

**Dallas Landmark Commission
Landmark Nomination Form**

1. Name

historic: Olive and Myers
and/or common: RLM Building date: 1925

2. Location

address: 2220 Canton
location/neighborhood: Downtown-Farmers' Market
block: 153 lot: land survey: tract size:

3. Current Zoning

CA-1 (A)

4. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residence
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes:restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes:unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> other, specify
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	

5. Ownership

Current Owner: Westdale Properties I, Ltd.
Contact: John Miller Phone: 826-8865
Address: 6721 Country Club Circle City: Dallas State: TX. Zip: 75214-4021

6. Form Preparation

Date: August, 1994
Name & Title: Kate Singleton, Preservation Consultant
Organization:
Contact: Kate Singleton Phone: 821-7533

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide) local state national National Register
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) A B C D Recorded TX Historic Ldmk
Oak Cliff TX Archaeological Ldmk
Victorian Survey
Dallas Historic Resources Survey, Phase high medium low

For Office Use Only

Date Rec'd: _____ Survey Verified: Y N by: _____ Field Check by: _____ Petitions Needed: Y N

Nomination: Archaeological Site Structure(s) Structure & Site District

8. Historic Ownership

original owner: Olive and Myers Manufacturing

significant later owner(s): RLM Clothing Manufacturing

9. Construction Dates

original: 1925

alterations/additions:

10. Architect

original construction: American Construction Company

alterations/additions:

11. Site Features

natural:

urban design:

12. Physical Description

Condition, check one:

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

unaltered

altered

Check one:

original site

moved(date _____)

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

Built in 1925, the Olive and Myers Building was constructed as a furniture factory by the American Construction Company of Houston. The construction cost for the five story building was \$250,000. This building was constructed so that Olive and Myers could expand their furniture manufacturing company. The building is located on Canton next to the old H.&T.C. railroad tracks.

The exterior of the building is brick and concrete. The concrete frame of the building is accented by red brick infill and steel casement windows. In several locations on the first, second and third floors, operable steel service doors exist. These doors exited onto bridges between the various factory buildings. The doors on the east facade were probably used to load goods into the trains on the H. & T.C. tracks. The original building entry is located in the center bay of the north facade (Canton Street). The entry and the first floor fenestration have been modified, changing the window configuration and plastering over column and masonry expression. The north facade has five bays of windows across each of the upper floors. The west facade has ten bays of windows on each floor and two steel fire escapes. The southwest bay on the west facade is an opening into the garage. The east facade has the same window configuration as the west facade. The south facade is the same as the north with the exception of a fire escape and a loading dock. The loading dock is continuous along the south facade and is covered with triangular framed steel trusses of standard steel angle shapes and a corrugated metal roof covering.

The existing building structure consists of poured in place concrete columns and beams expressed on the exterior facade, and round concrete belled columns on the interior. Each of the five floors of the building are flat slab construction with drop plates at the bell columns.

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Originally, the first floor had a small room on the first floor known as the glue room. All furniture "jobbing" was done on the second floor. The Sanborn Insurance Maps show a steel bridge from the third floor of the north facade across Canton to another on of the factory buildings. There was another bridge from the second floor on the west facade going to the mattress factory.

Vertical access was accomplished with two service elevators located back-to-back in the building center, a single run service stair on the east side of the elevators and a man lift on the northwest corner of the elevators. An elevator penthouse is located on the roof directly above the elevators, with the concrete frame extending another level above the penthouse to support a water tank. The basement contains the boiler room, electrical transformer and distribution equipment as well as the fire sprinkler riser.

The building has not been significantly altered over the years. The few alterations include filling in some of the original openings. There has been some alteration to the main (north) entrance. The current owner intends to repair the alterations and convert the building to residential.

13. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

The Olive and Myers building, 2220 Canton, was constructed in 1925 and used for manufacturing furniture. Manufacturing, which was once located in the core of most major cities, played a vital role in the Dallas economy. This structure represents one of the last remaining factory buildings in downtown Dallas and is a remnant of one of Dallas' first manufacturing companies.

The Olive and Myers Manufacturing Company was founded in 1899 by William S. Myers and Edward R. Olive. The company made furniture, mattresses, springs, beds, linoleum, rugs, pillows, tents, awnings and wagon covers. Originally located in one building, the firm eventually grew to occupy four city blocks. *Greater Dallas Illustrated* (p. 170) lists Olive and Myers as "...manufacturers and jobbers of high class furniture of all kinds". The article also stated, "The plant...is one that never fails to attract the attention to the visitor to Dallas who is generally surprised to find a works of such size." (*Dallas Illustrated*, p.170) Capital stock in the company had been repaid at \$350,000. Olive and Myers and the Awalt company were the only furniture "jobbers" in Dallas. A 1934 *Dallas Morning News* article showed the impact of the furniture industry on the Dallas economy. Furniture stores in Dallas sold over \$9.6 million annually.
(DMN 9-15-34)

Not much is known about Edward R. Olive. He apparently came to Dallas in 1899. By 1912, he was no longer with Olive and Myers and had left Dallas. However, William Scott Myers was involved with the company until his death on September 14, 1934. William S. Myers was born in Orville, Ohio and came to Dallas in 1899. In that same year he started the firm of Olive and Myers with Edward R. Olive. Myers was president of Olive and Myers. In 1905, with his vice-president Horace E. Spalti, he started the firm of Myers and Spalti in Houston. This company was an extension of the Dallas firm.

Myers spent a few years (ca. 1913-1917) in Denver, Colorado as president of the mining company Sutton, Steele and Steele. He was still president of Olive and Myers in Dallas. The other officers of the mining company were Edwin G. Steele, Walter L. Steele and Henry M. Sutton. The company offered a variety of services including mining engineering; ore manufacturing; concentrators; coal separators, and specific gravity separators for cleaning, separating and grading seeds, grains and other dry cereals.

By about 1917, Myers was back in Texas, having moved to Houston to be president of Myers and Spalti. He was chairman of the board for Myers and Spalti and Olive and Myers. In 1925, he oversaw the Dallas expansion with the construction of 2220 Canton. He hired the Houston firm, American Construction Company, to build the new \$250,000 factory.

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The company increased its number of employees to 350. At the time of his death at the age of 73, Myers was in Dallas to implement a new employee plan he developed. This plan, an early version of employee profit sharing, was being used in Houston and was working well.

An interesting aspect of Myers' life was his "auto touring". He was considered a "Pioneer Auto Tourist" in Texas. (DTH 9/15/34) In the early 1920's, Myers traveled across the country in a "house on wheels". One of the first of its kind, Myers had the cottage constructed on a lengthened Cadillac chassis. The miniature house had a kitchen, sitting room, bed and bath. The house on wheels was constructed at the Houston plant by Munger Automobile Company of Dallas. They, and Myers, gained national publicity with stories and pictures of this unusual vehicle.

Myers was succeeded by Horace E. Spalti who had been with Olive and Myers since the early 1900's. Spalti was born in Pleasantville, Iowa, and attended Drake University. After college he returned to Pleasantville to enter the furniture manufacturing business. He came to Dallas in 1900, just after William Myers. Spalti was very active in Dallas society. Aside from being president and chairman of the board of both Olive and Myers and Myers and Spalti, he was director of a local insurance company. He also served on the board of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce for many years. Spalti was a member of several organizations including Hella Shrine, Masons, High Noon Club and Elks Lodge. Horace Spalti died unexpectedly in Dallas on April 4, 1944.

Olive and Myers and Myers and Spalti were then taken over by his son, Horace D. Spalti. Along with Trammel Crow, Spalti developed the Furniture Mart in Dallas. Before that he helped organize the furniture shows at the State Fair. He merged Olive and Myers and Myers and Spalti in 1957 and moved manufacturing operations to a new \$2.5 million plant in Athens, Texas. In 1958, Curtis Mathis purchased controlling interest in the company and closed the Athens factory. At this point Olive and Myers ceased to exist as a company, ending over 50 years of local manufacturing.

In 1958, after Curtis Mathis purchased Olive and Myers, 2220 Canton was sold to the McMullen Realty Company. Robert Leroy McMullen and Ray Stockton were the founding partners of Stockton Manufacturing Company. Stockton was a manufacturer of ladies ready-to-wear clothing. Subsequent to the founding of Stockton, McMullen purchased Stockton's interest in the company, and the company was renamed RLM Fashion Industries, but retained the Stockton trademarks.

Stockton was a middle-of-the-line manufacturer of ladies wear with major sales to Sears and JC Penneys. One of the original and popular productions manufactured by Stockton/RLM was ladies denim jeans.

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During the 1960's, an original, and well used, pair of 1946 jeans were sent to the company by a woman from Stockton, California, along with a brand new pair she had just recently purchased. Accompanying the jeans, was a note commenting on the good fit and durability. Both pairs of jeans and the note were prominently displayed in the building until 1991. These items are still in the possession of the McMullen family.

At the height of its production, the building housed 550 employees, which included 450 sewing machine operators. Because of changing demographics and pay scales, sewing the garments became more of a cottage industry and the employment base of RLM at this location declined. Material would be brought to the building and cut into pieces, the cut material would be sent to outlying areas for assembly. The finished garment would be sent back to 2220 Canton for distribution to the retail outlets. RLM owned the building until 1991.

The initial office finish-out was done by a company owned by Doak Walker and Cloyce Box. Both Walker and Box were star football players at SMU and later played professional football. McMullen, Box and Walker were all good friends. This is how Box and Walker were chosen for the interior construction on the building. Leroy McMullen was an avid competitor and excellent golfer. His golf partners included well known Dallasites Red and W.O. Bankston, Mickey Mantle and Willie Shumaker. McMullen was reportedly the best golfer of the group. Baseball commentator Dizzy Dean would often "take an opportunity to say hello to his good friend in Dallas, Leroy McMullen" during the broadcast of games. Robert Leroy McMullen died in 1993.

The Olive and Myers Building, 2220 Canton, constructed in 1925, is one of the few remaining examples of factory architecture in downtown Dallas. The Olive and Myers Company represents the entrepreneurial spirit of Dallas. This company, begun in 1899, with one building grew to include four downtown city blocks and eventually, a \$2,500,000 plant in Athens. This building represents a facet of downtown, the manufacturing factory, which with the advent of industrial parks is long gone. It is for above reasons that the building is eligible for designation as a City of Dallas Landmark.

14. Bibliography

Friends of the Dallas Public Library. **Greater Dallas Illustrated 1908**, p.170. Dallas, Texas: Dallas Public Library, 1992.

Polk, R.L. and Company. **Dallas City Directory**, 1899, 1900-01, 1905-06, 1912, 1913, 1920, 1927, 1930, 1934, 1940. Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk and Company.

Magazines

Dallas Chamber of Commerce. **Dallas Magazine**. December 1924, page 19.

Newspapers

Dallas Times Herald 9-15-1934, section 1, p. 6
4-20-1944, section 2, p. 14
Dallas Morning News 9-15-1934 clipping file
2-28-1954 clipping file

Other Sources

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
1921 corrected volume 1, p. 16

City Building Permits Index
Dec. 24, 1924 no.4690

Texas Death Records

Telephone interview with Mrs. Horace D. Spalti Sept. 1, 1994

15. Attachments

District or Site Map
 Site Plan
 Photos (historic & current)

Additional descriptive material
 Footnotes
 Other: _____

Designation Merit

- | | |
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| <p>A. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas or the United States. _____</p> <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. _____</p> <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. _____</p> <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historical heritage of the city. <u> X </u></p> <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. _____</p> <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or specimen. <u> X </u></p> | <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. _____</p> <p>H. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. _____</p> <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif. _____</p> <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar feature of a neighborhood, community or the city. _____</p> <p>K. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories or historic or prehistoric value. _____</p> <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment of public pride. _____</p> |
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Recommendation

The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date:

 Chair
 Designation Task Force

 Jim Anderson, Urban Planner
 Historic Preservation