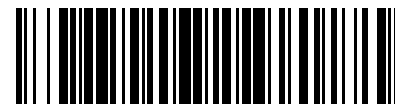




City of Chicago



O2012-3728

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date:	6/6/2012
Sponsor(s):	Misc. Transmittal
Type:	Ordinance
Title:	Historical landmark designation for Continental Center at 55 E Jackson Blvd
Committee(s) Assignment:	Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF CHICAGO

June 1, 2012

The Honorable Susana Mendoza
City Clerk
City of Chicago
Room 107, City Hall
121 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

**RE: Recommendation for Chicago Landmark Designation of the Continental Center,
55 E. Jackson Blvd.**

Dear Clerk Mendoza:

We are filing with your office for introduction at the June 6, 2012, City Council meeting as a transmittal to the Mayor and City Council of Chicago the recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that the Continental Center be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

The material being submitted to you for this proposal includes the:

1. Recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks; and
2. Proposed Ordinance.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Esser Gorski, AIA
Assistant Commissioner
Historic Preservation Division
Bureau of Planning and Zoning

encls.

cc: Alderman Robert W. Fioretti, 2nd Ward (w/out encl.)

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CITY CLERK

ORDINANCE

Continental Center 55 East Jackson Boulevard

WHEREAS, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-630 through -690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that the Continental Center, located at 55 East Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, as more precisely described in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein (the "Building"), satisfies three (3) criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, completed in 1962, the Building exemplifies the modernization and redevelopment of Chicago's Loop during the post-World War II era. As one of the earliest office towers to rise in the Loop since the 1930s, it was at the forefront of the building boom of the 1960s and early 1970s that transformed Chicago's skyline with a plethora of corporate headquarters designed in the International Style as developed by famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers; and

WHEREAS, the Building was one of the earliest skyscrapers to be constructed in the Loop in a modern architectural style, symbolizing the city's efforts in the post-war era to encourage private investment and revitalization in its aging historic core. The new urban landscape that resulted—glass-and-steel and concrete-framed modernist skyscrapers of unprecedented height and scale—demonstrated the vital role that architecture played in projecting a new image of modernity and prosperity for Chicago, reestablishing it as the leading center of American commercial architecture during this period; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an innovative International Style skyscraper and is significant in the history of modern Chicago architecture. The Building is noted for its boldly-expressed metal frame and spatial flexibility, both characteristics of the International Style as influenced by the steel-and-glass skyscrapers of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an outstanding example of post-World War II innovative design and engineering. At the time of its construction, it had the largest all-welded structural skeleton ever erected and featured exceptionally wide 42-foot building bays, which were needed to accommodate column-free office space within. Carrying the floors were some of the heaviest steel beams ever used in a high-rise office tower until that time; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the architectural principles of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as disseminated by his followers and former students. Mies' enormous influence on global modern architecture resulted from both his teaching at Chicago's Illinois Institute of Technology, where he was director of the Department of Architecture, and from his Chicago buildings. The resulting International Style skyscrapers by both Mies and firms such as C.F. Murphy transformed skylines in Chicago and around the world in the 1960s and 1970s; and

WHEREAS, the Building is one of the most significant buildings designed by C.F. Murphy Associates, one of the largest and most prolific modernist firms in Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s. C.F. Murphy designed, or was associated with, many of the City's most significant public commissions during the building boom of this period, including terminals at O'Hare International Airport, Chicago's Central District Water Filtration Plant, the Daley Center, and the second McCormick Place convention center. In addition to the Daley Center, C.F. Murphy's skyscrapers—including the Building and the First National Bank of Chicago Building—were highly influential and helped to redefine the Loop in the post-war era; and

WHEREAS, the Building satisfies three (3) criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Building retains the great majority of its historic materials and detailing; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a "significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express

such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value;" and

WHEREAS, on May 3, 2012, the Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council of the City of Chicago that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are expressly incorporated in and made a part of this ordinance as though fully set forth herein.

SECTION 2. The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

SECTION 3. For purposes of Section 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code governing permit review:

(A) the **significant historical and architectural features** of the Building are:

- all exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building; and
- the original first-floor building lobby of the Building as depicted and identified on **Exhibit B**, attached hereto and incorporated herein, including, but not limited to, its (i) overall historic spatial volume and (ii) decorative wall, floor, and ceiling materials, finishes and ornamentation, including, but not limited to, original granite wall covering and flooring.

but excluding:

- the portions of the Building's first-floor interior that were not part of the original first-floor Building lobby as depicted and identified on **Exhibit B**, attached hereto and incorporated herein; and
- later additions to the original first-floor Building lobby, including the current concierge desk and "water wall" in the Building lobby, as well as build-outs and furnishings associated with current retail tenants as depicted and identified on **Exhibit B**, attached hereto and incorporated herein.

(B) For purposes of Section 2-120-740 of the Municipal Code, the following "**Additional Guidelines**" shall apply to the Building:

Visual transparency should be maintained between the current Jackson Boulevard Building lobby and adjacent retail spaces, as well as visual transparency between the Building's arcade and the Building lobby and street-facing retail spaces. In addition, best efforts should be made to maintain and enhance the historic spatial volume, historic ceiling plane and any remaining historic building materials and wall finishes, including but not necessarily limited to granite cladding and flooring, remaining in current retail spaces and the rear portion of the first-floor lobby.

To the extent the significant historical and architectural features of the Building include interior spaces specifically identified in the designation ordinance, the Commission's review of work proposed for these interior spaces should ensure that the historic features and character of the Building are preserved long-term while allowing reasonable change and flexibility to meet continuing and new needs, whether related to the continued current uses of the Building or in accommodating future uses, and to the extent such consideration is not otherwise inconsistent with the intent of the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (Municipal Code, 2-120-580 et seq.).

SECTION 4. The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

SECTION 5. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.

Exhibit A

**Continental Center
Property Description**

Legal Description

LOTS 1 THROUGH 8, INCLUSIVE, IN ASSESSOR'S DIVISION OF LOTS 2 AND 3 OF BLOCK 8 IN THE NORTHWEST ¼ OF FRACTIONAL SECTION 15, TOWNSHIP 39 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN IN COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

P.I.N.:

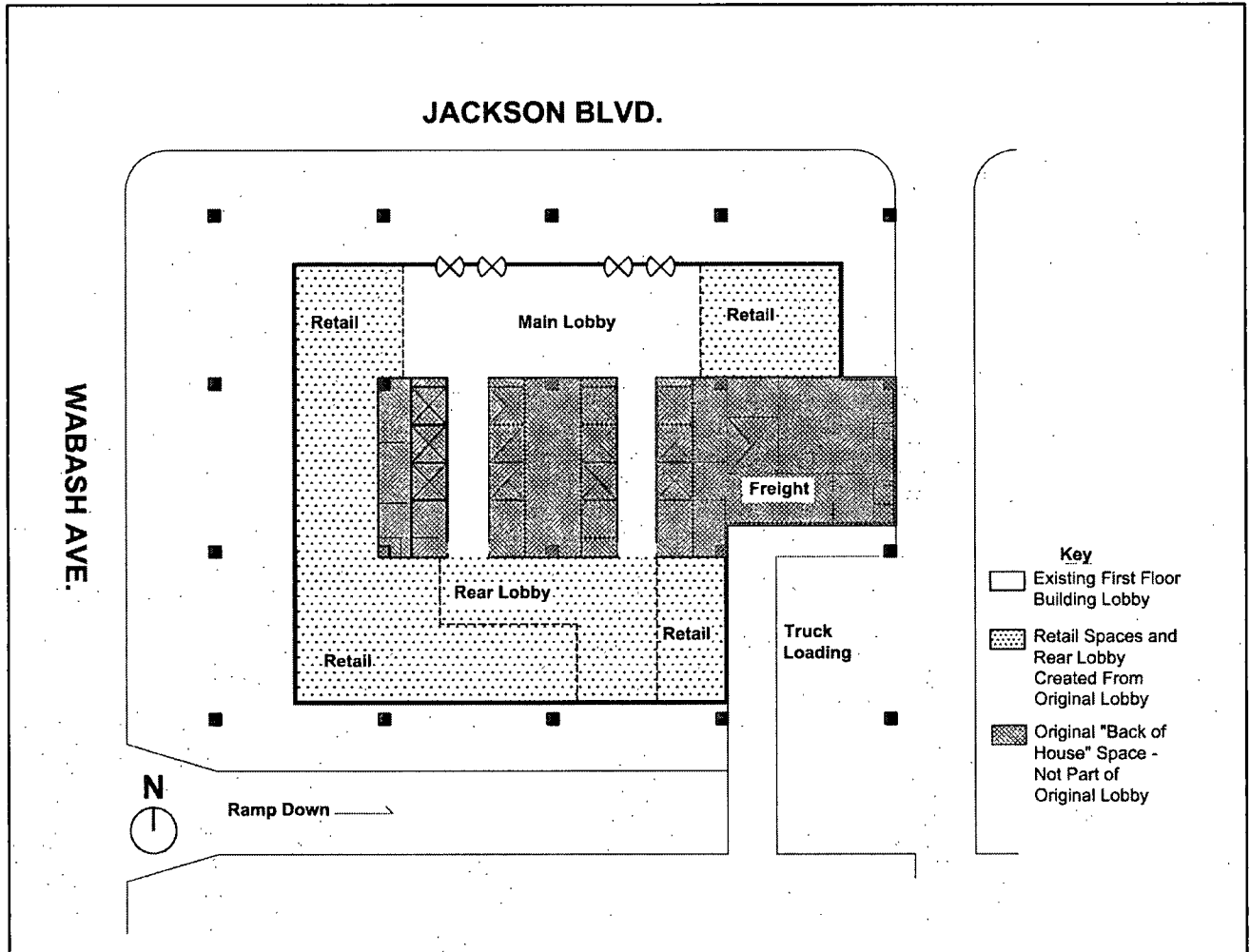
17-15-107-017-0000

Commonly known as:

55 East Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois

Exhibit B

**Continental Center
Existing first-floor building plan
(not to scale)**



**CITY OF CHICAGO
COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS**

May 3, 2012

**RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHICAGO THAT
CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION BE ADOPTED FOR THE**

**CONTINENTAL CENTER
55 East Jackson Boulevard**

Docket No. 2012-08

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago:

Pursuant to Section 2-120-690 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago (the “Municipal Code”), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the “Commission”) has determined that the Continental Center (the “Building”) is worthy of Chicago Landmark designation. On the basis of careful consideration of the history and architecture of the Building, the Commission has found that it satisfies the following three (3) criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code:

1. *Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*
4. *Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*
5. *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.*

I. BACKGROUND

The formal landmark designation process for the Building began on July 7, 2011, when the Commission received a “preliminary summary of information” at the Commission’s regular meeting of July 7th from the Department of Housing and Economic Development (“HED”) summarizing the historical and architectural background of the Building. At said meeting, the Commission voted to approve a “preliminary landmark recommendation” for the Building, based on its finding that it appeared to meet three of the seven criteria for designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code, as well as the integrity criterion set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, listed in the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (the “Landmarks Ordinance”).

The Commission’s Landmark Designation Report for the Building (initially adopted by the Commission on July 7, 2011, revised and adopted as of the date hereof) which contains specific

information about the Building's architectural and historical significance, is incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit A** (the "Designation Report").

At its regular meeting of September 1, 2011, the Commission also received a report from Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner of HED, stating that the proposed landmark designation of the Building supports the City's overall planning goals and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans. This report is incorporated herein and attached hereto as **Exhibit B** (the "HED Report").

On September 23, 2011, the Commission officially requested consent to the proposed landmark designation from 55 East Jackson LLC, the owner of the Building and a portion of the land upon which the Building is located (the "Building and Partial Land Owner") and Chicago Title Land Trust Co. under land trust # 1081106, the owner of the remainder of the land (the "Land Trust"). On October 5, 2011, the Commission received from the Building and Partial Land Owner a written consent form that indicated its consent to the proposed designation. On October 20, 2011, the Commission received a letter from the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, a beneficiary of the Land Trust, requesting that the Commission extend the expiration date of the request-for-consent period (i.e., November 2, 2011) by up to one hundred twenty (120) days.

As of the end of the extended request-for-consent period (i.e. March 6, 2012), the Land Trust had not provided written consent to the proposed landmark designation of the Building as a Chicago Landmark. Without written consent from all owners of the Building and the land upon which it is located, Section 2-120-650 of the Municipal Code required the Commission to hold a public hearing on the Preliminary Landmark Recommendation with respect to the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was convened, as scheduled and noticed, on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. in the Historic Preservation Division offices at 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600. Commission member Dr. Anita Blanchard served as hearing officer, assisted by Arthur Dolinsky, Senior Counsel of the Real Estate Division of the City's Law Department, as legal counsel to the Commission, and Eleanor Gorski, Assistant Commissioner of the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Housing and Economic Development. The hearing was conducted in accordance with the Commission's Rules and Regulations, specifically Article II regarding the conduct of public hearings for landmark designation.

Terry Tatum, Coordinating Planner I for the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Housing and Economic Development, City of Chicago, gave a presentation on the proposed landmark designation.

Anne Voshel, representing the Building and Partial Land Owner, requested and was granted party status in support of the proposed designation by the hearing officer. Nancy Ardell, representing the Land Trust, requested and was granted party status in opposition to the proposed designation by the hearing officer. Neither party gave a presentation.

Two statements were made by members of the general public, in favor of the proposed designation:

- Jean Follett, representing Landmarks Illinois; and
- Jonathan Fine, representing Preservation Chicago.

Letters of support for the proposed designation from the Honorable Robert W. Fioretti, Alderman of the 2nd Ward, and Ty Tabing, Executive Director of the Chicago Loop Alliance, were also noted for the record.

No statements in opposition to the proposed designation were made by members of the general public, nor were any letters in opposition received.

The transcript from the public hearing is attached hereto as **Exhibit C** (the “Transcript”).

III. FINDINGS OF THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

WHEREAS, completed in 1962, the Building exemplifies the modernization and redevelopment of Chicago’s Loop during the post-World War II era. As one of the earliest office towers to rise in the Loop since the 1930s, it was at the forefront of the building boom of the 1960s and early 1970s that transformed Chicago’s skyline with a plethora of corporate headquarters designed in the International Style as developed by famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers; and

WHEREAS, the Building was one of the earliest skyscrapers to be constructed in the Loop in a modern architectural style, symbolizing the city’s efforts in the post-war era to encourage private investment and revitalization in its aging historic core. The new urban landscape that resulted—glass-and-steel and concrete-framed modernist skyscrapers of unprecedented height and scale—demonstrated the vital role that architecture played in projecting a new image of modernity and prosperity for Chicago, reestablishing it as the leading center of American commercial architecture during this period; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an innovative International Style skyscraper and is significant in the history of modern Chicago architecture. The building is noted for its boldly-expressed metal frame and spatial flexibility, both characteristics of the International Style as influenced by the steel-and-glass skyscrapers of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers; and

WHEREAS, the Building is an outstanding example of post-World War II innovative design and engineering. At the time of its construction, it had the largest all-welded structural skeleton ever erected and featured exceptionally wide 42-foot building bays, which were needed to accommodate column-free office space within. Carrying the floors were some of the heaviest steel beams ever used in a high-rise office tower until that time; and

WHEREAS, the Building exemplifies the architectural principles of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as disseminated by his followers and former students. Mies’s enormous influence on global modern architecture resulted from both his teaching at Chicago’s Illinois Institute of Technology, where he was director of the Department of Architecture, and from his Chicago buildings. The resulting International Style skyscrapers by both Mies and firms such as C.F. Murphy transformed skylines in Chicago and around the world in the 1960s and 1970s; and

WHEREAS, the Building is one of the most significant buildings designed by C.F. Murphy Associates, one of the largest and most prolific modernist firms in Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s. C.F. Murphy designed, or was associated with, many of the City’s most significant public commissions during the building boom of this period, including terminals at

O'Hare International Airport, Chicago's Central District Water Filtration Plant, the Daley Center, and the second McCormick Place convention center. In addition to the Daley Center, C.F. Murphy's skyscrapers—including the Building and the First National Bank of Chicago Building—were highly influential and helped to redefine the Loop in the post-war era; and

WHEREAS, the Building satisfies the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4) and (5) of the Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a "significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value," the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; now, therefore,

THE COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS HEREBY:

1. Incorporates the preamble and Sections I, II and III into its finding; and
2. Adopts the Designation Report, as revised, and dated as of this 3rd day of May 2012; and
3. Finds, based on the Designation Report, HED Report, Transcript and the entire record before the Commission, that the Building meets the three (3) criteria for landmark designation set forth in Sections 2-120-620 (1), (4), and (5) of the Municipal Code; and
4. Finds that the Building satisfies the "integrity" requirement set forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code; and
5. Finds that the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as follows:
 - all exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building; and
 - the original first-floor building lobby of the Building, including, but not limited to, its (i) overall historic spatial volume and (ii) decorative wall, floor, and ceiling materials, finishes and ornamentation, including, but not limited to, original granite wall covering and flooring.

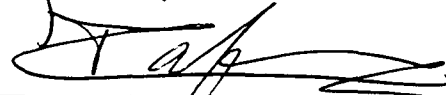
For purposes of Commission permit review, the portions of the Building's first-floor interior that were not part of the original first-floor Building lobby are not considered part of the significant features. In addition, later additions to the original first-floor Building lobby, including the current concierge desk and "water wall" in the Building lobby, as well as build-outs and furnishings associated with current retail tenants, are not considered significant features for the purpose of this designation.

Additional guidelines

Visual transparency should be maintained between the current Jackson Boulevard Building lobby and adjacent retail spaces, as well as visual transparency between the Building's arcade and the Building lobby and street-facing retail spaces. In addition, best efforts should be made to maintain and enhance the historic spatial volume, historic ceiling plane and any remaining historic building materials and wall finishes, including but not necessarily limited to granite cladding and flooring, remaining in current retail spaces and the rear portion of the first-floor lobby.

To the extent the significant historical and architectural features of the Building include interior spaces specifically identified in the designation ordinance, the Commission's review of work proposed for these interior spaces should ensure that the historic features and character of the Building are preserved long-term while allowing reasonable change and flexibility to meet continuing and new needs, whether related to the continued current uses of the Building or in accommodating future uses, and to the extent such consideration is not otherwise inconsistent with the intent of the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance (Municipal Code, 2-120-580 et seq.).

This recommendation was adopted unanimously (8-0).



Rafael M. Leon, Chairman
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Dated: May 3, 2012



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF CHICAGO

September 1, 2011

Report to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks

on the

Continental Center
55 E. Jackson Blvd.

The Department of Housing and Economic Development finds that the proposed designation of the Continental Center as a Chicago Landmark supports the City's overall planning goals for the surrounding Loop community area and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.

The Continental Center is a significant early example in Chicago of an International Style skyscraper and was innovative in its overall design and engineering. At the time of its construction, the building had the largest all-welded structural skeleton ever erected for a building and featured exceptionally wide 42-foot building bays. The building is a significant example of the work of the Chicago architectural firm of C.F. Murphy Associates, one of Chicago's leading architectural firms in the 1960s and 1970s. The building exemplifies the revitalization of Chicago's Central Business District in the 1950s through 1970s as existing businesses stayed and new corporations moved into the Loop and the Near North and West Sides.

The subject property is located in the Loop community area and is zoned DX-16. This zoning classification—the densest of the DX district designations—is primarily intended to accommodate high-rise office, commercial, public, institutional and residential development and to promote vertical mixed-use (residential/nonresidential) projects that contain active ground-floor uses. Surrounding properties are also largely zoned DX-16. Planned developments located near the subject property include: Planned Development 585 at 220 S. Michigan Ave. and Planned Development 426 at 200-208 S. Wabash Ave.

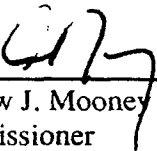
The subject property is well served by public transportation. Nearby elevated stations at Wabash & Adams and the Harold Washington Library Center/State & Van Buren provide access to the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Green, Brown, Purple and Pink Lines. The CTA Red Line runs beneath nearby State Street and is accessed through the nearby State & Jackson station. The property is also well-served by CTA bus routes running north and south on North Michigan Avenue and North State Street, as well as buses running east on Jackson Blvd. The Van Buren Metra station is located 1 block east and 1 block south at N. Michigan Ave. and E. Van Buren.

Many nearby properties have been designated as Chicago Landmarks, including the Chapin & Gore Building, the Leiter II Building, the Palmer House Hotel, the Fisher Building, the Monadnock Building, the Old Colony Building, and the Manhattan Building. The Historic Michigan Boulevard District is located immediately to the east of the subject property. The southern edge of the Jewelers Row District is located two blocks north of the subject property at Wabash and Adams.

Landmark designation and the rehabilitation of historic buildings through the use of economic incentives is supported by several City of Chicago plans, including the "Chicago Central Area Plan," adopted in June 2003, and the "Central Area Action Plan," adopted in August 2009, both of which comprehensively looked at the Central Area. Historic preservation is also supported by "A Vision for State Street, Wabash Avenue, and Michigan Avenue," released in 2000.

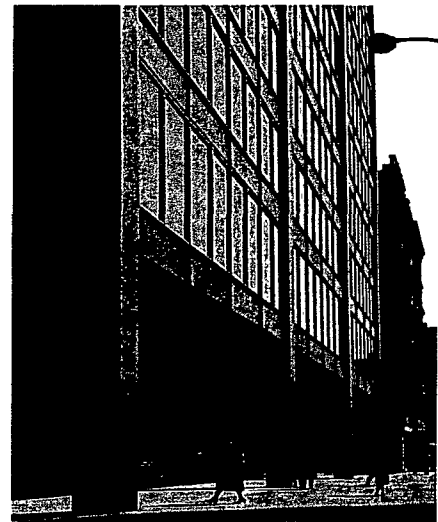
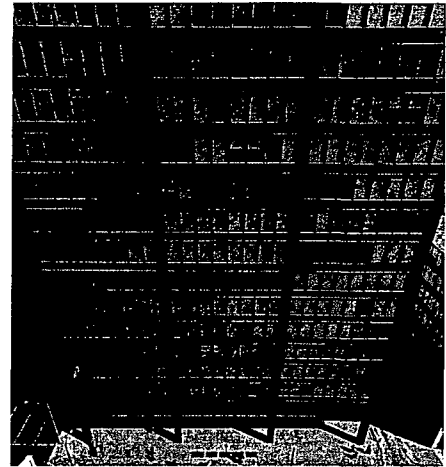
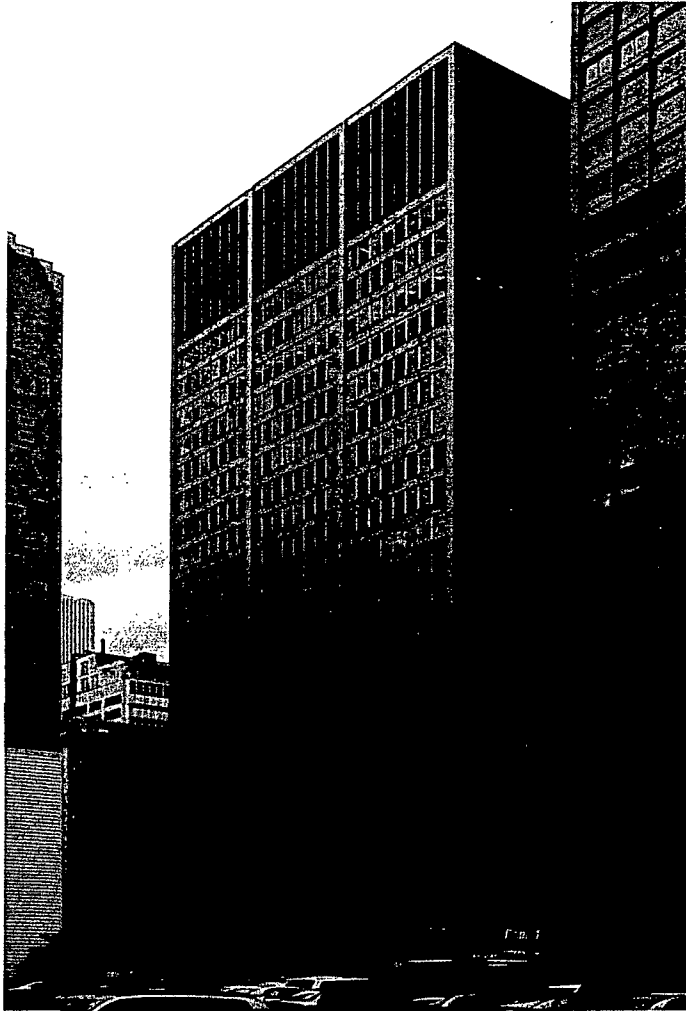
The Department supports the designation of the Continental Center as a Chicago Landmark. Preserving buildings such as this provides many long-term benefits to the City. Chicago Landmark designation assists in the preservation of Chicago's architectural heritage and the visual evidence of our rich history. Designation also supports economic development, employment, and an enhanced property tax base. It serves as a model for sustainability by retaining existing buildings and adapting them to modern conditions, versus tearing them down and depleting resources with the construction of an entirely new development. It also maintains the unique features of our city as a continued draw for tourists and new residents.

In conclusion, landmark designation of the Continental Center supports the City's overall planning goals for Chicago's Loop community area and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.



Andrew J. Mooney
Commissioner

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Continental Center

55 E. Jackson Blvd.

**Preliminary Landmark recommendation approved by
the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, July 7, 2011**



CITY OF CHICAGO
Rahm Emanuel, Mayor

Department of Housing and Economic Development
Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, <http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks>.

This landmark designation report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the City Council's final landmark designation ordinance should be regarded as final.

CONTINENTAL CENTER

55 E. JACKSON BLVD.

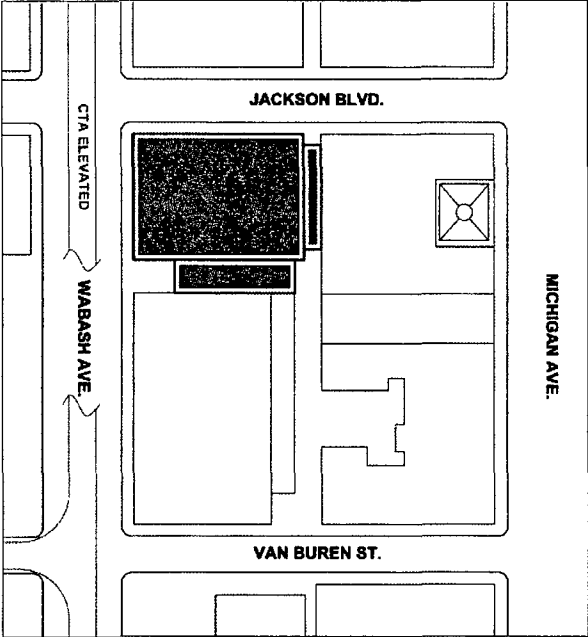
BUILT: 1961-62

**ARCHITECT: C.F. MURPHY ASSOCIATES
(JACQUES BROWNSON AND JAMES FERRIS,
CO-DESIGNERS)**

The Continental Center is an early and exemplary example of an International Style skyscraper, influenced by the radically modernist steel-and-glass towers of famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers, including C.F. Murphy Associates, the architects for the building. The International Style skyscrapers of these architectural firms transformed skylines in Chicago and throughout the world from the 1950s through the 1970s. The 23-story building remains an impressive feat of engineering and is especially noteworthy for the clear expression of its structural skeleton and its flexible, column-free interiors. Other hallmarks of International Style skyscrapers include its rectangular, monolithic massing, cellular elevations in glass and steel, and recessed, glass-enclosed lobby surrounded by freestanding structural columns at the base of the building. At the time of its construction, the Continental Center's design was revolutionary within the context of the Loop's 19th and early 20th century streetscapes, and it was widely published in national magazines, journals, and books.

The Continental Center is an important building designed by C.F. Murphy Associates, one of the largest and most prolific modernist firms in Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s. C.F. Murphy designed many of the city's most significant public buildings during the construction boom of this period. Its brawny Loop skyscrapers—many of which were designed in the International Style—were highly influential in terms of their architectural design and engineering. In addition to the Continental Center, the firm's significant works include terminals at O'Hare International Airport, Chicago's Central District Water Filtration Plant, the Daley Center, the second McCormick Place convention center, and the First National Bank of Chicago Building.

The Continental Center is located at 55 E. Jackson Boulevard in Chicago's Loop. With its sheer, gray-tinted glass walls, the building is a significant example of the International Style.



As one of the earliest office towers to rise in the Loop in the post-World War II period, the Continental Center was at the forefront of the era's building boom that transformed Chicago's skyline with a plethora of modernist office skyscrapers. The new urban landscape that resulted—featuring glass-and-steel and concrete-framed skyscrapers of unprecedented height and scale—demonstrated the vital role that architecture played in projecting an up-to-date image of modernity and prosperity for Chicago.

BUILDING HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The Continental Center was built in 1961-62 as the new headquarters building for the Chicago-based Continental-National Insurance Group. The origins of this group of three primary insurance companies dates to 1897, when the Continental Casualty Company (originally called the Continental Assurance Company of North America) was founded to offer accident and health insurance coverage in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. The new company's business was initially oriented largely to railroad workers. In 1911, Continental Casualty ventured into life insurance with the organization of the Continental Assurance Company. The two companies were referred to as the Continental Insurance Group and featured the same management. Both companies experienced steady growth in the ensuing decades, with assets increasing from \$20.4 million to \$53.3 million from 1927 to 1943, a period in which its premiums rose from \$14.6 million to \$31.7 million.

In 1943, the Continental Insurance Group purchased the 30-story Strauss Building at 310 S. Michigan Avenue for \$5.3 million to serve as its new headquarters. In 1945, Roy Tuchbreiter became President of the Continental Insurance Group, inaugurating a period of expansion and post-war prosperity for the company. Continental acquired the National Fire Insurance Company of Hartford in 1956, forming what became known as the Continental-National Insurance Group. In that year, the combined net premiums of the three companies—Continental Casualty, Continental Assurance, and National Fire Insurance—was close to \$415 million dollars. The move increased the company's status as an insurer while transforming it into one of the world's largest multiple line stock insurance organizations. The group offered life, accident, sickness, hospitalization, fire, and allied lines, casualty of all sorts, as well as fidelity and surety coverage.

During the late 1950s, the Continental-National Insurance Group consistently posted new all-time highs in terms of both volume and earnings. By 1959, Continental Casualty and Continental Assurance had grown to 2,500 employees and the insurance group occupied nearly 90 percent of the Strauss Building, leaving virtually no room for future expansion. As a result, in February 1960, Continental announced plans to erect a 20-story, \$5 million addition directly west of the group's existing building. It originally was to cover an "L" shaped site occupied by a parking lot with frontage on both Jackson Boulevard and Wabash Avenue, and would have wrapped around four adjacent buildings at the southeast corner of Jackson and Wabash, including the 11-story Cable Building on the corner and three smaller buildings to the south.

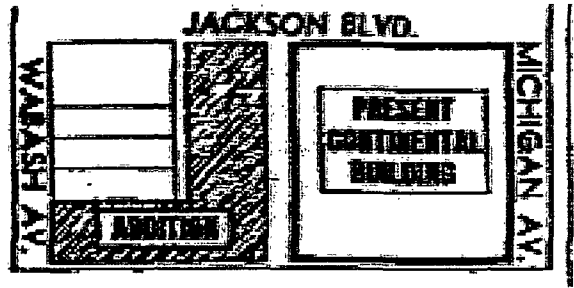
By September 1960, however, Continental had acquired these four remaining buildings and announced new plans by C.F. Murphy and Associates to erect a larger, 23-story glass-and-steel office building on the entire corner site. A.L. Jackson and Company was hired as the contractor. The new building was intended to connect to the company's existing headquarters on Michigan Avenue by enclosed bridges on all building levels above the ground floor. The combined buildings were called the Continental Center and together originally featured 1.2 million square feet of office space. In 1964, *Inland Architect* magazine noted that the new Continental Center was "elegant in its own right," without overpowering the old headquarters on Michigan Avenue.

Demolition of the Cable Building and its three neighboring buildings began in September 1960, and construction proceeded at a rapid pace. In November 1961, the last steel beam of the new 23-story tower was hoisted into place during a "topping out" ceremony attended by Mayor Richard J. Daley, Chairman Roy Tuchbreiter of the Continental-National Insurance Group, and numerous civic and business leaders. The new building was completed in October 1962 at a cost of about \$18 million, and the official opening events held that month were attended by more than 1,000 civic and insurance industry leaders. Most employees of the Continental Casualty and Continental Assurance Companies moved to the new building upon its completion, joined by 400 employees of the western office of the National Fire Insurance Company, which moved from the Insurance Exchange Building at 175 W. Jackson. Continental subsequently rented the majority of the Strauss Building to outside tenants.

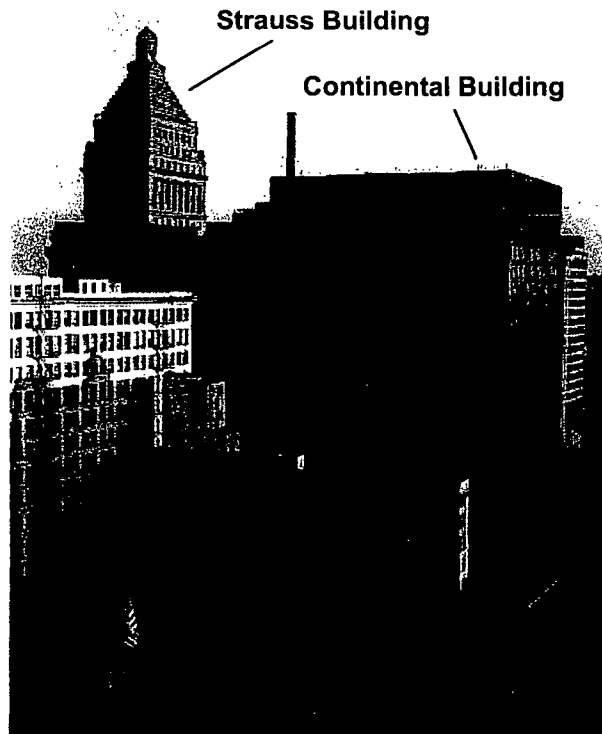
When the American Casualty Company joined the Continental-National Insurance Group in 1963, the company became known as the Continental-National American Group (CNA Group). The name of the group's building complex was then changed to the CNA Center. In 1967, the group was reorganized under a new holding company, CNA Financial Corporation. In 1972, a third building was added to the CNA Center: a 45-story glass-and-steel tower designed by James Ferris, who by then was working for Graham, Anderson, Probst and White. It was situated at the northeast corner of Wabash Avenue and Van Buren, just south of the company's 1962 tower. Both towers were painted red in order to provide a unified corporate identity. In 2003, the original C.F. Murphy-designed Continental Center was sold by the CNA Financial Corporation to Marc Realty and it has been known as the 55 E. Jackson Building since that time.

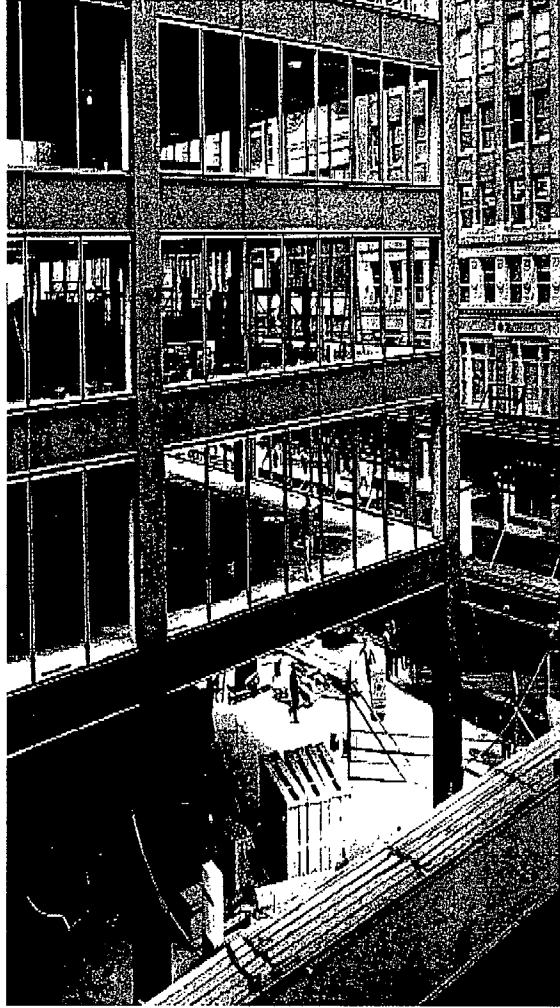
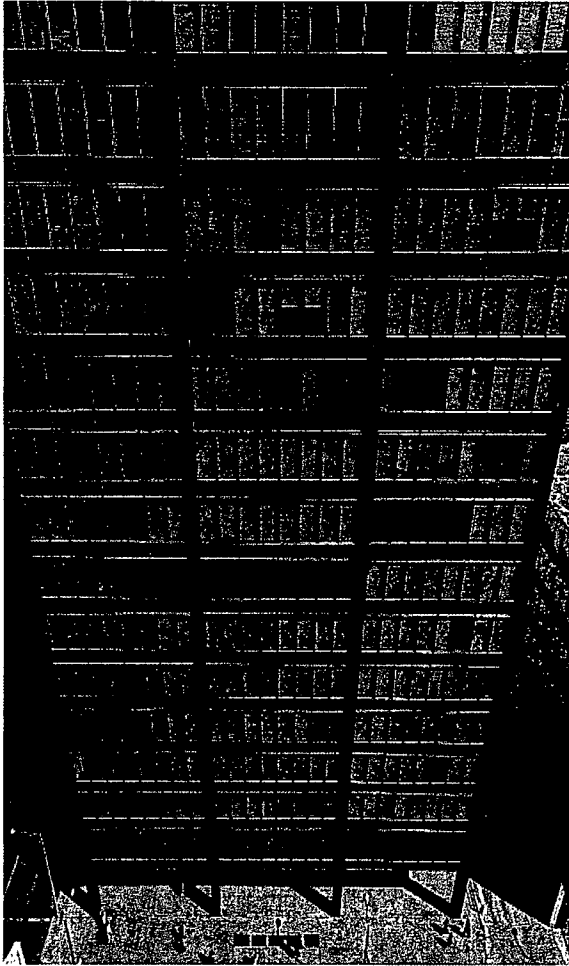
Building Description

The Continental Center at 55 E. Jackson Boulevard is an outstanding example of an International Style skyscraper that was influenced by the architectural principles of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers, whose International Style skyscrapers transformed skylines in Chicago and throughout the world from the 1950s through the 1970s. The 23-story building exemplifies the International Style in its design. Its massing is straightforward and strongly geometric—a simple rectilinear box rising to a height of 333 feet above its site on the southeast corner of Jackson Boulevard and Wabash Avenue. The Continental Center is especially noted for its boldly-expressed metal frame, which is emphasized by its sweeping bays and powerful structural columns that are freestanding at the base of the building, forming a protected colonnade around the recessed, glass-

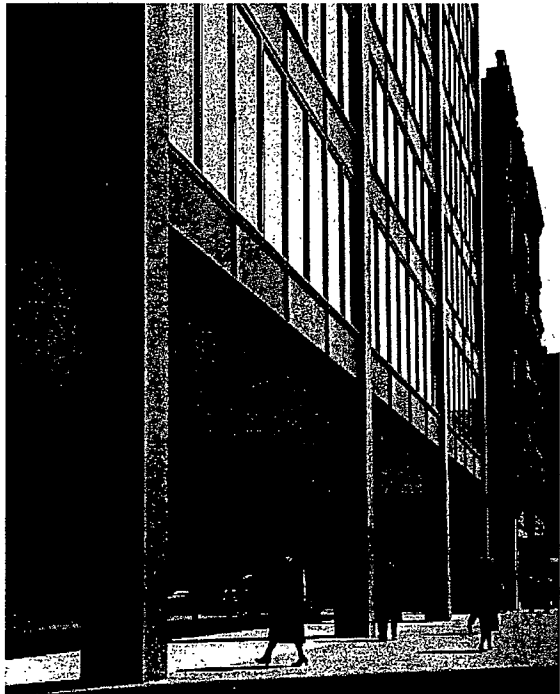


Explosive growth in the post-World War II era spurred the Continental-National Group to announce plans for an addition to their corporate headquarters in the Strauss Building at 310 S. Michigan Avenue. The original plan for an L-shaped footprint (above right) was changed to include the entire corner site of Jackson and Wabash following the acquisition of the Cable Building and three adjacent structures (above left). The resulting two-building complex featured approximately 1.2 million square feet of office space and stretched from Michigan Avenue to Wabash. The old and new buildings were connected on all levels above the ground floor by enclosed bridges that are extant but no longer in use as connectors (below right and left).





The Continental Center is noteworthy for its boldly-expressed metal frame, which is emphasized by sweeping horizontal structural bays and visually powerful columns that are freestanding at the base of the building, forming a colonnade around the recessed, glass-enclosed ground floor. It was the largest all-welded building when completed in 1962, and its 42-foot building bays were considered exceptionally wide in its day. These photos were taken during construction or soon after completion.



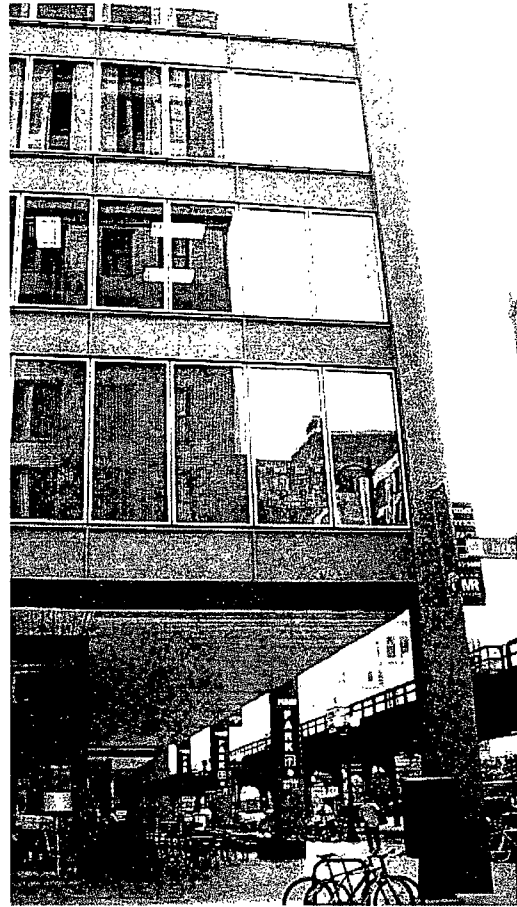
enclosed lobby and storefronts.

Steel and glass were typically the dominant materials used in International Style skyscrapers. At the Continental Center, steel is used for the structural frame and also as the material for the exterior curtain wall. The spandrel girders and the columns are sheathed in 3/8-inch-thick plates of continuously-welded carbon steel painted charcoal gray (originally painted black). During construction, fireproofing concrete was poured between the carbon plates and the structural frame, thereby eliminating the need for elaborate and costly formwork. The building's cellular east-west elevations are divided into three bays and the north-south elevations are divided into four bays. Each bay features eight floor-to-ceiling windows of gray-tinted glass.

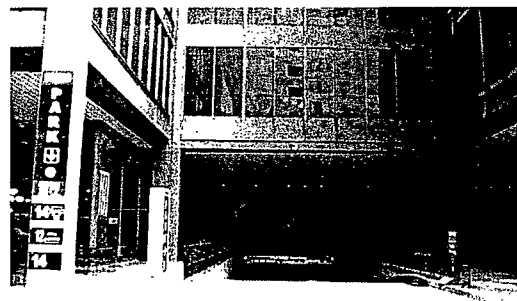
To this day, the Continental Center remains an impressive feat of engineering, featuring huge spans of steel framing that display both visual power and simplicity. A mere 20 columns of high-strength A440 steel carry the building's weight 100 feet below street level to bedrock. Stretching between these columns are 42-foot spandrel girders, creating building bays that were considered exceptionally wide in its day. All of the Continental Center's connections are welded, rather than riveted, making it the largest all-welded building when completed in 1962. Carrying the floors are some of the heaviest steel beams ever used in a high-rise office structure until that time. They are deep enough (2 feet 3 inches) to accommodate regular openings for the building's air conditioning ducts and mechanical conduits, yet shallow enough to keep floor-to-floor depth to 12 feet, which allowed all floors above the ground level to connect with those in the older Strauss Building to the east. The enclosed bridges that stretch between the Continental Center and the Strauss Building on Michigan Avenue are extant, but the two buildings are no longer internally connected and the spaces are mainly used for tenant storage and mechanical systems.

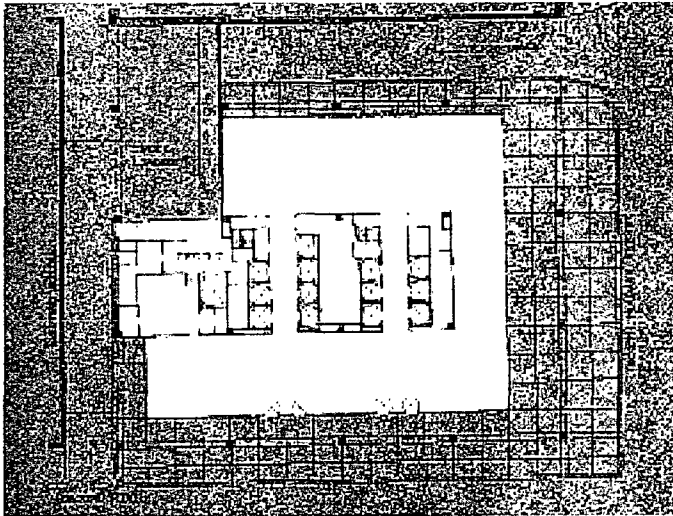
The Continental Center is surrounded by a 20-foot-wide, granite-paved sidewalk. An alley to the east of the building and accessed from Jackson Boulevard leads to truck docks, while a driveway to the south of the building and accessible from Wabash Avenue provides vehicular access to an underground garage that accommodates approximately 170 cars. The Continental Center's glass-enclosed lobby is accessed by two revolving doors on the Jackson Boulevard elevation. The U-shaped lobby originally wrapped around three sides of the 42-by-84-foot service core. (It has since been subdivided with glass walls and other partitions into a smaller lobby plus retail/commercial space.) Slabs of tan granite matching the sidewalk pavement serve as flooring for the lobby and as cladding for the elevator banks which have unadorned nickel-plated doors.

The Continental Center features exceptional interior flexibility, a hallmark of International Style skyscrapers. The functional character of this building is maintained by its open, column-free office floors. Wide, 42-foot bays yield 19,000 square feet of space on each floor, interrupted only by a compact, central service core. The column-free floor space was ideal for the large clerical pool area required by the Continental-National Insurance Group, and its versatility also allowed for future space needs. A 1963 critique of the building in *Progressive Architecture* noted that, "The uncompromisingly functional

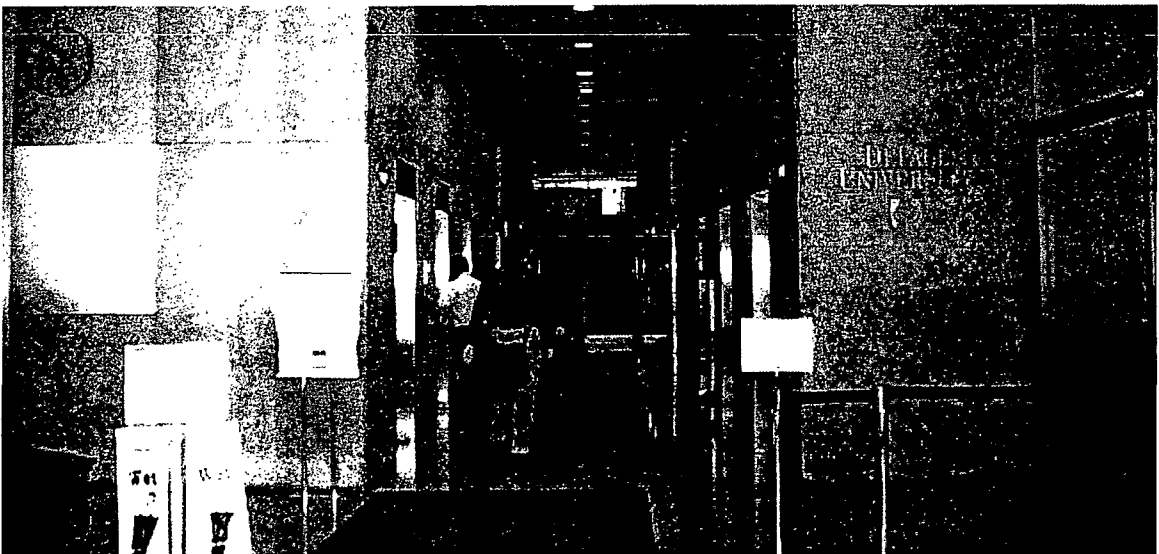


The Continental Center's massing is highly rational and geometric—a simple rectilinear box rising to a height of 333 feet above its site on the southeast corner of Jackson Boulevard and Wabash Avenue. Each building bay features eight floor-to-ceiling windows of gray-tinted glass. A driveway to the south of the building and accessible from Wabash provides access to an underground garage that accommodates approximately 170 cars.





The Continental Building's original U-shaped lobby wrapped around three sides of the 42-by-84-foot service core (left). Although now truncated, the existing building lobby visually flows through the building's glass skin onto the exterior plaza. Plaza, lobby floor, and elevator walls are all covered in the same granite material.



character of this structure, visible in its black-painted steel exterior, is maintained in its open, column-free office floors. The design closely follows the principles of the 19th-Century Chicago School.”

Upon its completion in 1962, the Continental Center received widespread acclaim in the architecture community and was published in national magazines and journals, such as *Architectural Forum* (May 1963), *Progressive Architecture* (September 1963), and *Inland Architect* (May 1964). In 1964, the Continental Center received an Honor Award from the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In its critique, the awards jury cited the building as an outstanding example of the new Chicago school of architecture. The building has also been featured in a variety of books, including the *AIA Guide to Chicago*, *Chicago 1930-70: Building, Planning, and Urban Technology*, and *Chicago's Famous Buildings*.

In 1963, *Architectural Forum* magazine praised the Continental Center as “Chicago’s newest office skyscraper, and one of its finest yet,” while noting that it “carries on its city’s steel skyscraper traditions at a fine, big scale.” In his book, *Chicago 1930-70: Building, Planning and Urban Technology*, architectural historian Carl Condit has noted the building’s bold expression of its steel frame:

The Continental Building marked a decisive and apparently permanent break with the smooth curtain walls of the previous decade. The articulated walls of the Continental addition are so emphatically drawn from the central tradition of the Chicago school as to make it seem as though the long discontinuities between past and present had never existed... The massive steel frame of the Continental Center is expressed in the street elevations with a relentless assertiveness, so that there is no mistaking what lies behind.

C.F. MURPHY ASSOCIATES

The Continental Center was designed by C.F. Murphy Associates (Jacques Brownson and James Ferris, co-designers). The firm was founded in 1959 by Charles F. Murphy, Sr. (1890-1985). Born in New Jersey and raised in Chicago, Murphy began his career in Daniel Burnham’s office in 1911. After Burnham’s death in 1912, Ernest R. Graham became head of the firm. Murphy became the administrative “right-hand man” to Graham both then and later in the firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst and White. After Graham’s death in 1936, Murphy and two associates, Alfred P. Shaw and Sigurd Naess, formed the office of Shaw, Naess and Murphy. After Shaw withdrew from this firm in 1946, Naess and Murphy practiced together for twelve more years, designing the city’s first major skyscraper in the post-war era, the Prudential Building (1952-55), as well as the Chicago Sun-Times Building (1957; demolished).

After Naess’s retirement in 1958, C.F. Murphy Associates was formed and quickly became one of the largest and most prolific firms in Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s, comparable only to Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill in terms of their high-

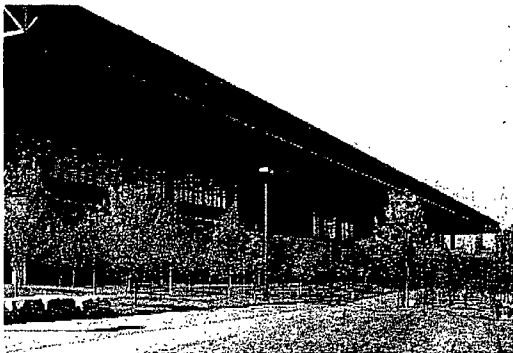
profile modernist projects. C.F. Murphy designed, or was associated with, the City's most significant public commissions during the building boom of this period, and its brawny office towers helped to redefine the Loop in the post-war era. In forming the design teams for its important commissions, the firm drew on former Illinois Institute of Technology students of famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, including Jacques Brownson and James Ferris. Such talented architects were attracted to the firm due to the virtual free reign they were provided over the commissions they supervised. This freedom resulted in a number of influential and award-winning buildings noteworthy for their architectural design and engineering.

C.F. Murphy's large-scale public commissions included terminals at O'Hare International Airport (opened 1963), Chicago's Central District Water Filtration Plant (opened 1964), the Daley Center (originally the Chicago Civic Center, 1963-65), and the second McCormick Place convention center (1967-71). The firm also served as associate architects with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe for the massive Federal Center complex (1959-64) in the Loop. Many of the firm's works were designed in the International Style as developed by Mies van der Rohe, with rectangular frames expressed in steel and glass. However, others showcased the versatility of its designers, such as the granite-clad First National Bank of Chicago Building (1964-69) with its gracefully tapering elevations, and the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building (1968), with its Brutalist reinforced-concrete design. Other important Chicago works by C.F. Murphy include an eleven-building expansion of DePaul University's Lincoln Park campus (early 1960s), the Mercy Hospital complex on the Near South Side (mid-1960s), Malcolm X College (1971), and the Cook County Juvenile Center (1973).

Jacques Brownson (1923-2012) earned his B.S. and M.S. at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1948 and 1954, respectively, studying under Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. For his master's thesis he designed and built his own home in Geneva, Illinois—a house of glass that received much favorable national attention. Brownson worked for various Chicago architects, including A. James Speyer in 1947 and Frazier & Raftery from 1950-53, before he and Bruno Conterato, another student of Mies, opened their own office in 1955. Brownson, like his mentor Mies, was both a builder and an educator. He taught architecture at IIT from 1948 to 1959, when he joined C. F. Murphy Associates as chief designer. Besides the Continental Center, Brownson's noteworthy designs include the Daley Center (a designated Chicago Landmark).

In 1966 he left C.F. Murphy to serve as chairman of the Department of Architecture at the University of Michigan. Brownson returned to Chicago briefly in 1968 to serve as the Managing Architect for the Public Building Commission of Chicago. In 1972 he moved to Colorado to plan the Auraria Higher Education Center in Denver, taking his cue from Mies's plan for the IIT campus. He served as Director of Colorado's State Buildings Division from 1976 to 1986.

James Ferris (1925-2002) studied architecture at IIT, receiving a B.S. in 1949 and a M.S. in 1951. After graduating, he worked for Philip Johnson in New Canaan, Connecticut, and the Austin Company in New York City before traveling to Italy in 1954



C.F. Murphy Associates, the architectural firm that designed the Continental Center, was one of the largest and most prolific modernist firms in Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s. In addition to the Continental Center, the firm's significant works include (clockwise from top left): terminals at O'Hare International Airport, the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building, Chicago's Central District Water Filtration Plant, and the second McCormick Place convention center.

with Myron Goldsmith to study under noted structural engineer Pier Luigi Nervi. In 1955, Ferris returned to the United States to work for Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in their San Francisco office and subsequently transferred to the firm's Chicago office in 1957. He left in 1960 to work for C.F. Murphy, where he was associated with several large projects, including the Continental Center, a restoration and addition to the Northern Trust Building, and as a member of the team that designed the First National Bank of Chicago Building.

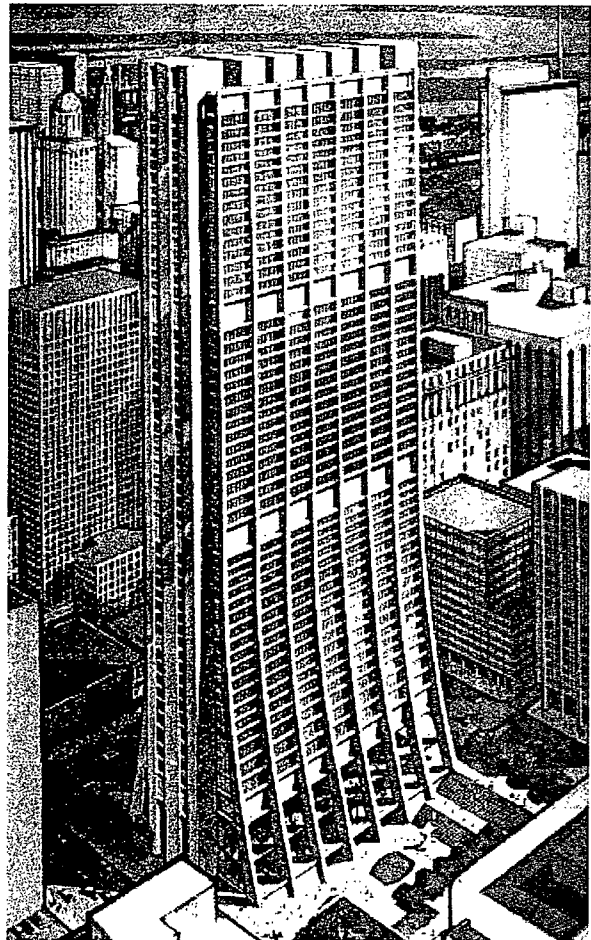
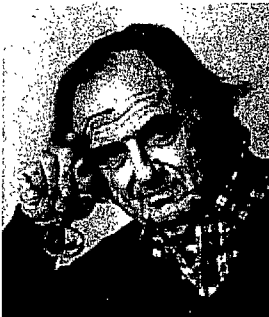
Ferris left Murphy in the late 1960s to work for Bertrand Goldberg. In 1969, he was hired by Graham, Anderson, Probst and White to serve as head designer for CNA's 45-story south tower. This building received a distinguished building award from the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1974. Ferris established an independent practice in 1973, and during the mid-1970s he served as a visiting professor at IIT. He was elected to the College of Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1976.

THE CONTINENTAL CENTER AND POST-WAR REVITALIZATION OF CHICAGO'S LOOP

The Continental Center serves as an important symbol of post-World War II efforts to rejuvenate Chicago's Loop following a quarter-century lull in skyscraper construction. Completed in 1962, it reflected the city's goals of encouraging private investment and revitalization in Chicago's historic core and helped spark a building boom in the 1960s and early 1970s that had a dramatic impact on the city's urban landscape. The radically modern architecture, including the Continental Center, that characterized post-war buildings in the Loop—glass-and-steel and concrete-framed modernist towers of unprecedented height and scale—demonstrated the vital role that skyscrapers played in projecting an image of affluence and prestige.

The 1960s boom was a long time in coming. The previous Chicago building boom of the 1920s was stopped short by the Great Depression of the 1930s, and new construction remained stagnant through the war years of the early 1940s. During this period, the traditional cycle of urban development—whereby buildings are replaced with ever larger towers that represent the highest and best use of their sites—was reversed. As foreclosures throughout the Loop multiplied, many owners of buildings operating at a loss resorted to demolishing them in favor of parking lots, garages, or one- to two-story speculative commercial buildings called “taxpayers.” All of these uses were intended as temporary means to generate short-term income to cover property taxes on a site until the return of prosperity. Other Loop property owners performed minimal maintenance on existing buildings while slashing rents and offering generous concessions as a way to attract and retain tenants in a hyper-competitive rental market. These practices resulted in an office market that featured numerous run-down buildings, dozens of vacant lots, and a building stock that was increasingly considered obsolete.

After the end of World War II in 1945, pent-up demand for modern downtown office



The Continental Center's co-designers, Jacques Brownson (above left) and James Ferris (above right) were both students of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). Brownson's subsequent design for the Daley Center (top left) is similar to that of the Continental Center (top right) in its unusually wide structural bays. Ferris was also associated with large projects while at C.F. Murphy, including the First National Bank of Chicago Building (bottom).

space following the long hiatus in construction was enormous, but it took nearly a decade for the economy and the building industry to gear up for new large-scale projects. In assessing the urban landscape during this era, architectural historian Carl Condit noted: "...the wry comment among the real estate men as late as 1947 was that the Loop might as well be returned to the Indians." The Prudential Building (1952-55), located at the northeast corner of Michigan Avenue and Randolph Street, was the first office tower erected in Chicago's larger central business district since the completion of the Field Building in 1934. Condit described its significance:

The forty-one story steel-framed tower was designed by Naess and Murphy and served two valuable functions: it demonstrated the willingness of a major corporation to invest a large sum of money in its Chicago facilities, and it reminded the building and real estate interests that if any substantial demand for space appeared, there was nothing of prime quality available beyond 5,000 square feet.

Despite the importance of the Prudential Building in shaking the construction industry out of its doldrums, the Loop itself, like most central business districts throughout the nation, was in a state of decline in the 1950s. The post-war suburbs were booming at the expense of central cities, as regional shopping centers, corporate offices and industrial parks drew business and jobs away from the Loop. The city was losing population as well, with middle-class residents replaced by an increasingly poorer population. As the downtown First Ward produced over one-third of the city's tax base, it assumed an ever-greater tax burden as taxpayers were replaced by tax consumers.

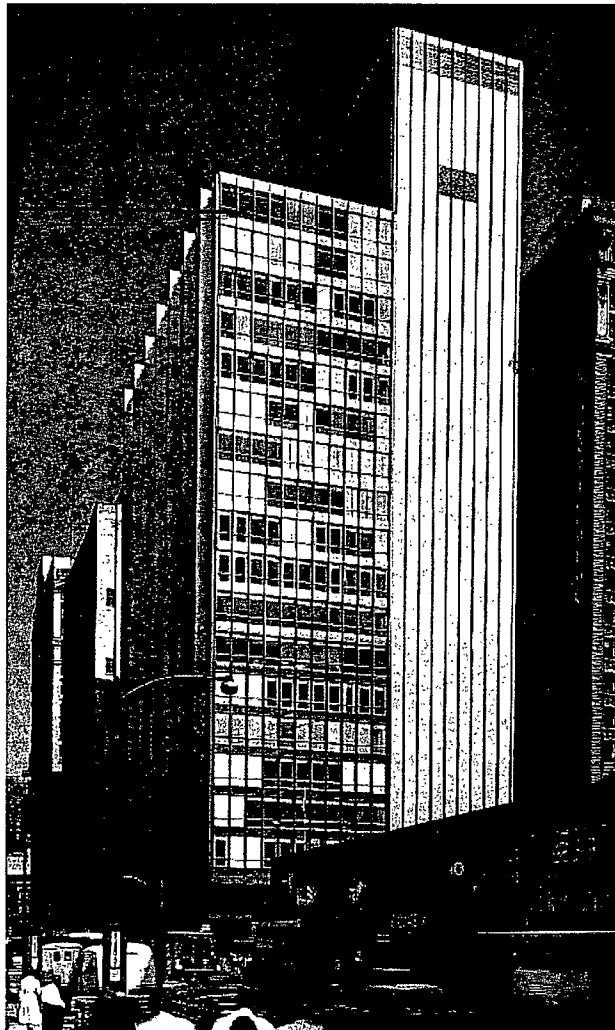
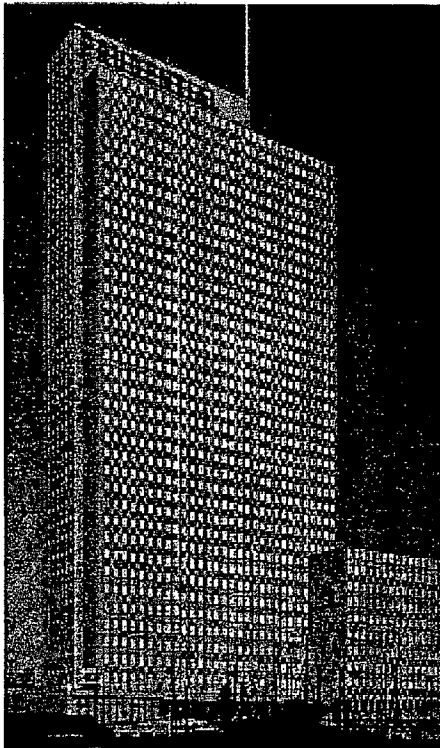
In 1955, Mayor Richard J. Daley took office and immediately turned his attention to the Loop. He aimed to improve its visually-tawdry streetscapes with gleaming, glass-and-steel towers that would generate more taxes. Distinctive, cutting-edge architecture was increasingly associated with modernity and prosperity, and such buildings were therefore embraced by city officials as a means to rejuvenate their historic centers. In 1955, the Chicago Central Area Committee was created by the city's top leaders in business and industry for the sole purpose of promoting the revitalization of the downtown area. A new zoning ordinance passed in 1957 encouraged the construction of taller buildings and helped to facilitate the City's goal of increasing downtown density, as did its 1958 Central Area Plan.

In 1958, Chicago's Central Business District witnessed the completion of its second major post-war corporate headquarters—and the first within the heart of the Loop itself—with the Inland Steel Building (a designated Chicago Landmark). Located at the northeast corner of Monroe and Dearborn, this striking building exemplifies the modernist corporate architecture of the Chicago firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill. Featuring stainless-steel cladding, green-tinted floor-to-ceiling windows, clear-span construction and unobstructed spaces on each floor, Inland Steel's design appeared revolutionary within the context of the Loop's late 19th- and early 20th-century building stock.

With the completion of the Inland Steel Building and plans for many other new projects



Following a quarter-century of stagnation due to depression and war, Chicago's Central Business District by the 1950s was characterized by numerous run-down buildings, parking lots (top right), and low-rise buildings called "taxpayers" (above). Skyscrapers such as the Prudential Building (below), built 1952-55, and the Inland Steel Building (bottom right), built 1954-58, symbolized the city's efforts in the post-World War II era to encourage private investment and revitalization in the city's aging historic core.



in the works—including one for a new modern Civic Center in the heart of the Loop across from the City Hall-County Building—the stage was set for a radical transformation of the Loop. The Continental Center, built in 1961-62, was at the forefront of a building boom that lasted from the early 1960s through the early 1970s. The novelty of erecting steel-and-glass skyscrapers at that time—a building type now ubiquitous among cities worldwide—was highlighted by a 1961 *Chicago Tribune* article on the construction of the Continental Center, which stated that: “An unusual aspect of the project is the use of structural steel to outline the building exterior, a new idea in skyscraper construction.”

Modernist towers such as the Continental Center allowed large companies to create new, polished corporate identities and quickly came to symbolize the United State’s vibrant and expanding capitalist economy in the post-war era. They also reflected the newfound faith of corporations in the future of the Loop, many of which were enticed to remain in the Loop or to return to the central city from outlying areas during this period.

The Continental Center is important as one of the Loop’s earliest corporate headquarters to be built in the post-war era. It preceded a plethora of new office towers built throughout Chicago’s Central Business District, some of which include the United States Gypsum Building at 101 S. Wacker Drive (1963); the Equitable Building at 401 North Michigan Avenue (1962-65); Mid-Continental Plaza at 55 W. Monroe Street (1969-72); the Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building at 55 W. Wacker Drive (1968); the IBM Building on the north bank of the Chicago River, between Wabash and State (1969); the John Hancock Center at 875 North Michigan Avenue (1965-70); and the Sears Tower at 233 South Wacker Drive (1968-74). In addition to the Continental Center, several other post-war office towers erected in Chicago’s Central Business District housed insurance companies, including the Prudential, Equitable, Blue Cross-Blue Shield, and Hartford Insurance Companies Buildings.

THE CONTINENTAL CENTER AND THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL STYLE SKYSCRAPERS IN THE LOOP

The Continental Center is an early example of an International Style skyscraper in Chicago, a modernist architectural style largely developed in the United States by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers and characterized by modernist glass-and-steel towers. The term “International Style” entered the lexicon in 1932 with an exhibit organized at the Museum of Modern Art by two American architectural historians, Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. The exhibit and its accompanying catalogue, *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*, documented the work of European architects that included Le Corbusier in France, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe in Germany, and J.J.P. Oud in Holland during the 1920s. Hitchcock and Johnson demonstrated that these architects had developed a distinctive architectural style that both reflected 20th-century concerns with functionalism and responded to the social upheaval in Europe following World War I. The architects involved used innovative structural techniques and materials in ways that rejected the styles of the past.

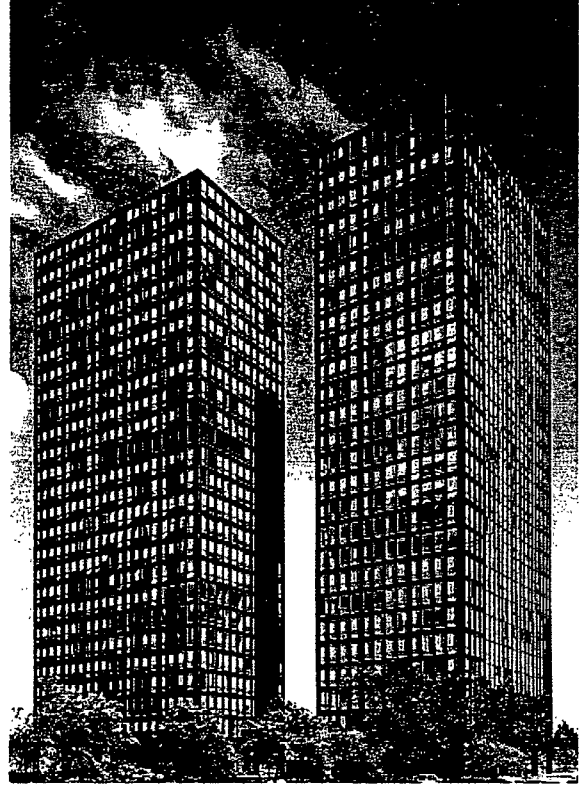
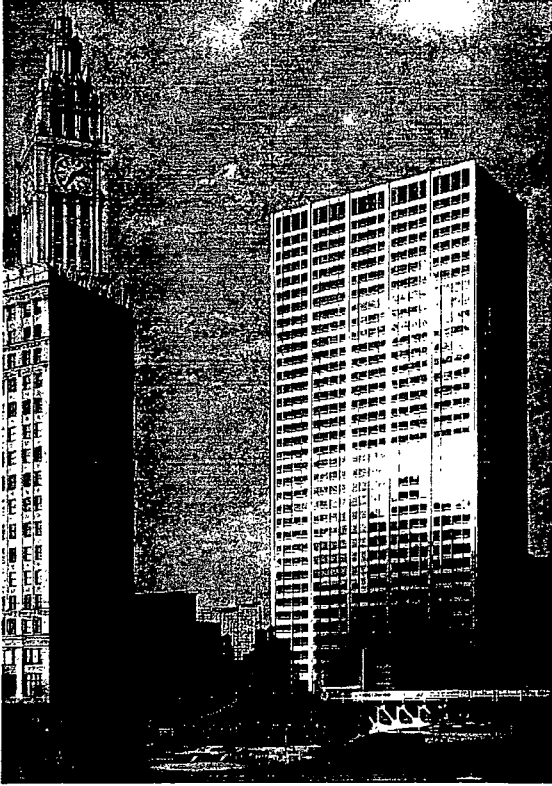
Hallmarks of the International Style as seen mainly in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s included flat roofs and smooth wall surfaces, achieved through the use of materials such as concrete, steel and glass. The style was typically used for low-rise residential and commercial buildings and featured an overwhelmingly horizontal orientation.

In the United States, however, the International Style became associated with tall steel-and-glass skyscrapers in the post-World War II era thanks largely to the work of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers. Mies, who had headed the Bauhaus (a German school that espoused modern design), came to Chicago from Germany in 1938 to head the School of Architecture at the Armour (now Illinois) Institute of Technology (IIT). Both as educator and as the head of his own architectural firm, Mies advocated rectilinear designs of metal and glass with spatially-flexible interiors. Although he designed a variety of building types, Mies became best-known in America for his International Style skyscrapers. Mies's followers, including such former students as Jacques Brownson and James Ferriss of C. F. Murphy (the designers of the Continental Center), took Mies's distinctive modern style and helped make it the dominant style of corporate architecture in America during the 1950s through 1970s.

Mies's twin apartment buildings at 860-880 North Lake Shore Drive (1948-51, a designated Chicago Landmark) established the visual look of International Style skyscrapers. Rectangular massing, "cellular" elevations expressed in steel and glass, and recessed, glass-enclosed lobbies surrounded by freestanding structural columns characterized both 860-880 and other International Style skyscrapers, including the Continental Center. The flexibility of the International Style meant that it could be used for residential, institutional and commercial purposes, and variations on the style were widely built in cities worldwide, including Chicago, by both Mies himself and followers such as C. F. Murphy.

During the 1960s and early 1970s, the skyline of Chicago's Loop was transformed with corporate headquarters designed in the International Style, which reestablished Chicago as the leading center of American commercial architecture during this period. Chicago's flourishing Miesian architectural culture of the period—labeled the "Second Chicago School of Architecture" by architectural historians such as Carl Condit—was dominated by architects who had studied under Mies at IIT or worked in his office and then spread his principles through subsequent work at large architectural firms that enjoyed national and international clienteles. The firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill was particularly noted for producing corporate office towers in the International Style. As America's largest architectural firm, SOM played the single, most powerful role in spreading the International Style as developed by Mies among high-profile corporate clients worldwide.

Next to SOM, C.F. Murphy Associates was one of the largest architecture-engineering firms in Chicago working in the International Style. Several of C.F. Murphy's Loop skyscrapers featured the articulation of their underlying steel frames in ways even more dramatic than towers designed by Mies himself. The Continental Center, along with the firm's later Daley Center, were both noted for the bold expression of their metal frames through sweeping bays and powerful exterior columns. These skyscrapers, along with



Mies van der Rohe's twin apartment towers at 860-880 North Lake Shore Drive, built 1948-51 (top right), is the first example of his prototypical International Style skyscrapers, a type that was easily adapted to corporate office towers. Chicago's skyline was transformed in the 1960s and early 1970s with International Style skyscrapers designed by prominent firms, including C.F. Murphy Associates, the architects of the Continental Center, that were influenced by the work of Mies. Examples include the Equitable Building (top left) by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, built 1962-65, and the Time-Life Building (left) by Harry Weese, built 1966-68.

high-profile designs for O'Hare International Airport and McCormick Place, pushed C.F. Murphy Associates to the forefront of the modernist Chicago firms working in the city in the post-war era.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a final recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object within the City of Chicago if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for designation," as well as possesses sufficient historic design integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Continental Center be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State or National Heritage

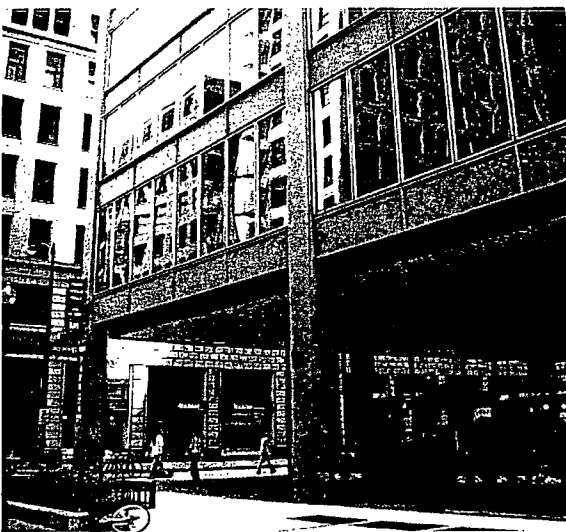
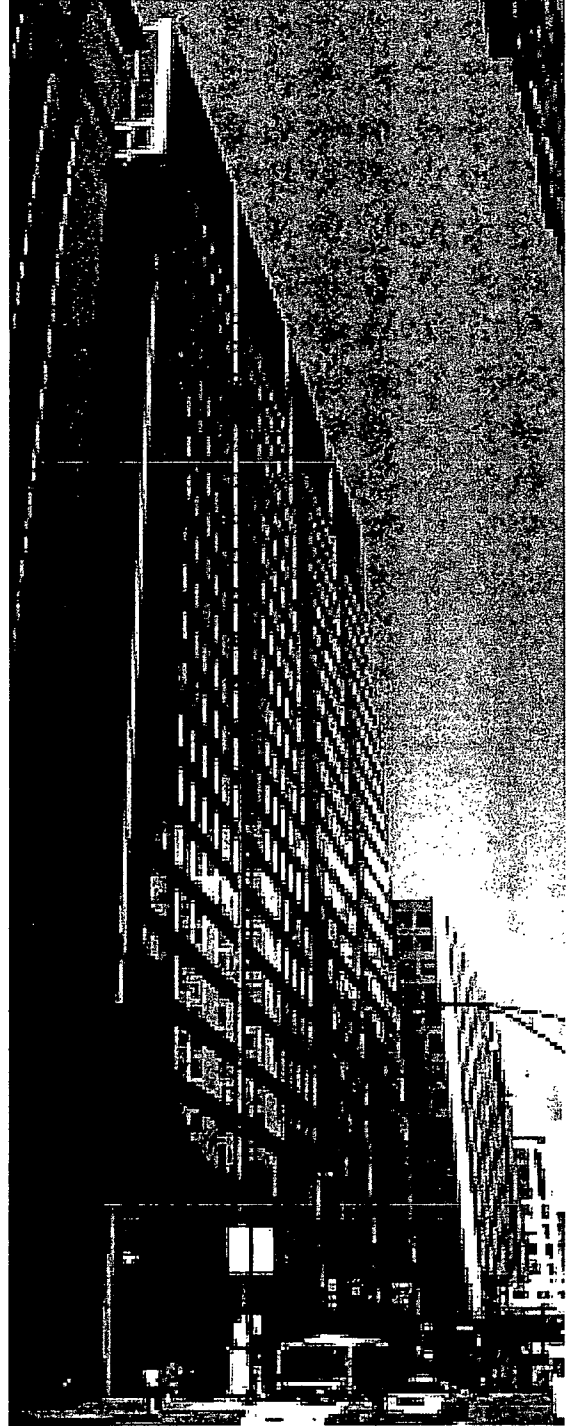
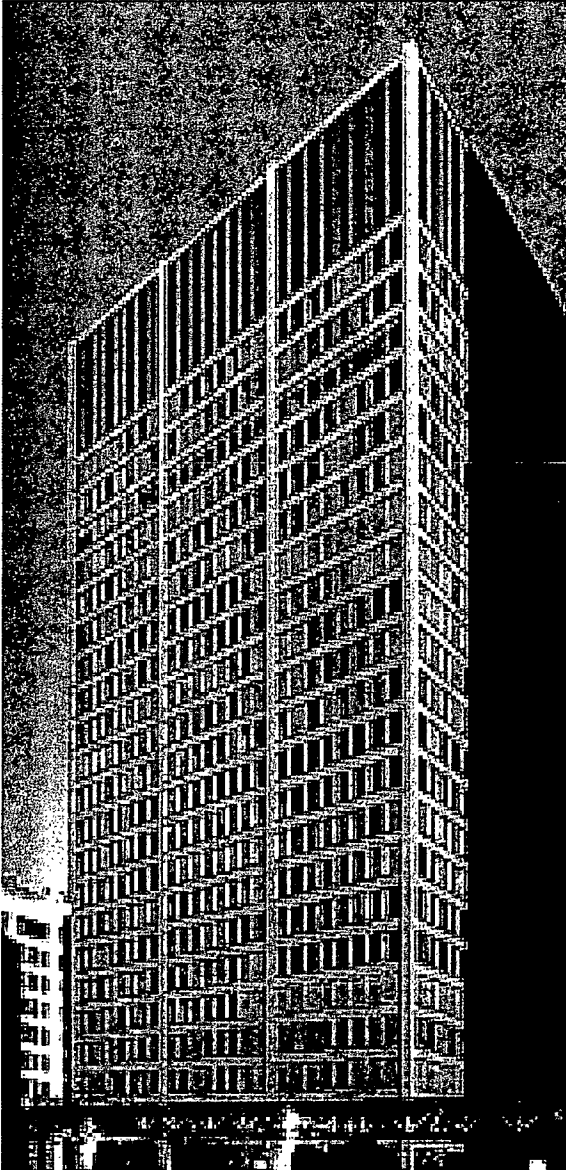
Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Completed in 1962, the Continental Center exemplifies the modernization and redevelopment of Chicago's Loop during the post-World War II era. As one of the earliest office towers to rise in the Loop since the 1930s, it was at the forefront of the building boom of the 1960s and early 1970s that transformed Chicago's skyline with a plethora of corporate headquarters designed in the International Style as developed by famed architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and his followers.
- The Continental Center was one of the earliest skyscrapers to be constructed in the Loop in a modern architectural style, symbolizing the city's efforts in the post-war era to encourage private investment and revitalization in its aging historic core. The new urban landscape that resulted—glass-and-steel and concrete-framed modernist skyscrapers of unprecedented height and scale—demonstrated the vital role that architecture played in projecting a new image of modernity and prosperity for Chicago, reestablishing it as the leading center of American commercial architecture during this period.

Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.

- The Continental Center is an innovative International Style skyscraper and is significant in the history of modern Chicago architecture. The building is noted for its boldly-expressed metal frame and spatial flexibility, both characteristics of the International Style as influenced by the steel-and-glass skyscrapers of Ludwig Mies



Upon its completion, the Continental Center was revolutionary within the context of the Loop's 19th and early 20th-century building stock. The design of high-profile commissions such as this pushed C.F. Murphy Associates to the forefront of Chicago's modernist firms working in the post-World War II era.

van der Rohe and his followers.

- The Continental Center is an outstanding example of post-World War II innovative design and engineering. At the time of its construction, it had the largest all-welded structural skeleton ever erected and featured exceptionally wide 42-foot building bays, which were needed to accommodate column-free office space within. Carrying the floors were some of the heaviest steel beams ever used in a high-rise office tower until that time.
- The Continental Center exemplifies the architectural principles of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as disseminated by his followers and former students. Mies's enormous influence on global modern architecture resulted from both his teaching at Chicago's Illinois Institute of Technology, where he was director of the Department of Architecture, and from his Chicago buildings. The resulting International Style skyscrapers by both Mies and firms such as C.F. Murphy transformed skylines in Chicago and around the world in the 1960s and 1970s.

Criterion 5: Work of Significant Architect or Designer

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The Continental Center is one of the most significant buildings designed by C.F. Murphy Associates, one of the largest and most prolific modernist firms in Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s. C.F. Murphy designed, or was associated with, many of the City's most significant public commissions during the building boom of this period, including terminals at O'Hare International Airport, Chicago's Central District Water Filtration Plant, the Daley Center, and the second McCormick Place convention center. In addition to the Daley Center, C.F. Murphy's skyscrapers—including the Continental Center and the First National Bank of Chicago Building—were highly influential and helped to redefine the Loop in the post-war era.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic value.

The Continental Center remains an outstanding example of a glass-and-steel skyscraper designed in the International Style and has excellent exterior integrity. The steel curtain walls and original gray-tinted windows remain intact, as do the glass walls enclosing the lobby and the steel structural columns at the building's base. The granite used for the sidewalk paving is also original.

Changes to the exterior of the Continental Center are minor, and include the replacement of two of the original four revolving doors along Jackson Boulevard with new glass doors: one set of double-glass doors and one sliding glass door. Revolving doors have

also been added along the Wabash Avenue elevation. The slatting on the ceiling within the protected colonnade around the recessed, glass-enclosed lobby is non-original. The other change undertaken on the building's exterior is its paint color, which was originally black and is now charcoal gray.

The Continental Center's original U-shaped first-floor building lobby has been subdivided into a smaller rectangular lobby and adjacent retail space. The existing lobby retains its original granite flooring, granite-clad elevator walls and round, granite clock on its central wall. Changes to this lobby are minor and include a non-historic reception desk and "running-water" sculptural wall behind the desk. The lobby's elevator corridors remain intact with original nickel-metal doors. The building's first floor retains its historic sense of visual transparency from the exterior colonnade into the existing lobby.

Adjacent retail spaces subdivided from the original U-shaped lobby also largely retain this historic sense of visual transparency between the exterior colonnade and first-floor interiors. In addition, the retail spaces adjacent to the existing building lobby retain visual transparency between those spaces and the lobby through non-historic, floor-to-ceiling clear-glass partitions.

First-floor retail spaces have been further altered with tenant build-outs and furnishings in order to allow them to function in their new uses. The building's existing rear lobby has been altered with new commercial space and partitions as well. However, some elements of the original building lobby from which these spaces were subdivided remain, including, to varying degrees, original spatial volumes, ceiling heights and ceiling planes, and granite cladding elevator walls and floors.

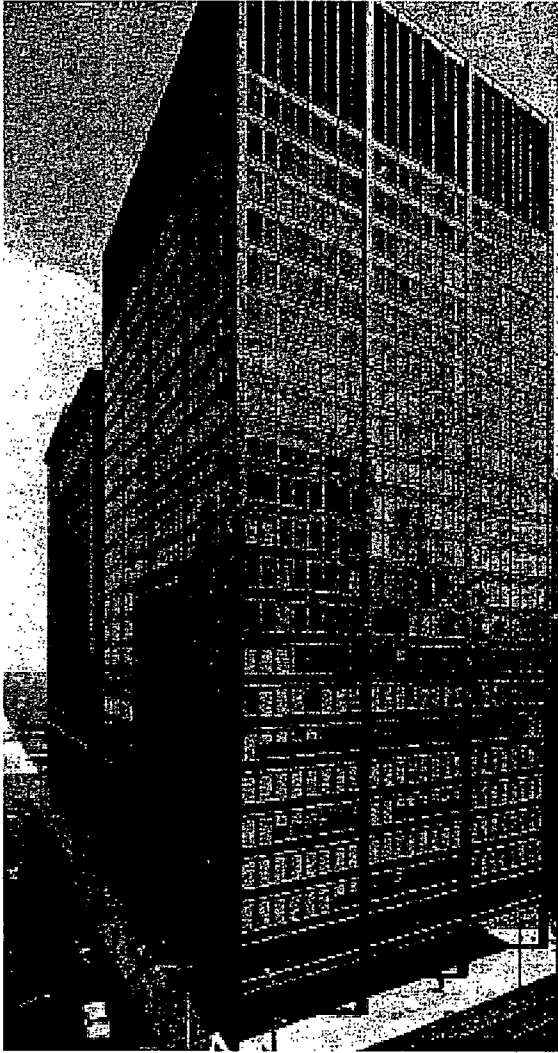
SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of the Continental Center, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building; and
- The original first-floor building lobby of the building (see plan).

The significant features of the building's original first-floor building lobby include, but are not limited to, the overall historic spatial volume of the original lobby and historic decorative wall, floor, and ceiling materials, finishes and ornamentation, including, but not limited to, original granite wall covering and flooring.



The Continental Center remains an outstanding example of a glass-and-steel skyscraper designed in the International Style and has excellent exterior integrity. The steel curtain walls and original gray-tinted windows remain intact, as do the glass walls enclosing the lobby and the steel structural columns at the building's base.



The Continental Center's original U-shaped lobby, which wrapped around three sides of the elevator core and featured unobstructed space, has been truncated by clear glass partition walls along its east and west ends. These partition walls separate the extant central lobby space from commercial and retail spaces on either side.

For purposes of Commission permit review, the portions of the building's first-floor interior that were not part of the original first-floor building lobby are not considered part of the significant features. In addition, later additions to the original first-floor building lobby, including the current concierge desk and "water wall" in the building lobby, as well as build-outs and furnishings associated with current retail tenants, are not considered significant features for the purpose of this designation.

Additional guidelines

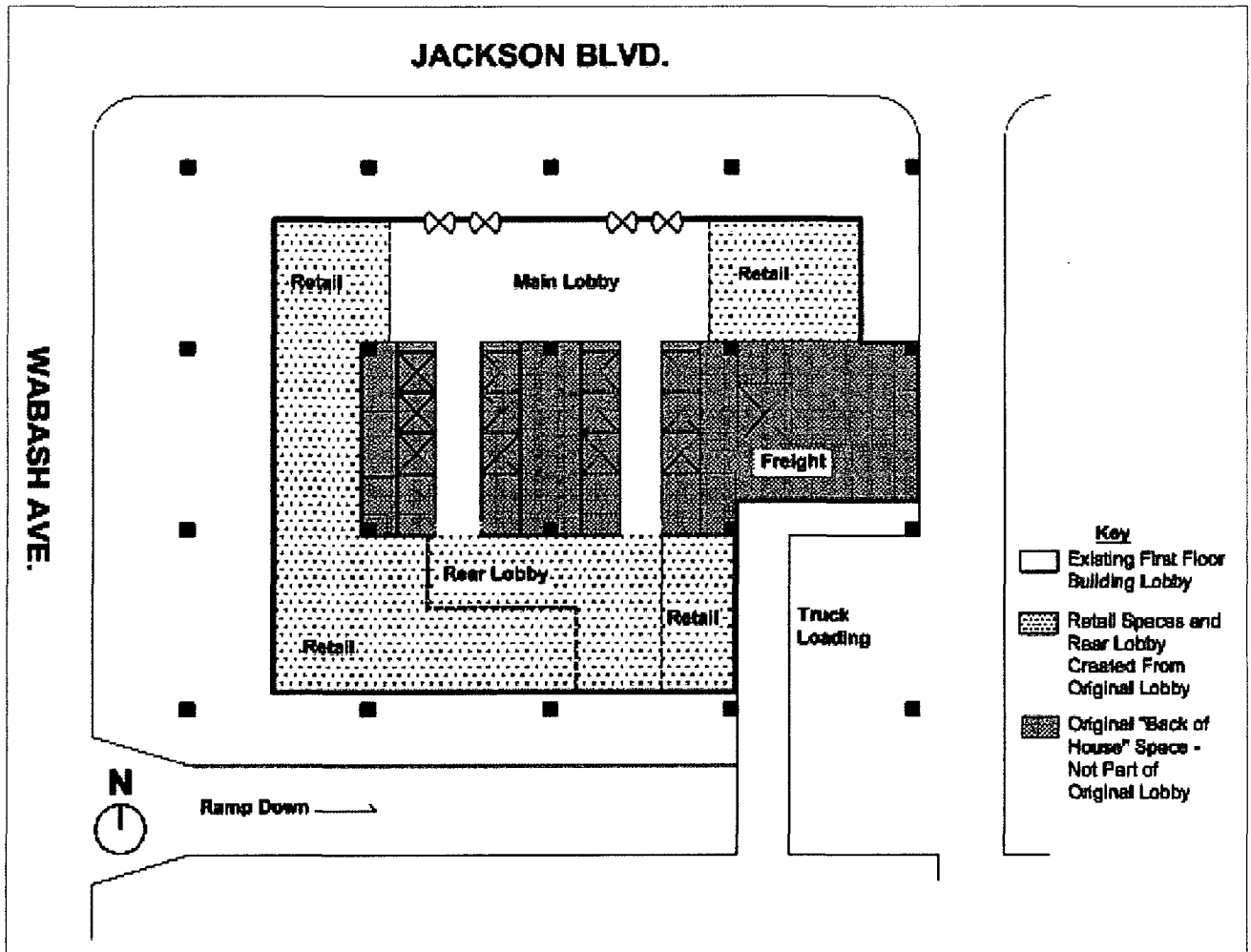
Visual transparency should be maintained between the current Jackson Blvd. building lobby and adjacent retail spaces, as well as visual transparency between the building's arcade and the building lobby and street-facing retail spaces.

In addition, best efforts should be made to maintain and enhance the historic spatial volume, historic ceiling plane and any remaining historic building materials and wall finishes, including but not necessarily limited to granite cladding and flooring, remaining in current retail spaces and the rear portion of the first-floor lobby.

To the extent the significant historical and architectural features of the building include interior spaces specifically identified in the designation ordinance, the Commission's review of work proposed for these interior spaces should ensure that the historic features and character of the building are preserved long-term while allowing reasonable change and flexibility to meet continuing and new needs, whether related to the continued current uses of the building or in accommodating future uses, and to the extent such consideration is not otherwise inconsistent with the intent of the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance.

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Top: A plan (not to scale) of the building's current first floor, including the existing building lobby and retail spaces carved from the original U-shaped building lobby. These retail spaces retain, to varying degrees, original granite flooring and granite-clad elevator walls, as well as original spatial volumes.

Bottom: These retail spaces also retain visual transparency between their interiors and the existing building lobby, as well as between their interiors and the exterior colonnade.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Illustrations

From *Architectural Forum*, May 1963: p. 11 (top).

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From Carl Condit, *Chicago 1930-1970*: p. 16 (bottom right).

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From Historic Preservation Division: p. 1 (left); 4 (bottom), p. 29.

Jean L. Guarino: p. 4 (bottom), p. 7 (bottom left), p. 10 (top right, middle, bottom), p. 11 (middle, bottom), p. 23 (bottom), p. 27 (bottom).

Marc Realty: p. 4 (top right), p. 10 (top left), p. 11 (middle), p. 23 (top right and left), p. 26 (right).

From *Progressive Architecture*, Sept. 1963: p. 26 (left).

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From Pauline Saliga, *The Sky's The Limit*: p. 14 (top right), p. 16 (top left), p. 18 (bottom right), p. 21 (top left and bottom left).

From John Zukowsky, *Chicago Architecture and Design 1923-1993*: p. 14 (top left, middle, bottom).

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COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING

THE PROPOSED CHICAGO LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF THE
CONTINENTAL CENTER
55 East Jackson Boulevard

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Historic Preservation Division
33 North LaSalle Street, Room 1600

9:30 a.m.

Docket No. 2012-08

Anita Blanchard, M.D., Hearing Officer
Commission on Chicago Landmarks

Mr. Arthur S. Dolinsky, Senior Counsel
Department of Law
Real Estate and Land Use Division

Ms. Eleanor Esser Gorski, Assistant Commissioner
Department of Housing and Economic Development
Historic Preservation Division

1 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Good morning. I
2 would like to call this public hearing to order.

3 My name is Dr. Anita Blanchard. I'm
4 a member of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks,
09:34AM 5 and I will be the hearing officer for today's
6 hearing.

7 Seated next to me are: Eleanor
8 Gorski, the Assistant Commissioner of the Historic
9 Preservation Division of the Department of Housing
09:34AM 10 and Economic Development; and Arthur Dolinsky, who
11 is a Senior Counsel of the Real Estate Division of
12 the City's Law Department, who is the Commission's
13 counsel for today's public hearing.

14 I will now summarize the nature of
09:34AM 15 today's hearing.

16 The Commission on Chicago Landmarks
17 was established and is governed by the Municipal
18 Code of Chicago. The procedures for today's
19 public hearing are contained in Article II of the
09:34AM 20 Commission's Rules and Regulations governing
21 hearings on landmark designations.

22 The purposes and duties of the
23 Commission are set forth in the Municipal Code
24 and include the identification, the preservation,

1 protection, enhancement, and encouragement of
2 the continued utilization and the rehabilitation
3 of such areas, districts, places, buildings,
4 structures, works of art, and other objects having
5 a special historical, community, architectural, or
6 aesthetic interest or value to the City of Chicago
7 and its citizens.

8 The Commission carries out this
9 mandate by recommending to the City Council the
10 specific areas, districts, places, buildings,
11 structure, works of art, and other objects be
12 designated as official Chicago Landmarks. The
13 Commission bases its recommendations on the seven
14 criteria set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the
15 Municipal Code and the integrity criterion set
16 forth in Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code.

17 The purpose of today's hearing is
18 for the Commission to receive relevant facts and
19 information to assist the Commission in deciding
20 whether to recommend that the Continental Center at
21 55 East Jackson Boulevard meets the criteria set
22 forth in Section 2-120-620.

23 So the format of the hearing will be
24 as follows:

1 * First, Eleanor Gorski, the
2 Assistant Commissioner of the Historic
3 Preservation Division, will review the
4 chronology of events related to the
09:36AM 5 proposed designation that have led to
6 today's hearing.

7 * Then I will rule on any
8 requests for party status to the hearing
9 by property owners, as well as other
09:36AM 10 individuals or organizations.

11 * After that, the Historic
12 Preservation Division staff will make a
13 presentation summarizing the Preliminary
14 Landmark Recommendation and Preliminary
09:36AM 15 Summary of Information on the Continental
16 Center.

17 * After the staff's presentation
18 property owners and other individuals
19 who have been granted party status will
09:37AM 20 have the opportunity to ask questions of
21 the staff.

22 * Then those who are granted
23 party status by me will be able to make
24 a presentation regarding the proposed

1 landmark designation. We'll start off
2 with those in support and then those in
3 opposition.

4 * Lastly, any members of the
09:37AM 5 public who wish to make brief statements
6 concerning the proposed landmark
7 designation may do so.

8 The owners of the Continental
9 Center and/or its underlying land, or their
09:37AM 10 representatives, have the right to make a statement
11 for or against the proposed designation. They also
12 have the right to ask questions of the Historic
13 Preservation Division staff at the conclusion of
14 the staff's summary of the Commission's Preliminary
09:37AM 15 Landmark Recommendation for the proposed
16 designation.

17 The Landmarks Ordinance also allows
18 the owners of the Continental Center and/or its
19 underlying land and other individuals and
09:38AM 20 organizations to request status as a party to the
21 hearing. Parties to the hearing's proceedings can
22 make longer and more detailed presentations for
23 or against the proposed landmark designation that
24 can include submitting photographs and other

1 documentation, as well as presenting testimony from
2 their own witnesses. Parties may also question any
3 other party's witnesses and question the Historic
4 Preservation staff member who summarized the
5 preliminary landmark recommendation.

09:38AM

6 Only those who want to make more
7 detailed presentation, beyond a statement or
8 question, need to request party status. Those
9 wishing to request party status should fill out a
10 blue appearance form and return it to a member of
11 the Historic Presentation Division staff. These
12 forms are at the table by the door.

09:38AM

13 If you wish to be a party, and you
14 have filled out a blue appearance form requesting
15 party status, I will call on each of you in turn
16 and consider your party request. If you've not
17 filled out a blue appearance form, but wish to be a
18 party, please do so now.

09:39AM

19 I want to note that the Commission's
20 Rules and Regulations strictly limit presentations
21 at this landmark designation public hearing to
22 information solely relevant to whether or not the
23 proposed designation meets criteria for Chicago
24 Landmark designation. So information related to

09:39AM

1 things like zoning, permit applications, the
2 building code, or potential economic impacts are
3 not to be heard or entertained during these
4 proceedings.

09:39AM

5 The owners of Continental Center
6 and/or its underlying land who do not want to be
7 parties and members of the general public are
8 welcome to make statements at today's hearing. If
9 you want to make a statement in support of the

09:40AM

10 proposed landmark designation, please fill out a
11 green appearance form. If you want to make a
12 statement in opposition to the proposed landmark
13 designation, please fill out a pink appearance
14 form. Please include your name, address, and
15 organization you represent, if any.

09:40AM

16 These forms are also available from
17 the staff at the back of the room and should be
18 completed and returned to a member of the staff at
19 this time.

09:40AM

20 Now, I will ask Ms. Gorski to
21 outline the chronology of events relating to the
22 proposed landmark designation of the building that
23 have led up to this public hearing and incorporate
24 the Commission's documents that are relevant to the

1 proposed designations into the record.

2 MS. GORSKI: Thank you.

3 And I'll now read the Chronology of
4 Events and Incorporation of Commission Documents
5 Into the Record.

09:40AM

6 At its regular meeting of July 7th,
7 2011, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks approved
8 a preliminary landmark recommendation, known as the
9 "Preliminary Recommendation," for the Continental

09:41AM

10 Center as a Chicago Landmark. The Commission found
11 that the building appeared to meet three of the
12 seven criteria for landmark designation as well as
13 the integrity criterion, identified in the Chicago
14 Landmarks Ordinance, which is in the Municipal Code
15 of the City of Chicago Section 2-120-580.

09:41AM

16 The Preliminary Recommendation
17 identified as Commission Document 1, initiated the
18 consideration process for further study and
19 analysis for the possible designation of the
20 building as a Chicago Landmark. As part of the
21 Preliminary Recommendation, the Commission
22 preliminarily identified the significant historical
23 and architectural features of the building as:

09:41AM

24 * all exterior elevations,

1 including rooflines, of the building;

2 and

3 * the original first-floor

4 building lobby of the building.

09:42AM

5 The significant features of the
6 building's original first-floor building lobby
7 include, but are not limited to, the overall
8 historic spatial volume of the original lobby and
9 historic decorative wall, floor, and ceiling

09:42AM

10 materials, finishes and ornamentation including,
11 but not limited to, original granite wall covering
12 and flooring.

13 For purposes of Commission permit
14 review, the portions of the building's first-floor

09:42AM

15 interior that were not part of the original first-
16 floor building lobby are not considered part of
17 the significant features. In addition, later
18 additions to the original building lobby, including
19 the current concierge desk and water wall in the
20 building lobby as well as build-outs and furnishings
21 associated with current retail tenants are not
22 considered significant features for the purpose of
23 this designation.

09:42AM

24 Additional guidelines include:

1 Visual transparency should be maintained between
2 the current Jackson Boulevard building lobby and
3 adjacent retail spaces, as well as the visual
4 transparency between the building's arcade and the
5 building lobby and street-facing retail spaces.

09:43AM

6 In addition, best efforts should be
7 made to maintain and enhance the historic spatial
8 volume, historic ceiling plane, and any remaining
9 historic building materials and wall finishes
10 including, but not necessarily limited to, granite
11 cladding and flooring remaining in current retail
12 spaces and the rear portion of the first-floor
13 lobby.

09:43AM

14 To the extent the significant
15 historical and architectural features of the
16 building include interior spaces specifically
17 identified in the designation ordinance, the
18 Commission's review of work proposed for these
19 interior spaces should ensure that the historic
20 features and character of the building are
21 preserved long term, while allowing reasonable
22 change and flexibility to meet continuing and new
23 needs, whether related to the continued current
24 uses of the building or in accommodating future

09:43AM

09:43AM

1 uses, and to the extent such consideration is not
2 otherwise inconsistent with the intent of the
3 Chicago Landmarks Ordinance.

4 As part of the Preliminary
09:44AM 5 Recommendation, the Commission adopted a preliminary
6 summary of information, dated July 7th, 2011, and
7 identified as Commission Document 2.

8 The Department of Housing and
9 Economic Development, on behalf of the Commission,
09:44AM 10 notified the owner of the building and a portion
11 of the land upon which the building sits, 55 East
12 Jackson LLC, the "building" and "partial landowner,"
13 and the owner of the remaining portion of the land
14 upon which the building sits, Chicago Title and
09:44AM 15 Trust Land Trust No. 1081106, know as the "land
16 trust," of the Preliminary Recommendation in a
17 letter, dated July 18th, 2011, which is identified
18 as Commission Document 3.

19 As a courtesy, the Department of
09:45AM 20 Housing and Economic Development also sent copies
21 of the July 18th letter to the two beneficiaries of
22 the land trust, the Rehabilitation Institute of
23 Chicago and William and Mary Platzer.

24 The research notebook compiled by

1 the Commission staff regarding the proposed Chicago
2 Landmark designation of the building is identified
3 as Commission Document 4.

4 At its regular meeting of
09:45AM 5 September 1st, 2011, the Commission received a
6 report, identified as Commission Document 5, from
7 Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner of the Department of
8 Housing and Economic Development, stating that the
9 proposed landmark designation of the building
09:45AM 10 supports the City's overall planning goals and is
11 consistent with the City's governing policies and
12 plans.

13 In a letter dated September 23rd,
14 2011, the Commission officially requested the
09:46AM 15 consent to the proposed landmark designation from
16 both the building and partial landowner and the
17 land trust. A copy of this letter, which requested
18 the return of the written consent form indicating
19 consent or non-consent by November 7th, 2011, is
09:46AM 20 identified as Commission Document 6.

21 In a letter dated October 5th, 2011,
22 Gerald Lee Nudo, representing the building and
23 partial landowner, provided written consent to the
24 proposed landmark designation of the building. A

1 copy of this letter is identified as Commission
2 Document 7.

3 In a letter dated October 20th,
4 2011, the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, on
09:47AM 5 behalf of the land trust, requested that the
6 Commission extend the expiration date of the
7 request-for-consent period, i.e., November 2nd,
8 2011, by up to 120 days. The new expiration date
9 for the request-for-consent period was March 6th,
09:47AM 10 2012. A copy of this letter is identified as
11 Commission Document 8.

12 At the end of the request-for-
13 consent period, i.e., March 6th, 2012, the land
14 trust had not provided written consent to the
09:47AM 15 proposed landmark designation of the building as
16 a Chicago Landmark, and this lack of written
17 consent continues to date. Without written consent
18 from all owners of the property, Section 2-120-650
19 of the Chicago Landmarks Ordinance requires the
09:47AM 20 Commission to hold a public hearing on the
21 Preliminary Recommendation with respect to the
22 building as a Chicago Landmark. In a letter dated
23 March 21st, 2012, and identified as Commission
24 Document 9, the Commission notified the building

1 and partial landowner and the land trust of the
2 hearing schedule today.

3 Notices of the hearing date were
4 posted in the public right-of-way at the building,
09:48AM 5 and were published as a legal notice in the *Chicago*
6 *Sun-Times*. A letter from Chicago Department of
7 Transportation Deputy Commissioner William Cheaks,
8 identified as Commission Document 10, attests that
9 two signs advertising the hearing date were posted
09:48AM 10 on March 30th, 2012. A certificate from the
11 *Chicago Sun-Times* attesting to the publication on
12 March 28th, 2012, of the legal notice for today's
13 public hearing is identified as Commission
14 Document 11.

09:49AM 15 The public hearing notice was also
16 posted on the Department of Housing and Economic
17 Development's website.

18 Copies of photographs and text used
19 in the Commission staff's presentation at today's
09:49AM 20 hearing are identified as Commission Document 12.

21 Other correspondence and information
22 received by the Commission from the building and
23 partial landowner and the land trust pertaining to
24 the proposed designation is identified as Commission

1 Document 13.

2 And that concludes my report.

3 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Thank you,
4 Eleanor.

09:49AM

5 All right. In a moment, I will rule
6 on requests to become party at today's hearing --
7 first, regarding the property owner, or their
8 representatives, wishing to represent themselves as
9 parties to the hearing.

09:49AM

10 To reiterate, if the owners of the
11 Continental Center and/or its underlying land, or
12 their representatives, only wish to make a statement
13 for or against proposed landmark designation, he or
14 she does not have to declare themselves a party.

09:50AM

15 A property owner may still make a verbal statement
16 during the public statement portion of the hearing,
17 after presentations by any parties, who may present
18 a written statement for the record -- or they may
19 present a written statement. A property owner

09:50AM

20 still retains the right to ask questions when
21 Historic Preservation Division staff makes their
22 presentation summarizing the preliminary landmark
23 recommendation.

24 However, the Commission's Rules and

1 Regulations give the owners of the Continental
2 Center and/or its underlying land a right to be
3 a party to the hearing. If they declare themselves
4 a party, they can then participate in the hearing
09:50AM 5 beyond a verbal statement, submitting a written
6 statement, or asking questions of the Historic
7 Preservation staff after their presentation.

8 If declared a party, a property
9 owner can also make a presentation for or against
09:51AM 10 the proposed landmark designation. In addition to
11 an oral or written statement, such presentations
12 may include documents, photographs, and/or testimony
13 from witnesses about whether or not the property
14 meets landmark criteria. A party's witnesses may be
09:51AM 15 questioned about their presentations by any other
16 party, Historic Presentation staff, and the hearing
17 officer.

18 Anyone requesting party status
19 should fill out a blue appearance form, return it
09:51AM 20 to the -- and return it to a member of the Historic
21 Presentation Division staff.

22 Please note that, in fairness to
23 other parties, I will not allow potential parties
24 to declare themselves later in the public hearing.

1 Therefore, you should ask to be a party at this
2 time if you wish to be considered one.

3 I have two blue appearance forms
4 from property owners requesting party status. Let
09:51AM 5 the record show that Anne Voshel wishes to be
6 recognized as a party, and her organization is
7 55 East Jackson LLC owner.

8 I also have a second blue form.
9 Let the record show that Nancy Ardell of 345 East
09:52AM 10 Superior Street, representing the Rehabilitation
11 Institute of Chicago, also wishes to be recognized
12 as a party and, in addition, a letter has been
13 submitted, written documentation.

14 The Landmarks Ordinance also allows
09:52AM 15 that certain other persons, organizations, or legal
16 entities may become parties to this proceeding.

17 If you are an interested individual
18 or a representative of an organization, and simply
19 want to make a verbal or written statement for or
09:52AM 20 against the proposed designation, you may do so
21 without asking to be named a party to the hearing.
22 You would simply make your statement during the
23 public statement portion of the hearing.

24 However, the Chicago Landmarks

1 Ordinance states that a person, organization, or
2 other legal entity whose use or enjoyment, or
3 whose members' use or enjoyment, of the property
4 proposed for designation may be injured by either
09:53AM 5 the designation of the property, or the failure to
6 recommend designation, may become a party to a
7 designation hearing. In addition, persons,
8 organizations, or other legal entities residing in,
9 leasing, or having an ownership interest in real
09:53AM 10 estate property located within 500 feet of the line
11 of the property proposed for landmark designation
12 may also become parties.

13 Again, the Commission's Rules and
14 Regulations provide the same rights and obligations
09:53AM 15 to a qualified interested party as it does to a
16 property owner who has declared themselves a
17 party. Persons I grant party status to can make
18 presentations for or against the proposed landmark
19 designation, which may include not just an oral or
09:54AM 20 written statement, but also documents, photographs,
21 and/or testimony from witnesses as to whether or
22 not the property meets landmark criteria.

23 So, again, I have two blue appearance
24 forms from individuals, organizations, or legal

1 entities. I'm going to go ahead ...

2 Okay. So let the record also
3 show that I have no blue appearance forms from
4 individuals, organizations, or legal entities
09:54AM 5 requesting party status beyond the two that I have
6 mentioned.

7 Let the record show that there are
8 no additional parties who wish to be recognized as
9 parties to this hearing.

09:54AM 10 Thank you.

11 We will now hear a presentation from
12 Terry Tatum of the Historic Preservation Division
13 staff summarizing the preliminary landmark
14 recommendation of the Continental Center.

09:55AM 15 MR. TATUM: Thank you, Commissioner Blanchard.

16 For the record, my name is Terry
17 Tatum. I'm a Coordinating Planner I for the
18 Historic Preservation Division of the Department of
19 Housing and Economic Development.

09:55AM 20 The Continental Center is a 23-story
21 metal-and-glass International Style skyscraper.
22 Built in 1961 to '62, it is located at 55 East
23 Jackson Boulevard in Chicago's Loop.

24 The Commission on Chicago Landmarks

1 has preliminarily found that the building meets
2 three criteria for Chicago Landmark designation:

3 * Criterion 1 for its value as
4 an example of City, State, or National
09:56AM 5 heritage;

6 * Criterion 4 for exemplary
7 architecture; and

8 * Criterion 5 as the work of a
9 significant architect.

09:56AM

10 The Continental Center is a
11 significant early example in Chicago of an
12 International Style skyscraper. Steel-and-glass
13 skyscrapers in this modern style exemplify the
14 importance of world-famous architect Ludwig Mies
09:56AM 15 van der Rohe and his followers in a post-World
16 War II era as the International Style became the
17 predominant -- became the predominant architectural
18 style for skyscrapers and other large-scale
19 buildings.

09:56AM

20 In Chicago, Mies's twin residential
21 towers at 860-880 North Lake Shore Drive and
22 Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Inland Steel Building
23 were pioneering buildings in this style, which did
24 away with historic ornament for the crisp visual

1 clarity of metal-and-glass curtain walls.

2 The International Style is important
3 in the history of post-war Chicago architecture
4 thanks to the work of Mies and other major
09:57AM 5 architectural firms working in the style, including
6 C.F. Murphy Associates, the architectural firm that
7 designed the Continental Center.

8 Designed by Jacques Brownson and
9 James Ferris of C.F. Murphy Associates, the
09:57AM 10 Continental Center has the character-defining
11 visual characteristics of the International Style,
12 including an overall rectilinear form, metal-and-
13 glass curtain walls, and metal-clad piers. The
14 building's first floor is set back, allowing for a
09:57AM 15 covered arcade around the building.

16 The Continental Center was innovative
17 in its overall design and engineering. At the time
18 of its construction, the building had the largest
19 all-welded structural skeleton ever erected for a
09:58AM 20 building and featured exceptionally wide 42-foot
21 building bays, which enabled column-free interior
22 office floors supported by some of the largest
23 steel beams used in high-rise office towers until
24 that time.

1 The Continental Center is a
2 significant example of the work of the Chicago
3 architectural firm of C.F. Murphy Associates. The
4 firm was one of Chicago's leading architectural
09:58AM 5 offices in the 1960s and '70s and is noteworthy for
6 its design of many prominent modernist buildings
7 including terminals at O'Hare International Airport,
8 the McCormick Place convention center, the City's
9 Central District Water Filtration Plant, and the
09:58AM 10 former Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building on West
11 Wacker Drive.

12 The Continental Center's
13 co-designers, Jacques Brownson and James Ferris,
14 both had studied architecture with Mies at the
09:59AM 15 Illinois Institute of Technology. Working for
16 C.F. Murphy, they became significant Chicago
17 architects working in modernist styles.

18 After designing the Continental
19 Center, they then went on to design other noteworthy
09:59AM 20 buildings for C.F. Murphy. Brownson was the chief
21 designer for the Daley Center, completed in 1965
22 and a designated Chicago Landmark. Ferris assisted
23 in the design of the First National Bank of Chicago,
24 now J.P. Morgan Chase Plaza. Both are considered

1 visually iconic post-war buildings in Chicago.

2 In addition to its architectural
3 significance and the importance of its designers,
4 the Continental Center also exemplifies the
09:59AM 5 revitalization of Chicago's central business
6 district in the 1960s through 1970s as existing
7 businesses stayed and new corporations moved into
8 the Loop and the Near North and West Sides.

9 The Continental Center was built as
10:00AM 10 an expression of faith in downtown Chicago by the
11 Continental-National Insurance Group, which had
12 long occupied the Strauss Building on South Michigan
13 Avenue, just next door to the current building.
14 Looking to expand, the company bought property
10:00AM 15 immediately to the west of their existing building
16 and the Continental Center was built.

17 Constructed in the early 1960s, the
18 building was at the forefront of the period of
19 great revitalization of downtown Chicago in the
10:00AM 20 1960s and 1970s that saw the construction of many
21 skyscrapers including, among others, the Equitable
22 Building on North Michigan Avenue and the Sears
23 Tower.

24 In addition to the three landmark

1 criteria just discussed, the Commission on Chicago
2 Landmarks also has preliminarily found that the
3 Continental Center meets the separate integrity
4 criteria.

10:01AM

5 Here are views of the building soon
6 after its completion in 1962 and as it looks today.
7 The building retains its historic site, overall
8 form, and the vast majority of exterior details.

10:01AM

9 In addition, despite changes to
10 allow the inclusion of retail tenants, the
11 building's lobby retains much of its historic
12 integrity. Here is a view of the lobby in 1962,
13 soon after the building's completion, and as it
14 looks today.

10:01AM

15 Although the current building lobby
16 is reduced in size from the original, the building
17 retains much original building material in both the
18 current lobby and within retail spaces carved from
19 the original lobby, including granite flooring, wall
20 cladding -- including granite flooring and wall
21 cladding. In addition, historic visual transparency
22 between the exterior arcade and interior spaces, as
23 well as historic ceiling heights and ceiling planes,
24 remain in varying degrees.

10:01AM

1 The Commission on Chicago Landmarks
2 has preliminarily identified the building's
3 significant historical and architectural features
4 as being the following:

10:02AM

5 * all exterior elevations,
6 including rooflines of the building; and
7 * the original first-floor
8 building lobby of the building.

10:02AM

9 The significant features of the
10 building's original first-floor building lobby
11 include, but are not limited to, the overall
12 historic spatial volume of the original lobby and
13 historic decorative wall, floor, and ceiling
14 materials, finishes and ornamentation including,
15 but not limited to, original granite wall covering
16 and flooring.

10:02AM

17 For purposes of Commission permit
18 review, the portions of the building's first-floor
19 interior that were not part of the original first-
20 floor building lobby are not considered part of the
21 significant features. In addition, later additions
22 to the original first-floor building lobby including
23 the current concierge desk and water wall in the
24 building lobby, as well as the build-outs and

10:03AM

1 furnishings associated with current retail tenants,
2 are not considered significant features for the
3 purpose of this designation.

4 Additional guidelines include:

10:03AM

5 Visual transparency should be maintained between
6 the current Jackson Boulevard building lobby and
7 adjacent retail spaces, as well as visual
8 transparency between the building's arcade and the
9 building lobby and street-facing retail spaces.

10:03AM

10 In addition, best efforts should be
11 made to maintain and enhance the historic spatial
12 volume, historic ceiling plane, and any remaining
13 historic building materials and wall finishes
14 including, but not necessarily limited to, granite
15 cladding and flooring remaining in current retail
16 spaces and the rear portion of the first-floor
17 lobby.

10:03AM

18 To the extent the significant
19 historical and architectural features of the
20 building include interior spaces specifically
21 identified in the designation ordinance, the
22 Commission's review of work proposed for these
23 interior spaces should ensure that the historic
24 features and character of the building are

10:04AM

1 preserved long term, while allowing reasonable
2 change and flexibility to meet continuing and new
3 needs, whether related to the continuing current
4 uses of the building or in accommodating future
10:04AM 5 uses, and to the extent such consideration is not
6 otherwise inconsistent with the intent of the
7 Chicago Landmarks Ordinance.

8 Thank you.

9 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Thank you, Terry.

10:04AM 10 Okay. That concludes the staff's
11 presentation. Now we will take questions for
12 Mr. Tatum.

13 I want to reiterate that any
14 property owner, whether or not a party to the
10:04AM 15 hearing, and any other party, may ask questions of
16 the staff. Questions must be related to whether
17 the proposed designation meets the criteria set
18 forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code.
19 I would ask that each person limit their questions
10:05AM 20 to 20 minutes.

21 We will begin by taking questions
22 for Historic Preservation Division staff from the
23 property owners or owners' representatives. If you
24 have a question, please come forward to the chair

1 and microphone -- or the chair, sorry, since I
2 don't think that we have a microphone, but this is
3 a small enough room I think we can hear you --
4 please come forward, state your name and whether
10:05AM 5 you are an owner, the owner's attorney, or the
6 owner's expert witness.

7 Now we will take questions for
8 Historic Preservation Division staff from any
9 parties who are not owners or representatives of
10:06AM 10 owners to whom I have granted party status.

11 And we don't have any of those.

12 So, next, we will have presentations
13 by parties to whom I have granted party status.

14 We will begin with presentations by
10:06AM 15 parties in support of the proposed designation.
16 Presentations may include any oral or written
17 statements, documents, photographs, and/or testimony
18 from witnesses. Presentations should be no longer
19 than 60 minutes and must be limited to whether the
10:06AM 20 proposed designation meets the landmark criteria
21 set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal
22 Code.

23 Information ruled by the hearing
24 officer as not relevant or whether to the -- to

1 whether the property meets landmark criteria may
2 not be entered into the hearing record. Also, to
3 the extent any presentations include testimony
4 from witnesses, any other parties to the hearing,
5 Historic Preservation Division staff, and the
6 hearing officer may question the witnesses.

10:07AM

7 We will now hear presentations
8 from those parties in support of the landmark
9 designation.

10:07AM

10 Let's begin with Anne Voshel.

11 MS. VOSHEL: I have no presentation.

12 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Okay. For the
13 record, let me give your address.

14 MS. VOSHEL: Okay.

10:07AM

15 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: 636 West
16 Wellington, Chicago, Illinois, 60657, representing
17 the organization 55 East Jackson LLC.

18 MS. VOSHEL: I have no presentation.

19 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: All right.

10:07AM

20 Now we will hear presentations from
21 parties in opposition to the proposed designation.
22 Presentations may again include oral or written
23 statements, documents, photographs, and/or
24 testimony.

1 Okay. Presentations may include
2 oral or written statements, documents, photographs,
3 and/or testimony from witnesses. Presentations
4 should be no longer than 60 minutes and must be
5 limited to whether the proposed designation meets
6 the landmark criteria set forth in Section
7 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code.

8 Information ruled by the hearing
9 officer as not relevant to whether the property
10 meets landmark criteria may not be entered into
11 the hearing record. Also, to the extent any
12 presentations include testimony from witnesses, any
13 other parties to the hearing, Historic Preservation
14 Division staff, and the hearing officer may question
15 the presenter providing that testimony.

16 Now we'll hear presentations from
17 those parties in opposition to the landmark
18 designation.

19 It is my understanding that the land
20 trust has an ownership interest in the property. I
21 have received a letter from the successor trustee
22 to that trust, Chicago Title Land Trust Company,
23 which states as following:

24 "To Whom It May Concern: Chicago

1 Title Land Trust Company, as successor
2 trustee to Chicago Title & Trust Company,
3 as Trustee under land trust No. 1081116,
4 the "Trust," hereby certifies that the
5 Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago is
6 the beneficial owner of the Trust and
7 can speak on behalf of the Trust during
8 the April 17th, 2012 City of Chicago
9 landmark designation hearing."

10:09AM 10 And this letter is submitted from
11 David J. Lanciotti.

12 So now let's begin with Anne [sic]
13 Ardell at 345 East Superior Street, Chicago,
14 Illinois, 60611, representing the Rehabilitation
15 Institute of Chicago.

16 Please come forward.

17 MS. ARDELL: It's Nancy Ardell, and I have no
18 presentation.

19 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Okay. Please let
20 the reflect this.

21 We will now hear any statements from
22 the Alderman, or his staff, in whose ward the
23 Continental Center is located.

24 Now, I do not believe we have a

1 representative, but we do have a letter from Robert
2 Fioretti. So please let the record show that we
3 have that letter, and it says:

10:10AM

4 "I am writing this letter in
5 support of the designation of the
6 Continental Center at 55 East Jackson
7 Boulevard ... "

8 And this is submitted by Robert
9 Fioretti.

10:11AM

10 Now, we will hear statements from
11 members of a general public regarding the proposed
12 landmark designations.

13 Statements may be made in favor or
14 in opposition to the proposed landmark designation.

10:11AM

15 Anyone wishing to make a statement in favor of the
16 proposed designation should have filled out a green
17 appearance form. Those who wish to speak in
18 opposition to the proposed designation should fill
19 out a pink appearance form. If you've not already
20 completed a form, they are available at the table
21 just outside of the room.

10:11AM

22 Statements from members of the
23 general public are limited to three minutes each.
24 In the interest of time, you were encouraged to

1 focus your statements on information not previously
2 given. If you agree with the previous statement or
3 statements, feel free to state as such.

4 Instead of an oral statement, you
10:11AM 5 may submit a written statement. Is there anyone
6 who wishes to submit a written statement? If
7 there is, please include your name, address, and
8 organization, if applicable, at the top of your
9 statement and give it to a member of the Historic
10:12AM 10 Presentation staff.

11 We do have a letter submitted from
12 Ty Tabing from Chicago Loop Alliance. And the
13 letter begins:

14 "The purpose of this letter is
10:12AM 15 for the Chicago Loop Alliance to voice its
16 support for this landmarking of 55 East
17 Jackson."

18 So please let the record show that
19 this letter is submitted in support.

10:12AM 20 We will now hear statements members
21 of the general public have submitted in favor of
22 the proposed landmark designation.

23 Let's begin with Jean Follett from
24 Landmarks Illinois, 53 West Jackson, Chicago,

1 60604.

2 Please come forward to the chair and
3 state your name and your interest, organization, or
4 company you represent, if it's anything other than
5 what I've already said.

10:13AM

6 MS. FOLLETT: It's exactly what you've said,
7 yeah.

8 I'm Jean Follett, the Interim
9 Executive Director of Landmarks Illinois. We are
10 in strong support of the landmark designation of
11 55 East Jackson.

10:13AM

12 This important building sets the
13 pace for the 1960s and 1970s redevelopment of the
14 Loop. It's an important steel-framed skyscraper
15 exemplifying the International Style and the
16 architectural legacy of Mies van der Rohe in the
17 mid-20th century Chicago.

10:13AM

18 55 East Jackson was designed by the
19 firm of C.F. Murphy under the leadership of Jacques
20 Brownson and James Ferris. This firm was really
21 second only to Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in
22 terms of the number of Chicago projects they were
23 involved in during the 1960s. The design of this
24 building really set the stage for Murphy's design

10:13AM

1 of the Daley Center. It also was an early
2 harbinger of the kind of signature buildings that
3 corporations built for themselves from this point
4 on.

10:13AM 5 Jacques Brownson, who has recently
6 passed away, has been cited as "among Chicago's
7 greatest post-World War II designers."

8 55 East Jackson was greatly admired
9 at the time of its construction and its strong
10:14AM 10 design, sleek materials, and flexible floor plan
11 have stood the test of time. It is a building that
12 is significant both for its architecture and for
13 its engineering, and it's really a great early
14 example of the International Style in Chicago.

10:14AM 15 Thanks.

16 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Thank you.

17 Okay. And now we have a second
18 statement from the general public in favor of the
19 proposed landmark. Jonathan Fine from Preservation
10:14AM 20 Chicago.

21 MR. FINE: Good morning, Commissioner
22 Blanchard and the staff of the Landmarks Commission.

23 For the record, my name is Jonathan
24 Fine. I'm executive director of Preservation

1 Chicago, and our offices are located at 4410 North
2 Ravenswood Avenue in Chicago, 60640.

3 I am going to forgo my statements
4 about the architecture because Jean Follett and, of
10:15AM 5 course, Terry Tatum did such an incredible job. So
6 I'm not going to reiterate. But what I would like
7 to do is just make a statement about the importance
8 of recognizing mid-century architecture.

9 For a long time, the -- it has taken
10:15AM 10 many decades for a particular style or trend in
11 architecture to attain its rightful place in the
12 history of architecture. So I would like to thank
13 the owners of the building, particularly Anne Voshel
14 for, first of all, recognizing the importance of
10:15AM 15 this building and also taking steps to initiate a
16 landmarking process. Had this progressive thinking
17 been done, perhaps, 50 years ago, maybe some our
18 wonderful Chicago School buildings would still be
19 standing.

10:16AM 20 So our organization is fully in
21 support of this designation, and we look forward
22 to, perhaps, seeing the First National Bank Building
23 landmarked one day soon.

24 Thank you very much.

1 HEARING OFFICER BLANCHARD: Thank you,
2 Mr. Fine.

10:16AM

3 Please let the record show that we
4 have no pink forms submitted opposing the proposed
5 landmark designation.

10:16AM

6 If there are no other questions or
7 comments, this concludes today's public hearing.
8 The Commission will consider the entire record,
9 including the transcript of today's hearing, at the
10 regular meeting on May 12th, 2012 -- I'm sorry --
11 May 3rd, 2012, and determine whether to make a
12 final recommendation to City Council on the
13 proposed landmark designation of the Continental
14 Center.

10:16AM

15 The meeting is open to the public
16 and will take place at 12:45 at Room 201-A in City
17 Hall.

18 Thank you for attending today.

19 (The public hearing in the
20 above-entitled matter was
21 adjourned.)
22
23
24

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2) SS:
3 COUNTY OF C O O K)

4 I, Marcia Yoshizumi, a Certified
5 Shorthand Reporter in and for the County of Cook
6 and State of Illinois, do hereby certify that I
7 reported in shorthand the proceedings of said
8 hearing as appears from my stenographic notes so
9 taken and transcribed under my direction.

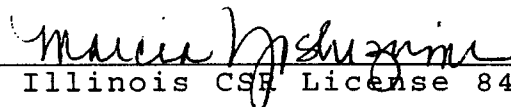
10

11 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
12 my hand and affixed my seal of office at Chicago,
13 Illinois, this 23rd day of April 2012.

14

15

16



Illinois CSR License 84-003537

17

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