

**Narrative for The Quinn
911 Main Street
Clark County Historic Preservation Commission**

August 30th, 2018

History of the Site

The original building located at the corner of Evergreen Boulevard and Main Street was constructed as a three-story department store for JC Penney by Lane Development Co. The building was consistent with characteristics of the 1950's architecture, with a boxy overall massing found in typical commercial buildings of this era. Storefront windows were designed along Main Street. The design did not incorporate any other windows on the building above the ground level. The main building entrance located on Main Street was recessed. The back (east side) of the building also contained an entrance. The photos below show the original building and show all four building elevations.



West and south side of the building/storefront exposure - Source Clark County Historical Museum, 1964





East side of the building showing back entrance (source and date unknown)



South side of the building. Shows original blade sign location. Photo source is The Columbian via Clark County History Board. Photo date is July 4, 1971.





This picture shows the north side of the building under construction. (source and date unknown)

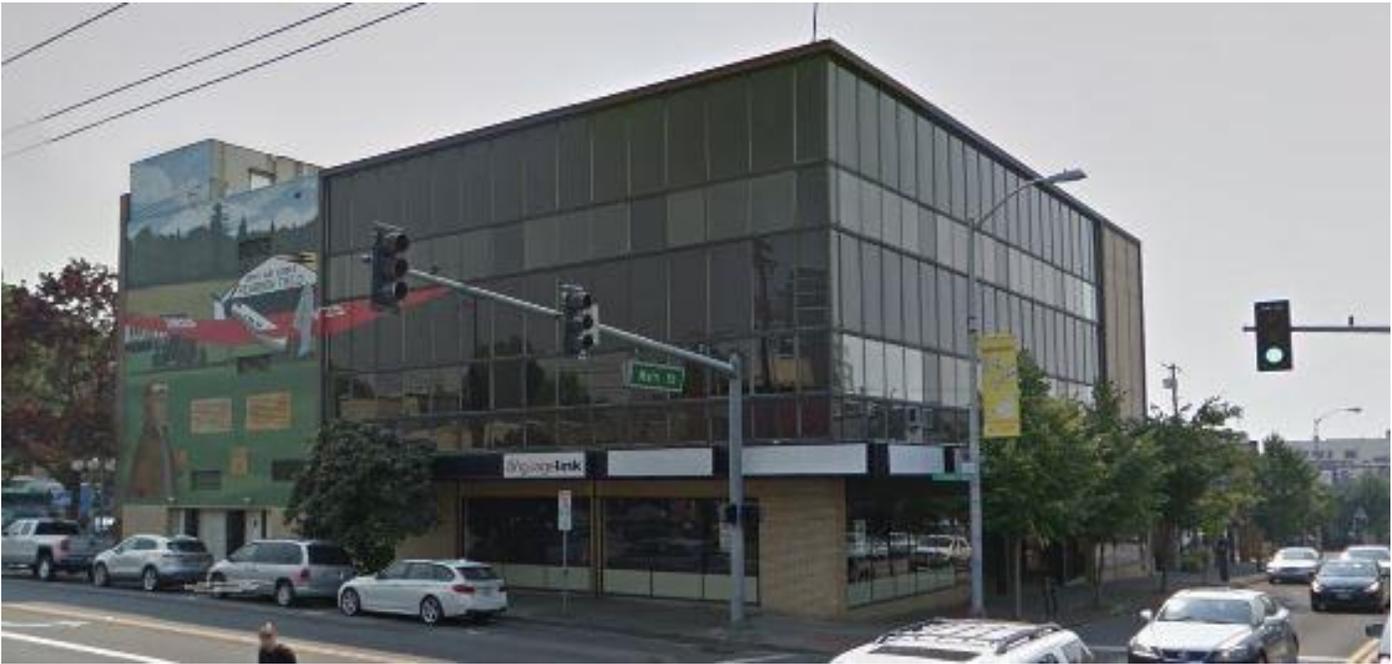
Vancouver Mall opened in 1977, which caused many downtown retail businesses to suffer. In 1979, JC Penney opened a store in Vancouver Mall. The downtown JC Penney store closed its doors around 1981.

The building has hosted a variety of tenants and users over the years including a bank, dance studio, travel company, and a translator/interpreter company.

Significant interior and exterior improvements to the building have taken place since the closure of JC Penney. The exterior facade dramatically changed when large windows were cut into the existing concrete shell on the 2nd and 3rd floors to create office space in the early 1980's. The pictures below depict the building's glazing and its current condition. The following list identifies the known exterior renovations that took place in 1980's:

- Openings for exterior windows were cut into the north and west façades (no major changes to the east and south facades-large blank walls still dominate).
- Exterior brick was removed from sections of the western and northern façade and replaced with a double height curtain wall glazing system.
- Exterior vertical blade sign was taken down on the western side of the building. Horizontal signage was added along the awnings.
- A mural on the northeast corner was completed in 2008.





North and west elevations – current conditions



South and west elevations – current conditions





North and east elevation - current conditions



Western elevation – recessed main entrance – current conditions



Surrounding Uses



North - Evergreen Boulevard lies directly to the north and contains an eclectic collection of buildings built during the 1920's and 30's, all of which are of no particular style.



East - The City of Vancouver owns and operates this public parking lot.





West - Main Street lies directly to the west, beyond that is the Elks building, which is a two-story brick building utilized by Biggs Insurance, Ray Lundrigan Photography and Brickstone Ballroom. Divine Consignment completes the remainder of the block to the west, which has a variety of finishes containing brick panels, and cream and green tones.



South – Beige Blonde Hair Salon, Oriental Fast Bowl, Natural Body Works and Comfort Interiors. These users are located in a one story, multi colored brick building.



Proposed Renovations and Upgrades

The Applicant seeks to redevelop this 3-story building into a creative urban office space with ground floor retail. The existing structure will be upgraded to take advantage of the great bones of the building and high ceilings with the intent to modernize the upper 2nd and 3rd floors for creative office space, containing a combined 21,500 square feet. The ground floor will be converted into an urban storefront for retail uses around 8,500 square feet. The retail area can be easily subdivided into several spaces with window exposure on Main Street and Evergreen, similar to the original building design. The recessed entry will be eliminated and will be replaced with additional storefront windows that will encompass all of Main street. The basement will be converted into underground parking with approximately 22 spaces with a state-of-the-art car stacker system. The interior of the building will be upgraded significantly with new ADA restrooms, a modernized passenger elevator, expanded window lines, new energy efficient heating/cooling system, and rooftop deck.

Proposed façade/exterior upgrades include the following:

- A twelve-foot floor to ceiling storefront system is proposed on Main Street and Evergreen Boulevard. for retail exposure. Ground floor retail is designed to be able to subdivide for future retail tenants needs.
- Eliminate the recessed entry on Main. Create a total of 3 building entrances on Main Street, two for future retail users and one entry for office space proposed for floors 2 and 3.
- New aluminum windows proposed on Main Street and Evergreen Boulevard. These windows will be larger by two feet. Existing concrete cut outs at windows to be used and/or modified as needed to match new exterior layout.
- The proposed façade will include a white/cream stucco system; or if it can aesthetically and structurally be saved, the Applicant will utilize the existing concrete. Composite panel siding running horizontally along the middle of the building, new storefront windows are proposed.
- The proposed façade will still be similar to the boxy nature of the original design with a light stucco finish on levels 2 and 3. A band of wood composite paneling at the windows adds a level of warmth and depth to the clean palette of the building.
- Stacker system proposed with a car elevator which will gain access from the east side of building, to the basement for a total of 22+/- parking spaces.
- Steel framed awnings on Main Street and Evergreen Boulevard for rain protection.
- Mural will be removed.
- New blade sign on Main Street to recapture some of the old JC Penney look while driving down Main Street.
- Paint/clean the south and east elevations.

Compliance with Heritage Overlay District VMC 20.510.

The property is within the Heritage Overlay District Number 2. Within this District, all exterior building alterations are required to address the provisions of 20.510.030.B. Below is a discussion of the applicable design guidelines and how this project is consistent with them.



VMC 20.520.020.B.5:

Exterior alteration and new construction guidelines. The following guidelines shall be adhered to in the construction of new buildings and alterations to all existing buildings in Heritage Overlay District Number Two.

a. Every effort should be made to provide a compatible new use for property, one that will require minimal alteration of the building and site; or, effort should be made to utilize the property for its originally intended purpose.

Response: The original user was a large retail store. The proposed use is a mix of retail and office, which is compatible with the past users of the building and the City's current vision for downtown. The surrounding area consists of restaurants, coffee shops, offices, and a variety of other office and retail uses.

b. Alterations to facades and the construction of new facades should incorporate as many as possible of the key architectural features and should be compatible with any adjacent or nearby key buildings. If possible, the original distinguishing qualities and character of a building, especially of its street facade, should be retained. Whenever possible, care should be taken to avoid altering or removing any historic material or significant architectural features such as cornices, display windows, recessed entries, original siding materials, or other features.

Response: The original building was constructed in 1955, but the extensive remodel changed the exterior appearance dramatically with the addition of 2nd and 3rd floor windows along Main Street and Evergreen Boulevard. The architectural features that can reasonably be retained from the original building are minimal. Large blank walls would need to be recreated to truly mimic the previous architecture. The storefront windows along Main Street and Evergreen Boulevard will be replaced with floor-to-ceiling storefront windows that are twelve feet in height on the first floor. This will create an urban retail experience appropriate for a building on the corner of Evergreen and Main Street. While increasing the size of the windows, the "glass storefront" of the previous building will remain an integral component of the building's architecture. The original recessed entry will be removed and storefront windows will be installed. In order to restore the Main Street streetscape, the Applicant is proposing to design a blade sign for the west side of the building. There are no major changes proposed to the east and south elevations.

The building entry on Main Street will be reworked with new door locations to allow the separation of uses between retail and office users above. This will not only help to revitalize the storefront retail viewing experience, but also help divert daily office traffic to an alternative entry for better flow.

c. Canopies should be compatible with the building to which they are attached, and should not disrupt key horizontal or vertical details of existing or adjacent buildings; and shall provide adequate lighting underneath.



Response: New steel framed awnings are proposed that will run along the north and west elevation facades. The existing building has awnings in locations similar to those proposed by the Applicant. The awnings proposed are similar to those nearby and thus furthering horizontal architectural compatibility.

d. Attempts should be made in new construction to articulate the street facade by the use of bay windows above the first story, and by rhythmically spacing building projections and recessions and other details, while maintaining the continuity of building lines along the street.

Response: This section does not apply as this is a building renovation, not new construction.

e. Facade materials should be restricted to those commonly in use in the early 1900's, such as brick and wood. Metal window and door frames should have nonmetallic finishes and colors.

Response: This building was constructed in the mid-1950s and was substantially architecturally altered in the early 1980's with the removal of much of existing brick. The proposed stucco finish is provided as an alternative to bring back some of the masonry look of the previous facades.

f. Buildings and accessories should not imitate styles inappropriate to the period exemplified by the key buildings (such as Spanish, Colonial, Federal, Georgian, etc.), which are not characteristic of or compatible with examples of architecture common in Vancouver in the early 1900's.

Response: The proposal does not mimic any inappropriate period.

g. Dark glass or opaque window panes should be avoided in favor of clear or textured glass similar to that in the key buildings.

Response: The proposal does include new windows which will be energy efficient containing a slight tint. The new windows will be much less dark than the current windows. The design proposes the use of clear, low-e insulated aluminum window systems at all office window locations. This would allow for minimum obstruction of views and provide full compliance with energy code standards. At the ground level for retail uses, a low iron, insulated storefront system would allow for energy efficiency but reduce glare for optimal window viewing of products, displays, etc.

h. Colors should contribute to the distinct character of the building. For non-listed structures, colors should be compatible with neighboring buildings. For listed structures, period-appropriate building colors shall be researched and incorporated in any new color scheme. Significant



departures from these standards shall be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Response: The site is a non-listed building. The existing nearby buildings contain a wide variety of colors, including bright red, beige and green, brick and white. The Applicant's proposed color scheme will be compatible with the neighboring buildings.

i. Continuity of cornice lines should be maintained physically or visually, between adjacent buildings.

Response: The proposed façade changes do not alter or modify the current cornice lines.

j. Each building should be recognized as a product of its own time and place. Efforts should be made to avoid designs that seek to create an early appearance, but which have no historic basis (Colonial, Bavarian, wild west and other artificial themes).

Response: The proposed façade changes do not recreate an early appearance.

k. Changes have taken place over the course of time and are the evidence of the history on a building and its site. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right and should be recognized and respected during alteration work.

Response: The original building elements were lost in the remodel of the north and west sides of the building. The original building did not contain windows above the first floor. It would do a disservice to the area to restore the large blank walls of the original 1950's building. The 1980's remodel created a space with larger windows with an architecturally improved façade that is compatible with the surrounding area. The goal is to improve upon the 1980's design with additional entrances, while being consistent with the original glass storefront and Main Street blade signage.

l. Stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize the building should be treated with great sensitivity.

Response: Neither the existing nor the original building contained many stylistic features; it was boxy with extremely limited windows. The two significant features the Applicant wishes to bring back are to reinstall the original blade sign and to enhance the storefront retail windows with an upgraded floor-to-ceiling storefront system.

m. Architectural features that have deteriorated should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features on historic buildings should be



based on physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings.

Response: Architectural features that can reasonably be retained from the 1955 building are minimal due to the renovations that significantly changed the exterior. The blade sign and storefront windows are the historic elements that can reasonably be re-created.

n. Building surfaces should be cleaned with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting or other cleaning methods that could damage the historic building materials should be avoided.

Response: While much of the exterior will be totally redone, those portions of the existing façade to be retained will be carefully repaired and restored.

o. Contemporary designs for new alterations or additions to the existing buildings should not destroy the significant architectural and historical material present on those buildings. Such designs must be compatible with the size, color, material and character of the building and the conservation

Response: Unfortunately, much of the historic character of the original building was removed during the renovation of the 1980's. The proposed design is meant to be a modern take of the original form while trying not to replicate it. The adaptive reuse of the building adds to the vitality of the district while the neutral palette is intended to enhance and not detract from the surrounding context.

p. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to a building should be designed in such a way that if they are removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original building would remain unimpaired.

Response: Due to the remodel, it is unfeasible that the original building can be retained. The east and south elevations are intact and represent the original building fairly accurately. A portion of the south wall is shared with another business. The eastern elevation will continue to operate as it did in 1955, with a back-of-building entrance door. With this proposal, one modification to the east side will be a car entrance at the building for underground parking in the basement level.

q. In strict restoration projects, any reinforcement required for structural stability and any installation of protective or code-required mechanical system should be concealed so as not to detract from the property's historical quality, except when concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically significant materials or spaces.

Response: This project is not considered a strict restoration project and there is no reinforcing that will be visible from the exterior side of the building



r. Mortar joints on brick or masonry-face buildings should be repointed only when moisture problems are evident or when enough mortar is missing that water stands in the joint. The old mortar should be duplicated to the greatest extent possible in composition, color, and texture. Most old mortar is high in lime content and "softer" than newer Portland cement types. When new mortar types are combined with old brick, changes in compression, expansion and contraction, caused by moisture migration stresses can damage the brick and break the mortar bond. In all joint repairs, the original joint size should be duplicated along with the method of application and joint profile.

Response: Brick is not part of this proposal. There is some existing brick on portions of the building, which will be removed.

Conclusion

The Quinn redevelopment will enhance the building's current attributes, while adding upgraded touches with a new exterior design and complete interior renovations. Materials such as composite panel siding, stucco, new windows on the west and north elevations along with a new storefront system on the ground floor retail to engage pedestrians on the street are proposed. These modifications will allow the building to be integrated with the surrounding users and be a compatible neighbor in downtown with a color palette complementary to the area. Restoring the blade sign and enhancing the original storefront system will help retain the two key character elements from the original building. The exterior changes proposed in this application incorporate an updated take on the 1980's remodel, which is the closest architectural form the building is tied to. The original building did not contain much historic character and was a fairly simple unadorned building. The updates described in this narrative meet and further the goals of the Heritage Overlay District by preserving and retaining key elements of the original design while being a compatible neighbor to the surrounding area.

