

Square 460 (Commercial Buildings)
Pennsylvania Ave. Between Sixth & Seventh Sts.
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-501

HABS
DC,
WASH,
323.

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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SQUARE 460

Square 460 lies in the most crucial area of proposed development in the PADC District. Its frontage along Pennsylvania Avenue forms the eastern approach to Market Square, one of the major open spaces called for in L'Enfant's Plan.

The wedge plan of Square 460 constitutes the southern third of the radial configuration of a patte d'oie that results from the convergence at Market Square of Pennsylvania and Indiana Avenues and C Street. Overall dimensions for the square's perimeter are 350 feet along C Street; 371.66 feet along Pennsylvania Avenue; and 163.66 feet on its eastern boundary with Sixth Street.

Across Pennsylvania Avenue to the south of Square 460 stands the Interstate Commerce Commission, which is the eastern tip of the Twentieth-Century Federal Triangle development. To the southwest, the Market Square area is dominated by the grandiose Ionic presence of the National Archives. To the east, on Square 491, is the D. C. Unemployment Bureau, a seven-story modern office building. Across C Street to the north is Square 459, the present edge of what was once Washington's commercial district.

Because of its adjacency to Seventh Street and the Market Square area and its proximity to the Capitol, Square 460 underwent very early development in the history of the city. Tax records indicate that by the mid-1820's most lots had already been improved by construction. Building activity seems to have continued steadily and the desirability of this location must have increased, since by the time of the Civil War, the Square presented a significant grouping of architecturally important buildings: the Central National Bank, the Mathew Brady Photographic Studio, Gilman's Drug Store and the then-immense Metropolitan or Brown's Hotel. Later, in 1892, this assemblage was enriched with the construction of James G. Hill's Atlantic Coast Line Building, which gave an eastern termination to this row of elegant structures.

Except for the Metropolitan Hotel, all of these historic structures are still in existence. The 5-story hotel, whose facade occupied nearly half of the Square's Pennsylvania Avenue frontage, was demolished in the 1920's to make way for a bus terminal that in turn, was later adapted to other uses. In addition to this massive change in the make-up of the Square's historic fabric, two demolitions have resulted in vacant lots on either side of the Gilman's - Mathew Brady twin structures.

As it stands today, the remaining historic buildings of Square 460 bear witness to earlier times when Pennsylvania Avenue was truly

Washington's primary center of activity. The period of decline and abandonment that took place in the area following World War II is evident not only in the deteriorated condition of the historic buildings, but also in the constructions of this period which are lacking in architectural interest and which underuse the site's potential for development.

For documentation of individual buildings within Square 460, see:

HABS No. DC-394	Atlantic Coastline Building, 601 Pennsylvania Ave.
HABS No. DC-295	Brady Studio, 625 Pennsylvania Ave.
HABS No. DC-322	Brown's Marble Hotel, 621 Pennsylvania Ave.
HABS No. DC-229	Central North Bank Building, 631 Pennsylvania Ave.
HABS No. DC-129	Gilman Drugstore, 627 Pennsylvania Ave.
HABS No. DC-240	Temperance Fountain, Pennsylvania Ave. and 7th Street
HABS No. DC-503	Waffle Shop, 619 Pennsylvania Ave.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE: BETWEEN SIXTH AND SEVENTH STREETS:

- 601 Atlantic Coastline Building (460-J)
.4/19/1892 #2081: Build a six story brick store plus cellar for the Atlantic Coastline Company offices. Material of front: stone and pressed brick; Roof: flat, concrete; Number of Bays: two, height 72', width 10', projection 4'; Architect: James G. Hill; Builder: W.E. Spursdo.
.3/14/1925 #7947: Cut doorway between barber shop and lobby. Architect/Contractor: Nahelman and Bennett.
.1/27/1936 #199053: Change location of elevator from basement to overhead. Contractor: New Era Elevator and Machine Co. Cost: \$1,200.00.
- 603 Atlantic Coastline Building (460-J):
.10/30/1936 #196,881: Repair store window. Contractor: Wolf Repair Shops; Cost: \$50.00.
- 605 Ooghouse Restaurant (460-P):
.2/5/1953 #A-39487: Build a one story brick and block store as per plan. Estimated Cost: \$6,000.00.
- 607
to
617 .19/8/1932: Take down six brick buildings piece by piece (607, 609, 611, 613, 615, 617), part of the Metropolitan Hotel, Contractor: Woodbridge, Blair & Oelaney
- 615 O. C. Department of Human Resources: Vital Records Division (460-L):
.5/10/1933 #162,626: Build a brick and concrete building for the use of a bus terminal and stores. Estimated Cost: \$185,000.00.
.5/21/1935 #180,628: Install a class "D" refrigeration system for the Bus Center of Washington. Cost: \$75.00.
.8/10/1945 #3767: Install one basin, one shower and one water closet. Cost: \$300.00.
.12/3/1945 #281,654: Install one electric freight elevator, size 10' 4" x 8' 4-1/2".
.11/22/1946 #290,667: Erect an iron frame roof to supp evaporative condensor. Contractor: Griffith Consumer; Cost: \$100.00
- 619 Waffle Shop (460-M)
.8/22/1947 #298,350: Remove top three stories of 619, 619A Pennsylvania Avenue.

621

Barney's Restaurant (460-K)

- .4/11/1908 #3108: Remove old wood beams in center of store and put in place new steel beams as per plan on file, and remove old show window. Owner: Hable and Luchs; Cost: \$400.00.
- .4/17/1908 #3183: Build small stage tin roof and make an exit on C Street. Make an 18' lobby and box up around front. Owner: Fred Hable and Sylvan Luchs; Architect: John J. Earley.
- .10/25/1919 #2652: Shorten length of windows, extend vestibule 6 feet as per plan. Owner: Wonder Clothes Co.; Architect/ Contractor: Joseph Neisman; Cost: \$800.00.
- .3/25/1921 #149,953: Install two motors. Owner: Kobod Snub Store Fixture Co.; Contractor: R. Albert; Cost: \$200.00.
- .12/18/1943 #265,892: Cut opening in 8" brick wall and install I-beams as per plan. Owner: William Benjamin; Cost: \$50.00.

625

Mathew Brady Studio (Fraternal Order of Police) (460-I):

- .8/11/1881 #168: Permit to make general repairs and make alterations. Owner: W. H. Ward Estate; Cost: \$2,500.00.
- .3/17/1885 #1251: Permit to make general repairs.
- .8/20/1901 #329: Permit to remodel the storefront. Architect: B. Stanley Simmons, FAIA.
- .2/2/1907 #2392: A permit was issued to remodel the lower floors of the building. This included the removal of wood flooring on the first floor and its replacement with tile, the rearrangement of the stairway from the first to the second floor with marble, the installation of marble columns on the first floor and the facing of the walls on the first floor with marble. Architect: Albert W. Sult; Cost: \$,500.00.
- .7/20/1917 #210: Erect one temporary sign against building line which reads "This is Another Globe Restaurant".
- .12/4/1919 #3427: Repair existing show window. Replace sills on show windows. Owner: N.Y. Noble.
- .12/11/1924 #5695: A permit was applied for to alter the rear store on the first floor and to remove and replace old joists.

627

Gilman's Drug Store (460-H):

- .8/1/1917 #35: Build a fire proof vault in front of cellar, 6' x 6'. Owner: Z. D. Gilman; Cost: \$5.00.

- 631-635 Central National Bank (Apex Liquor Store) (460-F):
.11/4/1879 #669: Permit to install boiler in cellar. Owner:
Barbour and Murray.
- .8/26/1884 #372: Permit to build a show window on C Street projecting
2' 8" from building line. Owner: N. C. Bowers, St. Marc Hotel;
Architect: A. B. Mullett.
- .6/30/1887 #2731-1/2: Permit to add new west facade to building,
including two six story towers. Architect: Alfred B. Mullett.
- .8/28/1928 #126,732: Remove glass lights in pavement over vault
and replace with concrete slab. Owner: National Bank of
Washington.
- .8/24/1931 #145,985: Remove partitions and install new doors.
Proprietor: Nathan Shapiro; Contractor: J. A. Rinis; Architect:
John A. Melby; Cost: \$195.00.
- .9/4/1931 #146,353: Convert two show windows into one. Proprietor:
Nathan Shapiro; Contractor: Joe Rinis; Architect: John A. Melby;
Cost: \$100.001
- .10/24/1931 #147, 785: Install a class B Refrigerator system for
drug store and luncheonette. Proprietor: Phillip Shapiro;
Contractor: J. Sterman.
- .8/19/1935 #183,599: Install class E and D refrigeration system.
Contractor: John G. Webster.
- .7/19/1932 #155,563: Install one class B refrigeration system.
Proprietor: Phillip Shapiro.
- .8/16/1935 #183, 572: Permit to repair show window. Proprietor:
Nathan Shapiro; Cost: \$200.00.