COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MEMO REPORT
OF FINDINGS FOR CERTIFICATE OF DEMOLITION ELIGIBILITY

May 19, 2020

Address: 900 Bannock Street

Legal Description: WHITSITTS ADD B7 L16 TO 18 & E/2 VAC ALY ADJ & L21 TO 32 &W/2
VAC ALY ADJ

Current Building Name: The Niles & Moser Cigar Company Building

Construction Date: 1951

Source of Information: Denver Assessor’s Office; Sanborn Insurance Maps from 1904, 1904
(corrected to 1925), 1929-30, 1929 (corrected to 1937), 1929 (corrected to 1951), 1929
(corrected to 1956), 1929 (corrected to 1958), 1929 (corrected to 1961), 1962 (corrected to
1967); Denver City Directories; Federal Census Records 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940; Denver

Architectural
Architectural Style: Modern
Architect/Builder: Harlan E. Rathbun/Harry G Worsham

Historical
Original owner: Niles & Moser Cigar Company
Original use(s): Cigar manufacturer offices and warehouse.
Current use(s): Office
Historical background:

The structure at 900 Bannock Street was constructed in 1951 as offices and warehouse for the
Niles & Moser Cigar Company of Kansas City. The Denver branch of the company was
established around 1903 and was originally located at 18th and Glenarm. In 1951, they relocated
to their purpose-built structure at 900 Bannock Street where they remained until 1968. After
closure of Niles & Moser, the building was used by several other companies as warehouse and
office space, such as Mutual Furniture and Fixture Co, which moved in in 1969.
Figure 1. Image of the newly constructed Niles & Moser Cigar Company building at 900 Bannock Street in a May 6, 1951 Denver Post article.

**Designation Eligibility Assessment**

**Landmark Designation Criteria:**

A structure or district may be designated for preservation if, due to its significance, it meets the criteria listed in subsections (1), (2), and (3) below.

(1) The structure or district maintains its integrity;

(2) The structure or district is more than 30 years old, or is of exceptional importance; and

(3) The structure or district meets at least 3 of the following 10 criteria:

- ☐ It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;

- ☐ It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;

- ☒ It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;

- ☐ It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;

- ☐ It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;

- ☒ It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;

- ☒ It promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;

- ☐ It represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations;

- ☐ It is a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural understanding;

- ☐ It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

**Integrity:** If a structure maintains its integrity, it may be designated for preservation.

- ☒ Has integrity

- ☐ Does not have integrity
Does the structure have potential for designation?
☒ Has potential for designation
☐ Does not have potential for designation

900 Bannock Street has potential for designation as it embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type. The structure is an example of a warehouse type building in the Modern style. The warehouse type is evident in the large, low-lying massing of the structure with a customer entrance and office located along the street and a loading-dock entrance at the rear. The arrangement of warehouse structures on a single-story was a design choice that allowed for the easy and efficient movement of goods throughout the building. The Modern style of the structure is also evident in the horizontal massing and simple exterior, with ornament limited to simple tile surrounds at the entrance and windows. The arrangement of the windows in ribbons across the Bannock street façade and wrapping around the corner at Bannock Street and E 9th Avenue are also highly typical of Modern architecture. The most ornamented portion of the building is the entrance, which is clad in rectangular tiles, stands slightly taller than the rest of the structure, and has a chamfered edge. This added height and the stylized sans-serif integrated sign that reads “Niles & Moser Cigar Company” above the entrance are also typical of Modern design, where signage indicating use or the occupant is the height of ornament.

This structure is also potentially eligible as it represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community, or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics. Located at the corner of Bannock Street and E 9th Avenue, the Niles & Moser Cigar Company building has a somewhat prominent location at a corner and within sight of Speer Boulevard. Additionally, the brick and tile exterior and iconic text above the entrance with its chamfered edges help to make this structure an established and familiar feature within the Golden Triangle neighborhood.

As well, the former Niles & Moser Cigar Company building has potential for designation as it promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity. This structure is a rare example of the Modern style in Denver, especially within the Golden Triangle neighborhood. Additionally, the structure is an increasingly rare industrial/warehouse building in the Golden Triangle neighborhood, and perhaps one of the only examples of the Modern style applied to this building type within the city.

900 Bannock Street also retains a high degree of integrity. The building has experienced several minor alterations including replacement of all windows, the reconfiguring of two windows at the front elevation, the enlargement of a ribbon window towards the rear of the side elevation along E 9th Avenue, and reconfiguration of some openings at the rear, including removal of the loading dock entrance. While these alterations do all negatively effect the integrity of design and materials for the structure, it is still able to communicate its design and style while retaining the majority of its historic materials. Additionally, the structure retains integrity of workmanship and location, still being in its original location. Integrity of setting has been somewhat altered through extensive demolition and redevelopment in the area around the building, but it maintains its relationship to Speer Boulevard, Broadway, and downtown Denver. The structure does retain its integrity of feeling, still strongly expressing the Modern aesthetic and its warehouse use. Given that there are no significant historic associations for the building, it does not have integrity of association.