

OAHP1403

Rev. 9/98

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

Official eligibility determination
(OAHP use only)

Date _____ Initials _____

- _____ Determined Eligible- NR
_____ Determined Not Eligible- NR
_____ Determined Eligible- SR
_____ Determined Not Eligible- SR
_____ Need Data
_____ Contributes to eligible NR District
_____ Noncontributing to eligible NR District

INTENSIVE LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Parcel #/s

2077-16-4-21-002

Neighborhood

3566.00 Off Broadway (South)

I. IDENTIFICATION

1. Resource number: 5AH.3682
2. Temporary resource #: N/A
3. County: Arapahoe
4. City: Littleton
5. Historic building name: New Fashion Cleaners & Shirt Laundry
6. Current building name: The Hemp Center
7. Building address: 5744 S Datura St
8. Owner name, address: 57 Datura LLC
2431 Eagleview Cir
Longmont, CO 80504-7315



National Register: Ineligible for Individual Listing
State Register: Eligible for Individual Listing (local)
Littleton Landmark Eligible for Individual Listing

Ineligible for District Listing
Ineligible for District Listing
Eligible for District Listing

II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. **PLSS information:** PM6 T5S R68W, SW 1/4 of SE 1/4 of Section 16
 10. **UTM reference:** NAD 83 ZONE 13S
 11. **USGS quad name:** Littleton
Year: 2016
Map scale: 1:24000
 12. **Lot(s)** 6 (partial)
Block: 3
Addition: Windermere Parks
Year of Addition: 1910
 13. **Boundary Description and Justification:**
 S 75 Ft Of W 60 Ft Of Lot 6 Blk 3 Windermere Parks & 1/2 Vac St Adj
 The boundary of the property is the legally defined parcel, encompassing .1380 acres.

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. **Building plan (footprint, shape):** Rectangular
 15. **Dimensions in feet:** 30' x 52'
 16. **Number of stories:** One
 17. **Primary external wall material(s):** Concrete Block
 18. **Roof configuration:** Flat
 19. **Primary external roof material:** Asphalt Roof/Composition Roof or Synthetic Roof
 20. **Special features:** N/A
 21. **General architectural description:**

The former New Fashion Cleaners & Shirt Laundry is sited to the north and east sides of a rectangular lot facing S Datura St.

The one-story building has a rectangular footprint and flat roof. The materials are concrete block masonry, wood shake shingles and a metal and glass storefront, windows and doors.

The west side of the building features a large blind wall of alternating plain and patterned stack-bond concrete block that rises above the main roof of the building. To the south is a storefront with a pair of central doors and a single transom above. The entry is flanked by groups of three full-height windows above a low wall of running-bond concrete block masonry. A large canopy with a wood shake fascia and paneled soffit projects to the west. The canopy is flush with the south and extends just onto the face of the pattern-block wall to the north. Three metal pole columns boxed with panels of crossed wood lathe support the west side of the canopy.

The south and east walls are running-bond concrete block, each with a single window with angled rowlock sills. The south wall has an abandoned service door opening to the west. The north wall has two small windows with rowlock sills and a service door.

22. **Architectural style:** Modern Movement / Commercial Modern
Building type Commercial

23. Landscaping or special setting features:

A raised planting bed appears at the northwest corner of the site. The balance of the lot is paved for surface parking.

24. Associated buildings, features, or objects:

A surface-mounted sign identifying the current occupant appears on the face of the canopy.

IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. **Date of Construction:** 1961
Estimated or Actual: Actual
Source of information: Arapahoe County Assessor Records.
 26. **Architect:** Unknown
Source of information: N/A
 27. **Builder/Contractor:** Unknown
Source of information: N/A
 28. **Original owner:** Unknown
Source of information: N/A

29. Construction history (description, dates of major additions, alterations, demolitions):

Three original metal pole columns are visible within crude boxes of panels of crossed wood lathe. Wood shingles were applied to the canopy fascia. A plywood panel appears at the location of an original glass and metal service door on the south wall, though the original door may survive beneath.

30. Original Location: Yes
Date of move(s): N/A

V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): Commerce/Trade, Specialty Store
32. Intermediate use(s): Commerce/Trade
33. Current use(s): Commerce/Trade, Specialty Store
34. Site Type(s): Commercial Building

35. Historical background:

Dry cleaning and laundry establishments were an expanding sector in the postwar era. There were two separate types of establishments for the cleaning of clothing: the self-serve laundromat and the full-service dry-cleaner. Laundromats, which were stocked with coin-operated washers and dryers, first appeared in the United States in the 1940s, and they flourished before many homeowners were able to afford residential appliances. Examples in Littleton include the Reinke Self Serv Laundry on W Alamo St and the Coin-Op Laundry on S Gallup St, both in this survey.

Though the process of dry cleaning goes back to the 19th century, it was in the 1920s when dry cleaners first began to open shops in this country. Dry-cleaning establishments were common in the 1950s and 1960s, when men and women alike wore more formal clothing that could not be laundered. In Littleton the swelling of the professional classes specifically related to the expansion of the defense and aerospace industry, which required men in suits and women in dresses, increased the local need for dry-cleaning facilities. Dry-cleaning, which uses chemicals, requires a processing plant, so, unlike laundromats, there were no home alternatives.

The New Fashion Cleaners & Shirt Laundry was the premier dry-cleaner in the West Littleton Boulevard Corridor, and it occupied its own custom designed building. More typically, Littleton dry-cleaners occupied spaces in larger shopping centers or strip malls such as Gigantic Cleaners which was in the Woodlawn Shopping Center.

New Fashion, providing shirt laundry services, also catered to women as they spent less time in the domestic sphere. The business reflects the expanding automobile culture, as customers drove under the canopy to drop off and pick up their dry cleaning and laundry. A huge elaborate lighted sign was removed in compliance with Littleton's 1971 sign ordinance.

36. Sources of information:

<http://quickcleanlaundromats.blogspot.com/2013/02/history-of-laundromats.html>

<http://www.lgfcleaners.com/origin-of-dry-cleaning/>

Collection of the Littleton Museum.

Arapahoe County Assessor Records.

Littleton City Directories.

The Historic Context of Littleton Colorado 1949-1967 (2008) by Diane Wray Tomasso, prepared for the City of Littleton, Office of Community Development.

VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: No
Date of designation: N/A
Designating authority: N/A

38. Applicable National Register Criteria:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory. Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).
- ✓ Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.
- 38A. Applicable Colorado State Register of Historic Properties Criteria:**
- ✓ A. The association of the property with events that have made a significant contribution to history;
- B. The connection of the property with persons significant in history;
- ✓ C. The apparent distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction, artisan;
- D. The geographic importance of the property;
- E. The possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history.
- Does not meet any of the above State Register criteria
- 38B. Applicable Littleton Landmark Standards:**
- ✓ 1. Exemplifies specific elements of an architectural style or period;
2. Is an example of the work of an architect or builder recognized for expertise nationally, state-wide, regionally, or locally;
- ✓ 3. Demonstrates superior craftsmanship or high artistic value;
4. Represents an innovation in construction, materials or design;
5. Represents a style particularly associated with the Littleton area;
- ✓ 6. Represents a built environment of a group of people in an era of history;
7. Represents a pattern or grouping of elements representing at least one of above criteria;
8. Has undergone significant historic remodel;
9. Is the site of historic event that had an effect upon society;
- ✓ 10. Exemplifies cultural, political, economic or social heritage of the community;
11. Represents an association with a notable person or the work of a notable person;
12. Represents a typical example/association with a particular ethnic group;
13. Represents a unique example of an event in Littleton's history;
14. Enhances sense of identity of the community;
15. Is an established and familiar natural setting or visual feature of the community?
- Does not meet any of the above City of Littleton Landmark standards.
- 39. Area(s) of significance:** Architecture, Commerce
- 40. Period of significance:** 1961
- 41. Level of significance:** Local
- 42. Statement of significance:**

The New Fashion Cleaners & Shirt Laundry building is evaluated as eligible for individual listing in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties under Criteria A and C and is eligible for Littleton local landmark designation under Criteria 1, 6 and 10.

SR Criterion A: The New Fashion Cleaners & Shirt Laundry building exemplifies the cultural, social and historic heritage of the City of Littleton through its association with the development of consumer services during the city's initial period of suburban growth and expansion in the post-World War II period.

SR Criterion C: The former New Fashion Cleaners & Shirt Laundry portrays the environment of the post World War II era of Littleton history characterized by the Modernist Style in architecture. It embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the Modernist Style. It is well-designed and displays a high standard of material quality and construction craft.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

The former New Fashion Cleaners is evaluated as retaining all seven aspects of integrity. The building retains its original location and setting. Its design has been barely modified by enclosing the original metal pole columns with crude boxes of wood lathe, adding shake shingles to the canopy fascia and encapsulating or replacing service doors on secondary elevations. The front windows and entrance may have possibly been replaced with a later storefront, but, if so, the change was made within the original masonry opening. The survey team believes that all these changes are acceptable within the context of normal and expected alterations in an active commercial district and should not preclude listing. The remainder of the materials and workmanship are intact, along with its feeling and association.

VII. ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. **National Register eligibility assessment:** Ineligible
State Register eligibility assessment: Individually eligible (local)
Local Landmark eligibility assessment: Individually eligible
45. **Is there historic district potential?** Yes
Discuss: Eligible for proposed Littleton Overlay District.
46. **Building located in N.R. district?** No
Contributing N/A
Noncontributing N/A

VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

47. **Photograph numbers:**
5744 SDS 01.jpg through 5744 SDS 04.jpg
5744 SDS WLB Historic 01.jpg
All photographs by Diane Wray Tomasso except as noted.
CD on file at the City of Littleton Historic Preservation Office.
48. **Report title:**
Survey of Commercial Modernism in the West Littleton Boulevard Corridor 1950-1980.
49. **Date(s):** June 2018
50. **Recorder(s):** Diane Wray Tomasso and Michael Paglia
51. **Organization:**
Performed on behalf of the Office of Community Development, Littleton, CO, in association with the State Historical Fund, History Colorado.
52. **Address:** 3058 S Cornell Circle, Englewood, CO 80113
53. **Phone number(s):** 303 552-8254

Aerial Map



Source Data DRCOG Regional Data Catalog
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5AH.3682

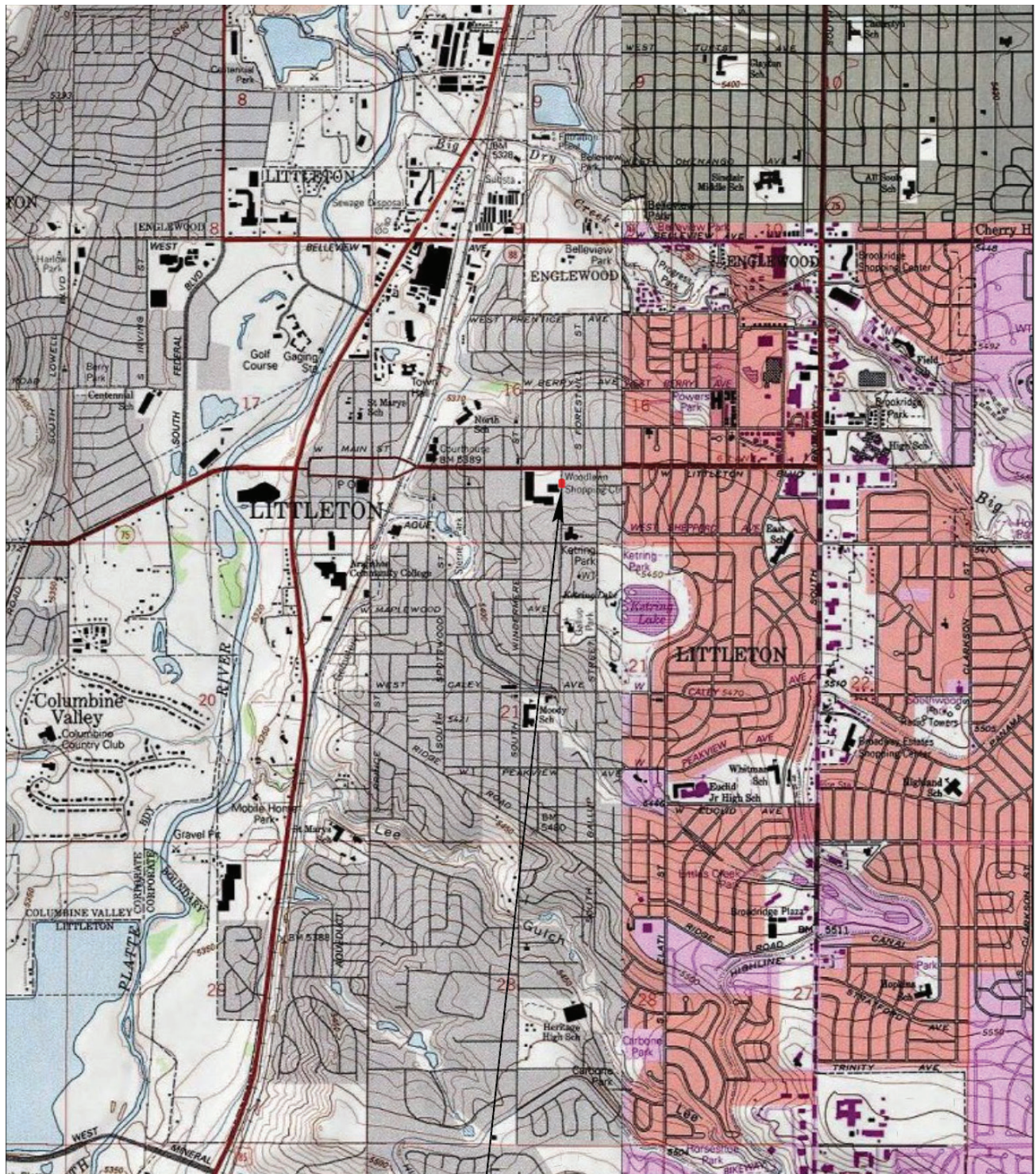
Sketch Map



Source Data DRCOG Regional Data Catalog
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5AH.3682

Location Map



5AH.3682

Photo: 5744 SDS 01.jpg
West Wall, facade, S Datura St in foreground.



Photo: 5744 SDS 02.jpg
West Wall (left), South Wall (right).



Photo: 5744 SDS 03.jpg
West Wall, facade (right), North Wall (left).



Photo: 5744 SDS 04.jpg
South Wall (left); East Wall (right).



Image: 199 WLB Historic 01.jpg

West Wall, facade (right); North Wall (left), W Littleton Blvd in foreground.

Source: Arapahoe County Assessor Website, Commercial Parcel Search / Photo (undated)



Image: 199 WLB Historic 02.jpg

Original signage, W Littleton Blvd at left.

Source: Photo October 1971.

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COMMERCIAL MODERN STYLE

Commercial Modern buildings represent thirty-five or 45% of the total seventy-seven survey buildings. Eight are classified in Tier Two and the remaining twenty-eight are classified in lower Tiers Three and Four.

Though the commercial buildings on West Littleton Boulevard exemplify many of the various Modernist styles popular with architects and clients at that time, as demonstrated by those that have been mentioned thus far, including Expressionism, Formalism and Usonian, it was a stripped down straight-forward functionalism, related to both the International Style and to its Meisian refinement, that clearly predominated. As discussed above, Sternberg's lost Littleton Medical Center, as well as both the bank and office building by the Marlows, are masterworks of this type.

The typical Modernist commercial buildings from the period of the 1950s to 1970s that were built on West Littleton Boulevard, and the surrounding streets, are small scale functionalist buildings intended to serve as retail businesses or professional offices. The majority of these buildings are rectilinear, either a simple rectangle, or a simple arrangement of rectangles. They ordinarily have flat roofs, with either plain, nearly flush fascias, or with overhanging boxed-in soffits or eaves. However a few have overhanging canopies, some of which are canted. These sometimes follow the roof-lines and were intended to protect shoppers from the sun or from inclement weather.

Many of these types of Modernist commercial buildings had light-colored walls in the form of painted concrete block or brick, as well as those done in buff-colored or even light-gray brick. Many others have been constructed using various shades of red-brick, as was used for Woodlawn Shopping Center, the largest commercial project from this period. Among those constructed as shops as opposed to offices, there is often the extensive use of glass for display windows.

The term was coined in 2016 by Michael Paglia and Diane Wray.

Defining Characteristics of Commercial Modern Style

- horizontally oriented
- rectangular volumes
- prominence of front facade, functional handling of secondary elevations
- large areas of glazing
- little to no ornament
- walls eave-less, or with overhanging eaves
- flat or shed roofs