

To: Historic Preservation Commission
From: Kristi Chase, Preservation Planner, and
Brandon Wilson, Executive Director
Date: July 17, 2012

HPC 12.063 Demolition – 315-321 Broadway – 1924-25 brick commercial block

Applicant: Peter Yung Lee

6/19/12



Initial Determination of Significance

The Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to determine the 1925 brick commercial block at 315-321 Broadway is 'significant' because the building is (Section 2.17) "at least 50 years old, and is or has been determined by the Commission to be a significant building or structure after a finding that the building or structure is either:

- i. *"Importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or*
- ii. *"Historically or architecturally significant (in terms of period, style, method of building construction, or association with a reputed architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of buildings or structures, and therefore it is in the public interest to be preserved or rehabilitated rather than to be demolished."*

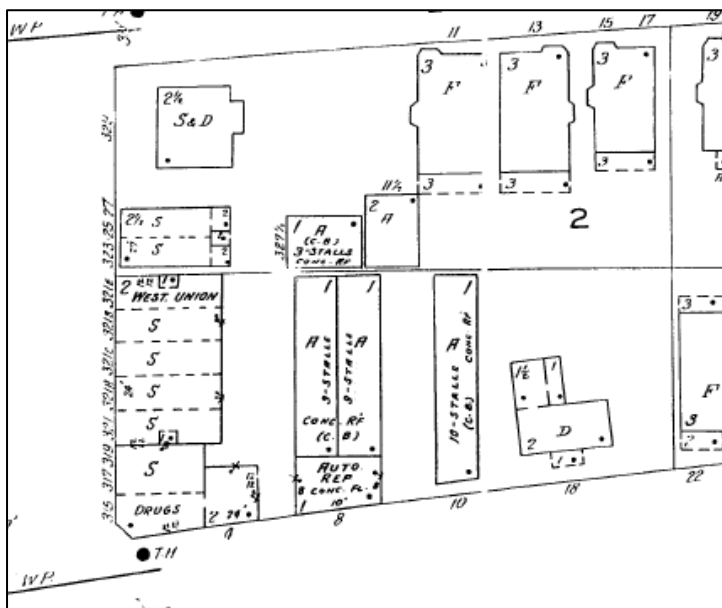
Specifically, the significance is particularly strong in terms of its associations with the period in which it was constructed and the economy of the time when 1920s commercial development in the City and the new automotive era began. The building has integrity with its copper covered parapet, arched doorways and many other details.

The commercial block at 315-321 Broadway was considered to be of sufficient importance that it was recorded as part of the 1990 Commercial and Industrial Survey by the Public Archeology Laboratory. It is a red brick two-story building constructed prior to 1924 per Building Permits. Its cast stone pilasters and frieze, brick quoining and panel work, copper covered parapet and arched entries are distinctive elements. Architecturally, it exemplifies the ideals of the period with its symmetrical openings and corner pediment.

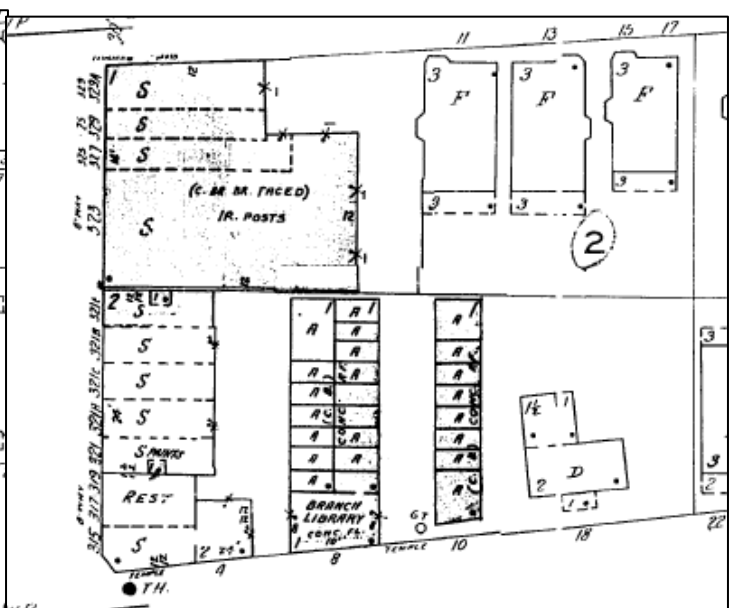
Historically, it is a good example of the wave of automobile-related construction that occurred in the area during the early part of the 20th century. This commercial block was built in two parts in 1924 and 1925. No. 321 Broadway, built in 1924, consisted of five stores including a hardware store, market, A & P Co., and a delicatessen. No. 315-319 Broadway was completed in 1925 and housed a drug store and barber shop as well as offices for a contractor and the Hilldale Club. Information has been found on the Hillside Club, a literary society based in Winter Hill started in 1882, not the Hilldale.

Recommendations

Due to the architectural and historical findings noted above, and this building's prominent location on the corner of a major intersection for almost 90 years, the Staff recommends that the building be determined 'preferably preserved.' While preserving the façade is unlikely, the Staff is optimistic that a viable development on the site would sustain the salient characteristics that make this building an important part of the Broadway streetscape. The Staff remains concerned that declaring this building not 'preferably preserved' without an approved plan through the Design Review Committee and the Planning Board runs a high probability that the lot would sit vacant. Therefore, the Staff recommends that a Memorandum of Agreement be written to ensure that the site is not left vacant, and that the salient characteristics marking the importance of the existing building are incorporated in completed plans approved by the Planning Board and the Design Review Committee. These characteristics are the arched entries, the use of cast stone and red brick especially the quoining and panel work, the rhythm of the original façade and the emphasis on the corner as a focal point of the building.



1933 Sanborn Map showing 315-321 Broadway



1950 Sanborn Map showing 315-321 Broadway