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City of
Ville d'**Ottawa**

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**CULTURAL PROGRAMS
HERITAGE UNIT**

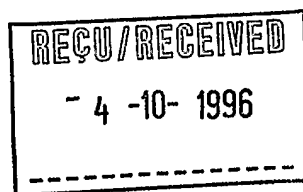
Department of Corporate Services Services intégrés
111 Sussex, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5A1

Our File/Notre Dossier: ACS1996/3300-013 CC1F383
Reply To: Répondre à:
P.G. Pagé, City Clerk/Greffier

BY COURIER

October 3, 1996

Ms. Lesley Lewis
Executive Director
Ontario Heritage Foundation
10 Adelaide St. East
3rd Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1J3




Dear Ms. Lewis:

The Council of the Corporation of the City of Ottawa on the 2nd day of October, 1996, established its Intention to Designate the property known municipally as 172-180 Sparks Street, in the City of Ottawa, pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990. c.0.18.

Enclosed herewith is the Notice of Intention to Designate served according to the act.

Yours truly,

for 
P.G. Pagé
City Clerk

/cp

Enc.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT.

The Corporation of the City of Ottawa on the 2nd day of October, 1996, established its intention to designate the following heritage property for its architectural and historical value.

172 and 180 Sparks Street

STATEMENT OF REASON FOR DESIGNATION

The former F.W. Woolworth Co. Store at 172 Sparks Street (spanning street address nos. 168-76), and the former S.S. Kresge Co. Store/later Reitman's Store at 180 Sparks Street (spanning street address nos. 178-182), are recommended for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for historical and architectural reasons.

The former Woolworth's and Kresge's stores were constructed in 1941 and 1929 respectively. The two adjacent buildings reflect the long-standing significance of Sparks Street as a diversified retail and commercial focus for Ottawa, and stand as examples of outlets of large retail chains from the first half of the 20th century which have had an notable impact on the development of the street and the economy of Ottawa.

The former F.W. Woolworth Co. Store extends through the block to Queen Street. The building is a larger, replacement structure for an earlier Woolworth's which opened on this site in 1917 (the company's second outlet in Ottawa). Woolworth's is known for popularizing the concept of the "five-and-dime store," and by the early 20th century the chain was immensely successful internationally because of its discount prices. By 1941 the company was known as a variety store and, in addition to its status as one of the world's largest retailers, was also the largest restaurateur through its lunch counters.

The 1941 building was designed by the architectural section of the Toronto District Office of the F.W. Woolworth Co. Ltd. The composition was intended to attract a broad and popular clientele, with an appearance perceived to be fashionable, modern, yet practical. The result was a Sparks Street elevation in the Art Deco style, and the related Moderne style for the secondary frontage on Queen Street - now rare styles in Ottawa. The second storey of each street front is unchanged from the time of construction. On Sparks Street this includes the finely worked limestone cladding ornamented with stylized, low-relief sculptural motifs, fluted pilasters, stepped cornice, as well as the original steel casement windows and glazing. The Queen Street elevation is notable for the streamlined banding of the brickwork and fenestration--horizontal on the shop front and vertical on the integrated design of the elevator tower. Due to the transitory nature of shop fronts, the lower levels of the two facades are no longer original (although notable original components remain on the Queen Street side), and absent are the traditional, red F.W. Woolworth Co. signs which spanned the length of each facade over the street-level glazing.

The former Kresge store also originated as a discount chain, and the company's aggressive marketing is reflected by its choice of location beside the Woolworth's. When the Sparks Street outlet opened in 1929, it was the largest variety chain in the world after Woolworth's. The former Kresge's is a 2-storey, brick-clad building, designed in the Modern Classical style popular in the 1920s.

The upper floor retains features consistent with this style, such as the flatness of corner piers, pilasters and entablature with a cornice (metal in this instance). The use of brick, trimmed with stone for capitals, mouldings, and medallions, was also typical of smaller buildings in this style. The shop front was reclad with black glass in 1957 when the building was taken over by the Reitman's hosiery and lingerie firm (later ladies wear). Black glass originated as a jazzy Art Deco material, and by the 1950s was an extremely popular store-front cladding. In the fickle world of store-front design, however, this high-quality material is now relatively rare and is, even here, compromised by a later patch of brown ceramic tile.

Woolworth's and Reitman's vacated their Sparks Street premises in 1988, however, the structures continue to reinforce the traditional commercial streetscape and the human scale of the Sparks Street pedestrian mall. They are part of the historical formation of Sparks Street and each contribute to the architectural variety of the streetscape. This designation does not apply to the interiors of either building.

OBJECTIONS

Any person wishing to object to this designation may do so by letter, outlining reasons for the objections and other relevant information. These must be received by the Clerk of the City of Ottawa either by registered mail or personally delivered by the 4th day of November, 1996.

DATED at Ottawa this 4th day of October, 1996.

P.G. Pagé
City Clerk