applied for a patent in Germany.

This construction method, as stated by the American Institute of Timber Construction, comprises:

A roof frame consisting of a series of intersecting skewed arches, made up of relatively short members, called lamellas, fastened together at an angle so that each is intersected by two similar adjacent members at its midpoint, forming a network of interlocking diamonds. This network of lamellas forms a structure of mutually braced and stiffened units, arching over the structure between supports; with the sheathing it forms a diaphragm for resistance to vertical and lateral loads.

Lamella roofs proved beneficial for their ability to span great distances without requiring obstructive supports in the form of columns or trusses. They also allowed for the advantageous use of short lengths of wood in their construction. Because the system relied on a great number of small elements, generally mass-produced, rather than a few large ones, assembly could be accomplished through simple hand-and-tool techniques, such as bolting.

In November 1924, German engineer Hugo Junkers applied for his own lamella patent. Junkers' patent was for lamella roof construction utilizing steel elements arranged in a network of triangles rather than diamonds. A year later, Junkers also applied for a patent in England.

In 1925, the technology was introduced to the United States and, as in Europe, it was governed by a proprietary system. Holding the United States patent was the Lamella Roof Syndicate in New York City. Two firms sharing the name Roof Structures, Inc., though unrelated, were major lamella promoters located in New York City and St. Louis,

Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 6 of 8

while Summerbell Roof Structures, of Los Angeles, and Timber Structures, Inc., of Portland, Oregon, were the primary distributors on the West Coast.

Between 1925 and 1942, lamella roofs appeared in many different types of buildings, including hangars, factories, garages, ice rinks, sports arenas, and market halls. The system would become widely used in Europe, America, and elsewhere for arched roofs.

One of the most remarkable buildings in the United States constructed with a lamella roof was the St. Louis Arena, which opened in 1929. The architect for the project was Gustav R. Kiewit, with the Boaz-Kiel Construction Company as general contractor. Kiewit's design called for a lamella roof upheld by 20 cantilevered steel trusses. The lamella design consisted of Douglas fir ribs, 3.75 inches thick, 17.5 inches wide, and 15 feet long, fitted together diagonally giving the appearance of fish scales. The huge structure was completed in just over a year. At 476 feet long and 276 feet wide, it was, next to Madison Square Garden, the largest indoor entertainment space in the country. The arena was demolished in 1999.

The Ralph's Grocery Company chain began using lamella construction as early as 1929 and would continue to incorporate that construction method into their new buildings in southern California through at least the early 1940s. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on the advantageous nature of Lamella construction in a 1939 article describing Ralph's newest market:

One of the most unusual architectural features in the new Ralph's market, and one that has proven its worth in other Ralph's outlets, is the Lamella trussless roof which eliminates both view-obstructing columns and unsightly trusses. Its high-arched character makes for greater clearance and imparts an air of roominess to the interior. Secret of this novel roof construction is the diamond-shaped bracing formed of short lengths of lumber so arranged as to brace each other against forces from any direction. These roofs are said to be unusually resistant to wind and earthquake stresses. Nearly all Ralph's markets incorporate this type of roof construction.

A 1931 article appearing in *Architect & Engineer* stated that hundreds of timber-framed lamella roofs had already been built in the United States. It further stated that this type of construction was highly economical, offering "a remarkably low fire hazard, damaged members being easily replaced."

Steel-framed lamella construction was also utilized in the United States. The first structure to incorporate a steel-framed lamella roof on the West Coast was a warehouse for the Coca-Cola Bottling Works in Los Angeles, debuting just five years after timber-framed lamella was first used in the area. While lamella construction utilizing steel had

Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 7 of 8

advantages over timber, namely in fireproofing, the steel shortage brought about by World War II increasingly stimulated the use of lamella construction in wood.

However, in the years following World War II, the wooden lamella technology was no longer utilized. A more versatile technology was glued laminated timber, which according to architectural historian Andreas Jordahl Rhude, "may have helped to ease lamella into the extinct genre." And improving upon steel-framed lamella construction was the geodesic dome, patented by R. Buckminster Fuller in 1947.

Constructed in 1935, the lamella roofs at the Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning building were among the earliest in Arizona. They predate the Cattle Barns (1936) and Agricultural Building (1938) at the Arizona State Fairgrounds, and the gymnasium at Chandler High School (1939), which also utilize lamella roofs and are the only such structures remaining in Maricopa County. According to the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, only one other similar building is known to exist in Arizona (in Kingman), making these structures significant at the state level.

Despite the aforementioned changes, the property retains a relatively high degree of historic integrity, still resembling its 1930s appearance. It remains sufficiently intact to convey both its historical and architectural significance.

### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

Section 807.E states that, when applying the evaluation criteria in Section 807.D, the boundaries of a historic district should be drawn as carefully as possible to ensure that:

- 1. The district contains documented historic, architectural, archaeological, or natural resources;
- 2. The district boundaries coincide with documented historic boundaries such as early roadways, canals, subdivision plats or property lines;
- 3. Other district boundaries coincide with logical physical or manmade features and reflect recognized neighborhood or area boundaries; and
- 4. Other non-historic resources or vacant land is included where necessary to create appropriate boundaries to assist in meeting the criteria in Section 807.D.

The proposed HP zoning boundary encompasses 1.31 gross acres. As mentioned previously, only the northern portion with the rebuilt 1935 building has been included in the proposed boundary, with the southern portion excluded to allow redevelopment on that part of the site. The proposed boundary contains the documented historic building and follows parcel lines and street monument lines as much as possible. It also includes the adjacent portion of the right way, as is customary in rezoning cases.

Staff Report: Z-117-23-7 February 7, 2024 Page 8 of 8

### **OWNER OPPOSITION**

The property owners have not signed an Ownership Authorization Form or Waiver of Claims under Proposition 207 for this rezoning case and have stated their opposition to the proposed HP zoning, as it would delay their demolition of the property by an additional year. They have further stated that they plan to file a claim for loss of value under Proposition 207 if the HP zoning is approved.

### CONCLUSION

The rezoning request Z-117-23-7 to establish HP overlay zoning for the subject property should be approved for the following reasons:

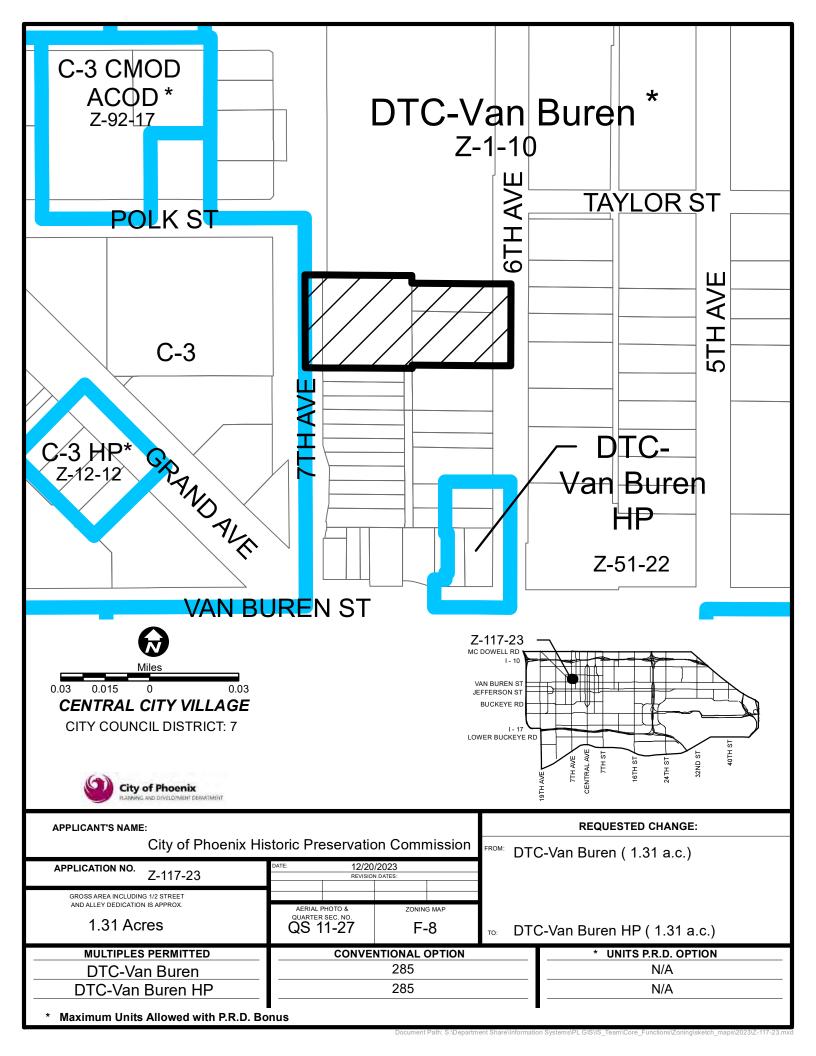
- 1. The property meets the significance, age, and integrity requirements for HP overlay zoning set forth in Section 807.D of the Zoning Ordinance; and
- 2. The proposed boundaries meet the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 807.E.

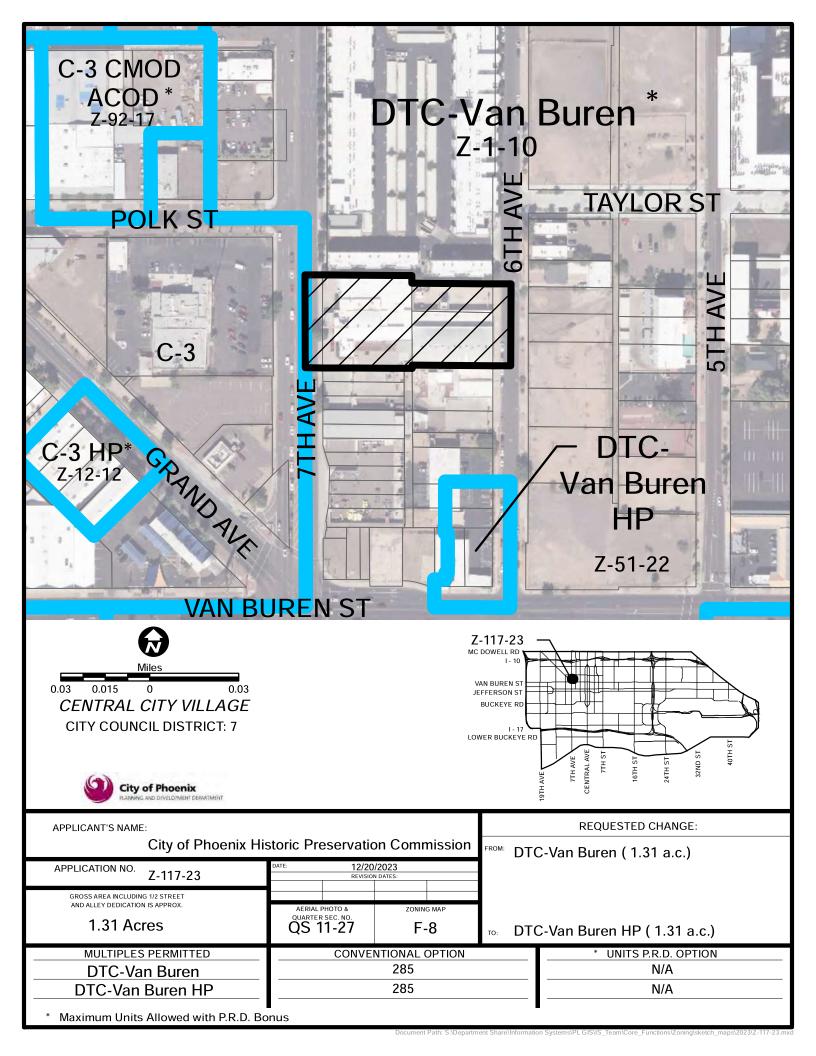
However, the owners' opposition to the case and their stated intention to file a Proposition 207 claim if it is approved may have financial impact to the City.

<u>Writer</u> K. Weight 2/7/24

<u>Team Leader</u> H. Ruter

<u>Attachments</u>: Sketch Maps (2 pages) Aerial Photo (1 page) Historic Property Inventory Form (2 pages) Historic Newspaper Articles and Photos (4 pages) Site Photos (2 pages)





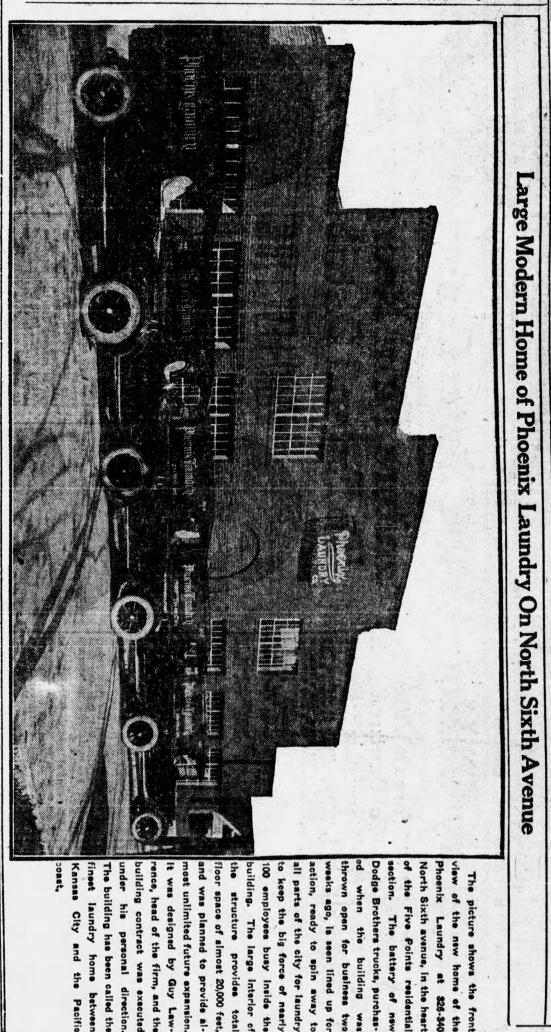
Proposed Historic Preservation (HP) Zoning Overlay shown in purple

# Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning 333-337 North 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue (a.k.a. 332-334 North 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue)

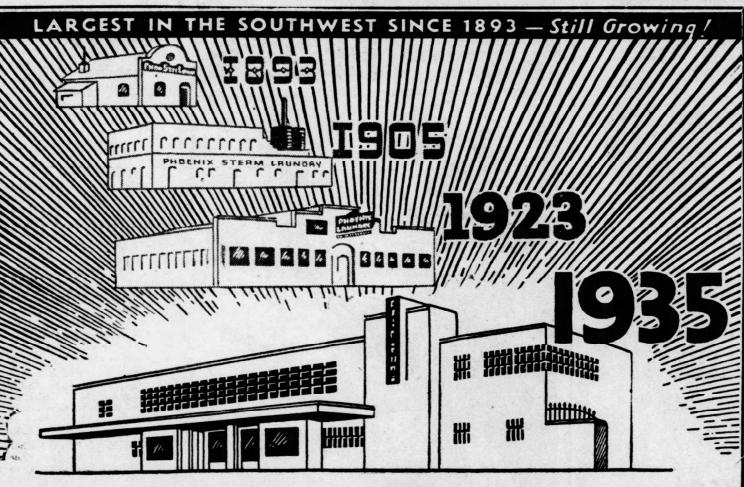


HIJIONIC DOTEDING LOUN	
ARIZONA STATE HISTORIC	PROF_RTY INVENTORY
IDENTIFICATION   SURVEY AREA NAME: Phoenix Commercial   HISTORIC NAME: Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning Co.   ADDRESS/LOCATION: 333 N. 7th Avenue and   334 N. 6th Avenue CITY/TOWN:   Phoenix 111/41/24, 29   OWNER: Phoenix Laundry & Dry Cleaning Co., Inc.   OWNER ADDRESS: 337 N. 7th Avenue   Phoenix, AZ 85007	COUNTY: <u>Maricopa</u> SURVEY SITE: <u>46-21</u> USGS QUAD: <u>Phoenix</u>
HISTORIC USE: Laundry	parapet - brick cornice
PRESENT USE: Laundry BUILDING TYPE: Commercial/ STYLE: Moderne and Early 20th Century Commercia CONSTRUCTION DATE: rebuilt 1935 ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Fred Whittlesey, Architect	WINDOWS: some fixed - some glass block some multi-light awning
INTEGRITY: original site/altered minor	STOREFRONTS: entry canopy - 7th Ave;
CONDITION: good/maintained	pilasters between windows
STORIES: 1 rear DIMENSIONS: (1) 150 (W)130   2 front   STRUCTURAL MATERIAL:	
FOUNDATION MATERIAL:	
	ALTERATIONS: Rebuilt after fire in 1935,
WALL SHEATHING: paint - 7th Avenue;	portions of exterior remain, interior
none – 6th Avenue	PHOTOGRAPH <u>layout is similar to original</u>
APPLIED ORNAMENT: concrete water table -	PHOTOGRAPHER: Osborn DATEAugust 1983 VIEW: NE
arch over 6th Avenue entry.	DATEMEDOS VIEW: NE
SKETCH MAP:	

	NCE:
AREAS OF	SIGNIFICANCE: COMMERCE X COMMUNITY PLANNING ECONOMICS
EXPL O	RATION/SETTLEMENT GOVERNMENTAL MILITARY RELIGION SCIENCE
THEAT	RETRANSPORTATIONTOURISMOTHER(specify)
HISTORIC	ASSOCIATIONS (be concise):
PROMI	NENT OCCUPANT/HISTORIC ASSOCIATION(S) The buildings were built by A.H. & G.H.
Lawe (cor RELAT	rence, as Phoenix Laundry & Dry cleaning Co. A.H. Lawerence founded Phoenix trinued below) IONSHIP TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
CULTU	RAL AFFILIATIONS
MAJUR	RAL AFFILIATIONS
ENIC TAL	FEDIME (STRUCTURAL Pare Phoenix example of wide span wood lamella roof structure
DISTR	ICT/STREETSCAPE CONTRIBUTION Focal point of 6th avenue and Van Buren area.
DISCU	SSION AS REQUIRED: (Associations, continued) odry in 1893. The Lawerence family was a pioneer business family, active
in t	the commercial growth of early Phoenix. The property has been occupied since
1909	) and the buildings have remained in use as the Phoenix Laundry and Dry Cleaning
Co.	since 1924. Buildings were rebuilt using some original exterior walls after
1935	5 fire.
CONTEXT:	ISOLATED/RURALRESIDENTIAL STREETCOMMERCIAL_X_CENTRAL SQUARE
CONTEXT	CBD: OTHER: <u>Strip</u>
BIBLIOGRA	PHY/SOURCES:
	Phoenix Directory
	Arizona Republic 1/26/24 3; 4; 3/16/24 2, 2:1-8; 7/1/35 1, 1:8; 12/11/35 2, 2
	Arizona Weekly Gazette 9/16/35; 6/18/37
LICTING 1	IN OTHER SURVEYS:
	REGISTER STATUS:
NATIONAL	DETERMINED_ELIGIBLEDETERMINED_NOT_ELIGIBLENOT_EVALUATED
	DEVELOPMENT PLANS/THREATS:
a parameter a succession	
Promise and	



building contract was executed most unlimited future expansion. under his personal direction. It was designed by Guy Lawand was planned to provide althe structure provides total building. The large interior of all parts of the city for laundry ed when the building was Dodge Brothers trucks, purchas-Phoenix Laundry at \$26-340 Kansas City and the Pacifie finest laundry home between The building has been called the rence, head of the firm, and the floor space of almost 20,000 feet, 100 employees busy inside the to keep the big force of nearly action, ready to spin away to thrown open for business two North Sixth avenue, in the heart view of the new home of the weeks ago, is seen lined up for ection. The battery of new of the Five Points residential



# Modern as Tomorrow

The Phoenix Steam Laundry, founded 42 years ago, in 1893-first power laundry in this vast territory-had, as its aim and ideal, an unsurpassed excellence of service; and to that end was the first plant dedicated.

The growing population of Phoenix, by 1905, and the splendid acceptance and response of customers to the service offered by the Phoenix Laundry, called for extensive additions to the plant, an increased personnel, and new equipment to care for the steady growth. Three years later, Guy H. Lawrence, son of the founder, assumed management.

Again, in 1923, the Phoenix Laundry and Dry Cleaning Company's plant was found inadequate to care for its everincreasing patronage. A new building was erected at 334 North Sixth Avenuewhich, for that day, was a model of efficiency.

During the summer of 1935, the building and equipment were ravaged by fire. As soon as the debris could be cleared away, work was begun on a new plant, now rapidly nearing completion.

& DRY CLEANING no.

Modern as Tomorrow in every respect, and housing the latest equipment, it represents the ultimate fulfillment of the founders' ideal-an unsurpassed excellence of service. This new plant marks the dawn of a new era in laundering and dry cleaning.

Equally as important as the costly new equipment and splendid new building are the constantly maintained high standards of skill and perfection in workmanship-the pride of each of the 250 42 employes-standards which, for years, have made the Phoenix Laundry the foremost organization of its kind in the entire Southwest.

The distinctive fleet of orange and black Phoenix Laundry and Dry Cleaning Company trucks travels more than a half-million miles yearly, rendering prompt, dependable pick-up and deliv-ery service to many thousands of custo-mers in the Salt River Valley.

You, too, will enjoy the services of this new plant that is as Modern as Tomorrow.







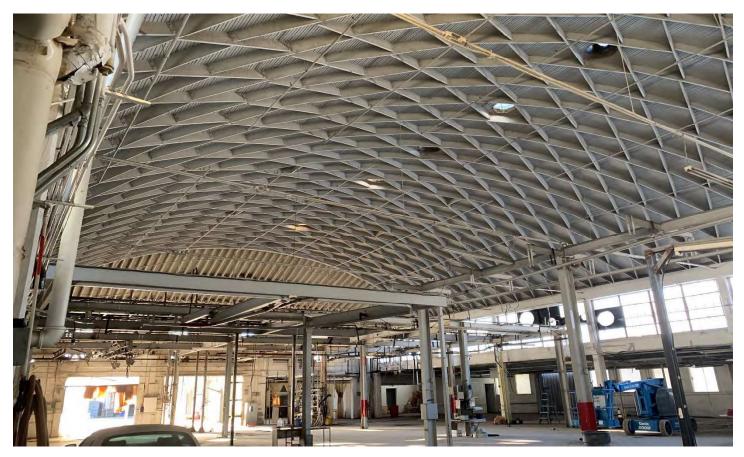
View from 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 10/20/2023



View from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 10/20/2023



Interior view, 10/20/2023



Interior view, 10/20/2023