



**United States Department of the Interior**  
 National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Uptown Theatre  
 Other names/site number: Cineplex-Odeon Uptown, AMC-Loews Uptown  
 Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 3426 Connecticut Avenue NW  
 City or town: Washington State: DC County: N/A  
 Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ **national**      \_\_\_ **statewide**      \_\_\_ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ **A**      \_\_\_ **B**      \_\_\_ **C**      \_\_\_ **D**

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p> <p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
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In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

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**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**

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**Title :** **State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government**

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ entered in the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register
- \_\_\_ removed from the National Register
- \_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site

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Structure

Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Limestone, Brick, Granite, Aluminum trim

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Uptown Theater is located at 3426 Connecticut Avenue, NW in the commercial center of Cleveland Park. Constructed in 1936, it is an excellent example of “Waterfall Moderne”, a variant of the late Art Deco or Art Moderne style found in many movie theaters of the 1930s. The Connecticut Avenue facade is a tripartite composition featuring a stepped massing comprised of a center entrance to the theater and flanked on either side by a retail storefront. This primary façade is clad in limestone and buff brick, and details include Art Deco stylized geometric motifs in the limestone, etched glass upper story windows, corbeled brick, and ornamental metal marquee. The building is separated from the neighboring Post Office to the north and a retail block to the south by narrow pedestrian alleys that provide circulation for service and emergency egress. The secondary side and rear facades are clad in common red brick with pilasters and a corbeled eave. Projecting metal fire escapes and minor brick-clad additions housing projection equipment occur on both side facades. The exterior of the building is largely intact with little alteration. The interior lobby and theater have been altered over time. The original surface parking lot to the rear of the building is also extant.

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## Narrative Description

The Uptown Theater is situated on a deep, relatively narrow lot in mid-block. It is separated from its neighbor on either side by a narrow pedestrian alley which runs from Connecticut Avenue to a brick wall about two-thirds the building's depth from the street. These walls are apparently a security feature: a door in the center of each presumably provides access to the rear of the side alley and a small area to its rear which ends at the stone retaining wall built against the hillside to the theater's west. The theater's south, west, and north walls, which are not directly visible from the street, are roughly three and one-half stories tall and built of common red brick. The north and south facades bear fire escapes with covered metal walkways and flights of stairs. On each facade, a flight of steps descends from a door and platform at the level of the projection booth near the front of the building to a walkway that runs to the rear of the building at what is likely the level of the balcony and mezzanine. On both sides of the building the walkway wraps a box-like upper story extrusion constructed to house multiple projection equipment in the 1960s. Only the theater's upper stories and hipped roof rise above the top of the retaining wall to its west. Here the fire escape walkways, which are secured by iron gates, connect to its hilltop rear parking lot at grade. The parking lot, an asphalt rectangle with space for 30 to 40 cars, is accessed from Ordway Street through an alley.

The theater's front, or east, façade is architecturally embellished in the "Waterfall Moderne" style, with protruding bays of varying heights that suggest the ledges and drops of a waterfall and whose flow emphasizes its streamlined verticality. It is a relatively complex composition of contrasting materials, textures and colors arranged in overlying planes and setbacks that create an interplay of light and shadow. A lower limestone-clad tripartite façade reaches to the sidewalk and a taller brick façade set back approximately 10' rises above by an additional one to one-and-a-half stories and contains the upper bulk of the movie theater. This taller façade is topped by a parapet wall which stands roughly a half-story taller than the theater's roof. Its ziggurat profile consists of a center section flanked by sets of three steps. As the steps ascend to the center from each side, the rise of each successive step decreases, creating a visual counterpoint. Topped by a dark roof-line coping that is likely painted metal, the façade's upper section is of contrasting buff colored brick. It is embellished with geometrical patterns formed by straight line "speed stripes," each composed of four parallel rows of projecting header-bricks, which intersect at right angles. The famous illuminated "UPTOWN" sign is mounted against the center of this section. Its underlined upper-case letters conceal a pair of single windows which apparently ventilate the projection booth.

Below its brick upper section, which includes both the parapet wall and most of the third story, is a stepped tripartite façade of protruding bays faced in smooth-finished limestone blocks. The recessed center bay is the tallest and most complex in form. It is divided into three sections by a pair of recessed semi-circular channels which descend to the marquee at the top of the first story. A horizontal frieze just below the "UPTOWN" sign is fashioned from carved limestone blocks and is comprised of a continuous zig-zag chevron pattern with geometric fan-shaped accents. A

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row of four slit windows, two in the wider middle section and one in each of the bay's flanking sections, runs just above the marquee. These windows feature etched glass panes with stylized geometric linear and floral motifs.

Broad protruding pilasters, unornamented except for stepped courses of stone at the tops, transition between the center bay and the identical shorter bays on either side. These north and south bays, which are essentially two stories tall, protrude even further toward the street. Unlike the "flat top" center bay, their upper courses of stone have a raised center section that creates a simplified ziggurat profile. Each continues the upper façade's vertical brick "speed stripes" in a trio of incised fluted ribbons which descend to the top of the first story. A row of three small single openings that extends across each side bay centers a window within each ribbon. Each window is filled by a single pane of glass etched with geometric and stylized floral elements, similar in pattern to the windows found above the marquee in the center façade bay.

The theater entrance spans the center bay, shielded by a protruding rectangular marquee edged with streamlined horizontal aluminum bands separated by painted metal recessed accent lines. On its street face, the marquee is embellished with three sets of vertical aluminum bars painted a vivid red. The bars traverse the underside of the marquee, which is embellished with lightbulbs set in a circular pattern. The theatre entrance is faced with polished aluminum and pink granite and framed by end pilasters, each of which bears an aluminum poster case. An extruded sign board with horizontal aluminum bands spans the center ticket booth and flanking sets of lobby doors. The center projecting ticket booth has clipped angled corners and its upper section of glass panes is trimmed with narrow aluminum mullions and topped by a crown of horizontal aluminum bands echoing those of the marquee. Its lower section is formed of polished pink granite panels which continue into the lobby. While the aluminum doors are probably replacements, they remain faithful to the style of those shown in vintage photographs.

The first story of each symmetrical side bay is devoted to a retail storefront. Both storefronts are largely intact and retain their original detailing. Each is composed with a center recessed entrance flanked by projecting bay display windows with angled sides. The bays and recessed entrance are joined by a stepped horizontal polished aluminum frieze echoing the horizontal lines of the theater marquee. Above the projecting frieze spans a horizontal transom with radius corners.

The theater interior retains its original division into lobby with mezzanine, single auditorium with balcony, and mechanical areas. However, alterations over many years have removed virtually all traces of its original décor. In the 1950s and 1960s a wraparound screen and multiple projection equipment were added, resulting in modifications to rear wall, proscenium, and the seating area.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years



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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE  
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1936  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1936  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Architect: John J. Zink

Builder: Associated Constructors of Washington and Philadelphia

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Uptown Theatre meets DC Criterion B (History) because it is associated with historical periods, social movements and patterns of growth and change that contributed significantly to the development of the District. It thus also meets similar National Register Criterion A. Its construction was an important event in the development of Cleveland Park's business district, as it was the community's first mass entertainment venue and anchored the surrounding community. It became a social institution that exerted a cohesive influence, as Cleveland Park residents previously had to travel well beyond the neighborhood to attend the movies and had no central gathering spot for community events. Ultimately the theater gained such prestige that it drew attendees from all over the city and contributed to the neighborhood's commercial prosperity. Its construction also reflected the increasing importance of motor vehicle transportation on patterns of growth and the development of the city's major commuter thoroughfares. Constructed just after streetcar service on Connecticut Avenue was replaced by bus service, the theater was easily reached by bus or automobile, as well as on foot. With its rear parking lot originally offering free parking, the Uptown extended the trend set by Arthur Heaton's innovative Park and Shop retail complex of 1930, located nearby on Connecticut Avenue.

The Uptown is also noteworthy in the development of motion picture exhibition in the District. It presented an early and fine example of a smaller-scale version of a highly stylized downtown theater being erected to serve a neighborhood clientele.

The Uptown also meets DC Criterion D (Architecture and Urbanism) for embodying the distinguishing characteristics of the Art Deco/Streamline Moderne architectural style and presenting an outstanding example of the movie theater building type and Criterion E (Artistry) for possessing high aesthetic value that contributes significantly to the heritage and appearance of the District of Columbia. In addition, the theater provides the keystone for what has been termed a "continuous band" of Streamline Moderne commercial structures that extends across much of the west side of the 3400 block of Connecticut Avenue and wraps the corner of Newark Street with the Macklin Apartments of 1939. As the Cleveland Park Historic District National Register nomination notes, The Uptown "is among the largest and finest neighborhood movie houses built in the city and is an outstanding example of Art Deco commercial architecture in the city and region and perhaps the finest 20<sup>th</sup> century building of its type to survive in the metropolitan area."

The Uptown also meets Criterion F (Work of a Master) as a notable work of John J. Zink, an architect whose works are significant to the development of the District of Columbia. Zink was one of the most significant designers of movie theaters in the Middle Atlantic states during his era. In Washington, his National Register listed theaters include The Atlas on H Street NE and The Newton in Brookland.

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By meeting DC Criteria D, E, and F, the Uptown also meets similar National Register Criterion C.

The theater retains integrity of form, feeling, and association. Its period of significance is its construction date of 1936.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Construction of the Uptown Theater was part of a trend for shopping and entertainment to move away from downtown areas to thriving suburban neighborhoods that were close to affluent consumers, easily accessible by automobile, and located on heavily trafficked commuter thoroughfares. Not only a notable architectural landmark, the theater also came in time to stand as the city's last grand movie "palace"—a large, single-screen movie theater offering an unequalled setting for important cinematic premieres. The prestige of the Uptown in its heyday brought viewers from all over the city and contributed much to the character of Cleveland Park and the success of its business district.

### **The Cleveland Park Business District on Connecticut Avenue**

Cleveland Park takes its name from President Grover Cleveland, whose estate lay near its center. The name was first applied to a nineteenth century subdivision, which over time blended with adjacent subdivisions to form a cohesive neighborhood. Today's Cleveland Park Historic District is bounded by Wisconsin Avenue on the west, Connecticut Avenue on the east, the Klinge Valley on the south, and Tilden Street on the north.<sup>1</sup>

For decades, Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues have been important transit, commercial, and residential corridors. However, they developed at different rates. In the nineteenth century Wisconsin Avenue was a long-established link in a road chain that connected Georgetown to settlements in the Tenleytown area and Montgomery County towns like Rockville. Connecticut Avenue extended into the countryside through much less developed lands.<sup>2</sup>

Both Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues were served by early electric streetcar lines. After erecting iron truss bridges across the Rock Creek and Klinge Valleys, the Rock Creek Railway Company began service on Connecticut Avenue between Calvert Street and Chevy Chase Lake in September 1892. The railway was essentially established to promote the newly planted suburb of Chevy Chase at the District line, but in 1894, a stop was established near Newark Street to serve Cleveland Park and neighboring subdivisions. The corridor was, however, slow to reach

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<sup>1</sup> The historic district also includes a small number of buildings in the 2700 block of Macomb Street east of Connecticut Avenue.

<sup>2</sup> Information regarding the pre-World War I development of Cleveland Park is taken from Kimberly Williams, *Cleveland Park Historic District Brochure* (Washington, DC: DC Historic Preservation Office, 2001) and Kathleen Sinclair Wood, *Cleveland Park Historic District National Register Nomination* (unpublished, February 1987).

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developmental critical mass. Chevy Chase and Cleveland Park were upscale subdivisions of detached houses on individual lots, and, while each was economically successful, neither generated great population density. Development along much of the Connecticut Avenue corridor was further limited by the steep slopes of Rock Creek Park to its east. Transportation infrastructure improved steadily, with Connecticut Avenue's pavement extending through the Chevy Chase subdivision by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Taft Bridge crossing the Rock Creek Valley at grade in 1907. However, at the close of World War I, Connecticut Avenue still traversed largely empty lands between Woodley Road and the southern boundary of the Chevy Chase neighborhood near Jennifer Street.

The development of upper Connecticut Avenue and growth of the Cleveland Park business district are closely correlated with progression of the automotive era. In 1919, a year in which there was approximately 1 registered motor vehicle to every 12.5 residents, the 1919 *Baist Real Estate Atlas* showed the blocks between the Klingle Valley and Porter Street that have become Cleveland Park's "Main Street" as virtually empty. On the avenue's east side, control by the Chevy Chase Land Company and other speculators blended seamlessly into the wooded Rock Creek Valley. East of the avenue, cross streets quickly dwindled to unpaved country lanes. Only Tilden Street and Broad Branch Road to its north crossed Rock Creek on bridges; neither provided a direct paved route to 16<sup>th</sup> Street, the first major thoroughfare to the east.

Only a firehouse constructed in 1915 between Lawrence (now Ordway) and Monroe (now Porter) Streets, fronted on the avenue's west side. However, real estate maps showed that changes loomed. Macomb and Ordway Streets were beginning to be lined with the detached houses of the Connecticut Avenue Highlands subdivision, which had been platted as far north as Rodman Street, with twenty-five-foot frontage lots on Connecticut Avenue itself. Save for a knot of houses near the National Bureau of Standards laboratory near Van Ness Street, Connecticut Avenue then ran through empty tracts and subdivisions of vacant lots, passing only occasional houses until the southern edge of the development associated with Chevy Chase.

Within two years, development pressures pent up by war were pressing past previous barriers and pushing development across the Klingle Valley. The blocks of Connecticut Avenue south of the valley had been built up with townhouses, but this pattern was reshaped in 1920, when the District's first zoning law delineated Connecticut Avenue as a mixed-use corridor for residential apartments and designated Cleveland Park as one of its four retail nodes.<sup>3</sup> By 1930, apartment houses were sprinkled along Connecticut Avenue well north of Tilden Street.

In Cleveland Park, the new development pattern slightly preceded the enactment of the zoning regulations. In 1919, Harry Wardman, the city's most prolific developer, built a four-story apartment house at 3520 Connecticut Avenue, followed in 1921 by an adjoining row of three-story townhouse-flats that wrapped the corner of Ordway Street. Other developers quickly followed, and, between 1921 and 1929, 15 more apartment houses containing nearly 700 units had been built in the blocks of Connecticut Avenue within the present-day Cleveland Park Historic District. These buildings were designed by such prolific blue-chip architects as Stern &

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<sup>3</sup> Williams, 12.

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Tomlinson, Robert O. Scholz, Harvey H. Warwick, George T. Santmyers, Frank Russell White, and Joseph H. Abel to appeal to middle and upper-middle class tenants. At the same time, individual dwellings continued to be built on side streets. Cleveland Park was considered fully built out by the 1930s.<sup>4</sup>

## **Evolving Patterns**

The wave of building in Cleveland Park was shaped by rapidly evolving transportation patterns, as Washington saw explosive growth in automobile ownership and vehicular traffic. District motor vehicle registrations rose twenty-fold between 1913 and 1924. By 1929, they had risen from 88,782 to 151,409, an increase of approximately 70 percent in just five years.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, streetcar ridership declined, in part because of competition from buses as well as automobiles. A large segment of the public came to consider streetcars as “road hogs” that were slower, uncomfortable, less efficient than buses that maneuvered through traffic on rubber-tired wheels and unsafe because their tracks typically ran down the center lanes of a street, forcing passengers to step into traffic lanes when boarding or disembarking. These perceptions were likely reinforced in Cleveland Park on July 8, 1925, when a debarking passenger and a motorist died in separate streetcar-related accidents at the corner of Connecticut and Porter.<sup>6</sup>

By December 1922, the Washington Railway and Electric Company was running a feeder bus line that connected its Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenue car lines via Woodley Road.<sup>7</sup> However, despite the urgings of the Connecticut Avenue Civic Association, streetcar replacement on the avenue was gradual.<sup>8</sup> In 1923, late night buses were temporarily substituted for streetcars to avoid disrupting delicate observations at the National Bureau of Standards.<sup>9</sup> By 1924, buses had replaced the late night “owl” streetcars whose route spanned the city from the Navy Yard to Chevy Chase Circle.<sup>10</sup> In 1925, deluxe “palace car” buses with guaranteed seats for all riders began operating between Chevy Chase Circle and the Capitol.<sup>11</sup> Served by “feeder” bus routes that looped through adjacent neighborhoods, streetcars ran on Connecticut Avenue until 1935. However, citywide transit revenue and ridership continued to decline in the face of competition from automobiles.<sup>12</sup>

By the 1920s, Cleveland Park and upper Connecticut Avenue’s development was increasingly constrained by the narrow and antiquated Kingle Valley trestle. Although the trestle was just thirty years old and had been reinforced several times, it was considered obsolete for modern traffic. Its roadbed was about 40 percent narrower than the avenue’s pavement, and its center

<sup>4</sup> Williams, 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Statistical Abstract of the United States for 1930*. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office; 1930), 387.

<sup>6</sup> “‘Road Hog’ Worst Menace in Traffic,” *Post*; Jul. 10, 1925, 20.

<sup>7</sup> “Through Car Service to Potomac Park Ends,” *Post*; Jan. 31, 1923, 12; “New Bus Line in Operation,” *Post*, Dec. 15, 1922, 16; and “W.R. & E. To Request Additional One-Man Cars,” *Post*, Oct. 16, 1924, 2.

<sup>8</sup> “Bus Lines Are Urged for Connecticut Avenue,” *Post*; Mar. 22, 1923, 2.

<sup>9</sup> “Cars Yield to Buses to Permit Research Study in Magnetism,” *Post*, Feb. 13, 1923, 2.

<sup>10</sup> “Car Routes Changed by Capital Traction,” *Post*; Mar. 30, 1924, 22.

<sup>11</sup> DeFerrari, 149-150; “Board Lays Down New Chevy Chase De Luxe Bus Route,” *Post*, Jun. 27, 1925, 18.

<sup>12</sup> *Annual Report of the Public Utilities Commissioners for 1929*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1930), 149.

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track lines and power poles forced motor traffic into extremely narrow lanes.<sup>13</sup> The 1922 Knickerbocker Theater roof collapse focused great attention on all manner of public structures and triggered an outcry about the trestle's condition as well as that of its neighbor on Calvert Street. Over the next several years, the Board of Trade, the Kiwanis Club, Chamber of Commerce, and civic groups advocated for a modern, publicly funded replacement.<sup>14</sup> In June 1925, these cries were amplified by a horrific accident. Driving his family home from an evening excursion, Veterans Administration official William Thayer attempted to squeeze past a slower car on the bridge and apparently clipped a trolley pole with a wheel hub. Thayer's car swerved right, smashed through the bridge siderail, and plummeted 80 feet to Klinge Road. While all three adults in Thayer's car died, his "miracle baby" granddaughter survived with only minor bruises.<sup>15</sup>

Blame for the accident quickly shifted from the driver of the slower car, whom the District Director of Traffic called "a road hog," to the bridge itself. While civic groups pressed for the power poles to be removed from the middle of both the bridge and Connecticut Avenue, their demand for a modern bridge increasingly resonated with the general public.<sup>16</sup> Although funds were provisionally budgeted for several years, it was not until 1930 that architect Paul Cret was commissioned to design the new bridge. His graceful Art Deco replacement was dedicated in 1931.

### **Commercial Cleveland Park**

Cleveland Park's rapidly growing population and Connecticut Avenue's evolution into a major thoroughfare spurred the establishment of local businesses. Cleveland Park's first retail establishment was a drug store, which opened in the Monterey at 2902 Porter Street in 1923.<sup>17</sup> The first purpose-built retail building was fittingly automobile related. Although a permit for a Standard Oil station at 3535 Connecticut was issued in September 1923, it does not appear to have been built until 1926. However, in November 1923, real estate developer Allan S. Walker announced plans to build filling stations at Ordway and Albemarle Streets. The stations, to be designed by architect Robert Beresford, in the words of the *Washington Post*, provided "recognition for the importance of Connecticut Avenue as one of the city's most important thoroughfares, connecting with the fast growing northwest and suburban sections."<sup>18</sup> The *Post* noted that the Ordway Street station was envisioned to become "one of the finest and most complete establishments of its kind in the country" with eight wide driveways, sixteen canopied

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<sup>13</sup> "Coroner Orders Inquest on Wreck at Klinge Bridge," *Post*, Jun. 18, 1925, 22.

<sup>14</sup> "Kiwanians Demand City Act Now to Insure Safety of Two Bridges," *Post*; Feb 3, 1922; 2; "Wide Bridge Probe Begun by Chamber," *Post*; Feb. 11, 1922; 2; "Urge 30-Year-Old Bridges Be Replaced by Congress," *Post*; Feb 7, 1922; 2; "Board Of Trade Wants New Klinge Bridge," *Post*; Jul 31, 1925; 7; "Citizens Will Ask New Klinge Run Bridge," *Post*; Oct 25, 1925; 12; "New Klinge Ford Bridge Sought by Association," *Post*; Jan 20, 1927; 2.

<sup>15</sup> "2 Killed, 2 Injured in Plunge of Auto," *Post*; Jun. 17, 1925; 1; "Traction Company Objects To "Third Rail" Installation," *Post*; Jun. 30, 1925; 22.

<sup>16</sup> "'Road Hog' Worst Menace In Traffic," *Post*; Jul 10, 1925; 20; "Removal of Posts from Connecticut Avenue Proposed," *Post*; Jun 19, 1925; 4; "Side Trolley Pole Plan to Be Studied By Maj. Covell," *Post*, Jul. 3, 1925; 20.

<sup>17</sup> "District Approves Cret's Bridge Plan: Contract for Klinge Valley," *Post*, Nov. 19, 1930, 12.

<sup>18</sup> "Walker to Build 2 Large Stations for Gas, Supplies," *Post*: Nov. 18, 1923, 45.

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pumps, a large accessories store, and “handsomely appointed women’s rest room.”<sup>19</sup> This newest unit in the citywide “Minute Service” was stucco-clad, Spanish tile roofed, and topped by an octagonal tower and cupola. Its dramatic design placed it within the new generation of roadside business building that used its design to establish a brand identity and catch the eye of motorists passing by at 25 or 30 miles per hour. Building such a flamboyant building on a prominent corner underscored the importance of automobile traffic to the development of Connecticut Avenue.

Cleveland Park’s early commercial buildings were occupied by a mix of independent small businesses as well as branches of local and national chains. Its first retail row was under construction when the Minute Service station opened in the summer of 1924. These storefronts at 3311-3315 Connecticut, designed by prolific architect-developers David Stern and Frank Tomlinson for David A. Baer, were first occupied by branches of the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company (A&P) and Piggly Wiggly grocery chains and the American Beef Company. In 1925, Baer commissioned Robert Scholz to design the gable-roofed two-flat Tudor-style building at 3309 Connecticut, which housed the confectionery of Frederick Hiser. In 1926, the same development-design team completed the row with 3301 Connecticut, which was Cleveland Park’s first true mixed-use building. Its avenue storefronts housed a competing confectionary, a hairdresser, and a branch of the Palace Laundry, while its 37 apartments were entered from Macomb Street.

In 1925, veteran architect Julius Wenig designed a row of storefronts from 3419 to 3423 Connecticut Avenue for small independent businesses that included a dry cleaner, a window shade shop, a battery store, and an independent grocery. That year also saw the openings of a Sanitary Grocery chain branch at 3319 Connecticut as well as the independent grocery of William Aed at 3519 Connecticut. In 1926, architect-developer George N. Ray erected a string of seven one-story storefronts from 3321 to 3333 Connecticut. They soon housed businesses that included a drug store, a delicatessen, and a barber shop. However, the Cleveland Park retail strip was now overbuilt. Several of Ray’s storefronts appear to have remained vacant as late as 1929.

Although a handful of other storefronts were built, in the late 1920s Cleveland Park’s major development was the construction of the massive and luxurious Broadmoor Apartments at 3601 Connecticut. A new chapter opened in 1930, shortly before the first wave of the Great Depression made itself manifest. In July, the Shannon & Luchs real estate firm began the “Park and Shop” retail complex at 3509-3519 Connecticut Avenue. Designed by Arthur B. Heaton, the Park and Shop was a fusion of drive-in markets that had developed in southern California and auto service centers like the Minute Service Station. Although its style was a conservative adaptation of the Colonial Revival, the complex’s plan was innovative, with an L-shaped main block that frames a parking forecourt and an octagonal cupola with a ball finial of the type traditionally used on public buildings that marked its place on the roadside. A 1932 addition with a gas station and auto laundry provided the automobile driver with complete and convenient one-stop shopping. The Park and Shop complex quickly became famous beyond Cleveland Park. It was hailed by the Architects’ Advisory Council, featured in national planning and architectural

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<sup>19</sup> “Call New Filling Station One of Finest in Country,” *Post*, Dec 9, 1923, 75.

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journals, and served as a model for at least twenty similar complexes constructed in Maryland and Virginia suburbs by the end of World War II.<sup>20</sup>

1930 also saw the building of the Mechanics' National Bank branch at 3401 Connecticut Avenue. Designed by George Oakley Totten--the Beaux-Arts architect most associated with Mary Foote Henderson's efforts to transform Meridian Hill into a monumental civic landscape--the bank filled an important niche as the first financial institution in Cleveland Park. The Thomas E. Clarke Company plumbing showroom at 3407 Connecticut Avenue marked a further innovation. Designed by Upman and Adams, the showroom eschewed the traditionalist Georgian and Colonial revival elements typical of Cleveland Park in favor of a neon sign and such newly-fashionable Art Deco elements as a ziggurat copper cornice and sandstone façade carved with abstract plant motifs, stylized floral patterns, and ogee arches.

### **Cleveland Park and the Uptown**

Although the Great Depression made a deep impact on Washington, its effects were less severe and of shorter duration than in other parts of the country. While economic activity was depressed in Cleveland Park, even its reduced level of building was a relative bright spot in the city. As conditions deteriorated, the neighborhood gained two grand apartment buildings with 3726 Connecticut, which opened in 1931, and Sedgwick Gardens, dubbed the "Queen of Connecticut Avenue" on its completion in 1932.<sup>21</sup>

Although all businesses struggled and some failed, the Cleveland Park commercial district had a relatively low vacancy rate and even expanded slightly during the worst years of the depression. During the 1920s, its stores had sold groceries, sundries, and staple goods or provided basic services like dry cleaning and haircutting. With the coming of the depression, it gained a more diverse array of establishments which even reflected the miniature golf craze. The Madame Queen Putting Green briefly occupied the former Clark Plumbing showroom and several lots to its west before being displaced by a row of storefronts at 3409-3417 Connecticut. Constructed between 1932 and 1935, these buildings housed specialty shops, including a cluster of woman's clothing stores and a radio repair shop, as well as a small grocery. Later aggregated into the legendary Roma Restaurant, their aluminum spandrels complemented the deco-styled Clark showroom. At approximately the same time, many of the Wardman townhouse-flats in the 3500 block were converted to commercial uses that included a dry cleaner, two cigar shops, a florist, and a dental office. A large storefront erected at 3337 Connecticut in 1931 housed a Singer Sewing Machine showroom. Cleveland Park's largest retail building to date was designed and built by the S.S. Kresge variety chain at 3427 Connecticut in 1936. Several new two-story buildings provided office space above retail. The Ofty Building at 3433 Connecticut, which replaced the Minute Service Station in 1936, housed a restaurant, a beauty shop, and offices for a dentist and a building contractor.

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<sup>20</sup> Wood, 8-38, 8-39.

<sup>21</sup> Williams, 13.



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The building of the Uptown Theater in 1936 (described in later sections of the nomination) was both the capstone of that year's remarkable explosion of development and the culmination of trends that were already becoming visible. The Uptown represented the larger scale development exemplified by the Kresge store and the Ofty Building. Like the Kresge store, it was constructed by a national chain and designed by a specialist-architect from outside the city. The theater also represented the expansion of the Cleveland Park business district to incorporate new types of businesses—in this case entertainment—as well as new patterns of transportation. As the nomination's subsequent sections make clear, the Uptown was a "neighborhood theater," but it was still accessible to a customer base broader than the immediate surrounding area. Its nearest early competitors were the Avalon at 5612 Connecticut, the Apex at 4913 Massachusetts (1940), the Calvert at 2324 Wisconsin (1937), and, once Porter Street was extended to cross Rock Creek in the late 1930s, the Tivoli at 3215 14<sup>th</sup>.<sup>22</sup> Like the Park and Shop, its design was shaped by the automotive age, though its parking lot was to the theater's rear rather than in a forecourt. The theater was architecturally dramatic, and its façade with enormous Uptown sign in bold letters were plainly capable of attracting attention in a crowded roadside vista.

The Uptown was a full-blown example of "Waterfall Moderne," the more vertically-oriented iteration of "streamline moderne," the latest step in the evolutionary step for the Art Deco style pioneered in the neighborhood by Cret's bridge and the storefronts on the opposite side of Connecticut Avenue. The theater would establish an architectural motif for the west side of its block of Connecticut Avenue. The integral storefronts that flanked the theater entrance, originally occupied by a Brentano's bookstore on the north and a milliner on the south, were complemented by a row of moderne storefronts at 3412-31 Connecticut. Designed by the theater's architect, John J. Zink, these shops were occupied by a florist, a beauty salon, a drug store, and a women's clothing shop. In 1939, the elegant Macklin Apartments was built into the side of a hill at the corner of Newark Street. The Macklin's moderne Connecticut Avenue façade has a lower story that includes several storefronts facing a parking forecourt. An adjoining commercial building built in 1940 wraps the corner of the parking court to link the Zink-designed storefronts to those in the Macklin. With the building of the moderne-accented Cleveland Park Postal Station at 3430 Connecticut in 1940, the west side of the 3400 block became what Hans Wirz and Richard Striner's *Washington Deco* calls a "continuous band" of streamline deco.<sup>23</sup>

By 1938, when Washington's building totals were nearing their pre-Depression levels, the Cleveland Park commercial district had achieved maturity with a broad-based and diverse array of merchants. Its more than 70 establishments included five restaurants, seven beauty shops, seven grocery stores, four milliners, two florists, numerous dry cleaners, laundries, women's clothing stores, and specialty shops like radio repair, cigar, and window shade stores. Besides the theater, they ranged from small sole proprietor establishments to branches of major national, regional, and citywide chains as A&P and Sanitary Grocery markets, Standard Oil and Lord Baltimore (later Amoco) gasoline stations, S. S. Kresge stores, Peoples Hardware and Drug

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<sup>22</sup> Headley, 164-166.

<sup>23</sup> Hans Wirz and Richard Striner. *Washington Deco; Art Deco in the Nation's Capital*, (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984).

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Stores, Jelleff clothing stores, and Barker's Bakeries. The Cleveland Park commercial district had progressed from a strip of shops selling staple goods to a complete "Main Street" that satisfied a wide variety of consumer wants.

### **Early Motion Picture Theaters in Washington, DC**

The first movie theater in Washington was opened in 1906. The Star Theatre, located on the ground floor of the Hutchins Building at 401 D Street NW, was typical of the first generation of cinemas: a small, approximately 80-seat auditorium fashioned out of standard storefront space. Double doors were installed on the façade; inside the auditorium were benches arranged in rows. Single-reel films were shown; admission was five cents.<sup>24</sup> The opening of the Star marked the beginning of what theater historian Robert K. Headley has termed the nickelodeon era, the period from 1906 to 1912. Over the next six years, more movie theaters opened in Washington than at any other time, almost 100 by 1912, as Washingtonians enthusiastically embraced the new entertainment medium.<sup>25</sup>

Most of the city's early cinemas were clustered on or around the 9<sup>th</sup> Street theater district, which stretched from Pennsylvania Avenue north to Mount Vernon Square. After 1910, technical improvements in the showing of films, combined with larger audiences, led to the construction of large, purpose-built movie theaters. By 1918, three such cinemas had been constructed downtown: Tom Moore's Rialto, at 713 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (2,100 seats); Loew's Palace, at 1306 F Street, NW (2,423 seats); and the Metropolitan, at 932 F Street, NW (1,484 seats). These larger theaters began pushing the edges of the theater district east and west of 9<sup>th</sup> Street along F Street, NW, which would become the city's new downtown entertainment zone.

The Metropolitan, constructed in 1918, was the flagship theater of one of the most successful and influential of the city's early theater moguls, Harry Crandall (1879-1937). A native Washingtonian, Crandall was endowed with keen instincts and fortuitous timing. Dropping out of school after the fourth grade, Crandall took his first job, at a grocery store, at age 12. Later he worked as a telephone company test operator and ran a livery stable business on the side. One day, while sitting in one of the city's cramped nickelodeon theaters, Crandall realized that "moving pictures were the coming thing."<sup>26</sup> Starting with the 86-seat Casino Theater on Capitol Hill in 1907, Crandall made steady profits and slowly expanded his business. He built comfortable, well-ventilated theaters with elegant trappings that drew capacity crowds and soon was the largest movie theater operator in the city.

In addition to the Metropolitan, Crandall's theaters would include the Central, Tivoli, Apollo, Lincoln, Colony, and Savoy theaters, among others. One of his projects was the 1,800-seat Knickerbocker Theater at 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Road NW, in what is now Adams Morgan. In 1922, the Knickerbocker's roof collapsed during a massive snowstorm, killing 98 of the several hundred patrons who were watching a new comedy that evening. Though Crandall was cleared

<sup>24</sup> Robert K. Headley, *Motion Picture Exhibition in Washington, D.C.* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1999), 323.

<sup>25</sup> Headley, 17-31.

<sup>26</sup> Lee Poe Hart, "Motion Picture Industry from Infancy to Its Prime," *Post*, Oct. 22, 1922.

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of any blame in the accident, it would haunt him for the rest of his life. Nevertheless, he continued to open neighborhood theaters throughout the city, making him one of the District's wealthiest men. One of his successful theaters was the rebuilt Knickerbocker, which he called the Ambassador.

By 1925, Crandall was said to be worth \$6 million, and he decided it was time to merge his business with a large national theater chain, the Stanley Corporation. At first, Crandall continued to run his theaters as part of the Stanley organization, but consolidation was sweeping the industry, and by the end of the decade Stanley had merged with Warner Brothers. The stock market crash in 1929 hurt Crandall's finances, forcing him to sell his remaining interest in the theaters to Warner Brothers.<sup>27</sup>

### **Harry Crandall and the Origins of the Uptown**

Crandall would always be plagued by the loss of his theaters. Barred by his contract with Warner Brothers from reentering the theater business until October 1931, he tried to get back into the movie business as soon as he could. In June 1931, Crandall's attorney announced that the former theater magnate would soon be rebuilding his empire, starting with a large new neighborhood theater on the west side of Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park. The D.C. government had just rezoned properties along this stretch of Connecticut Avenue from residential to commercial, and the new Crandall Theatres Corporation quickly purchased a five-lot site that had previously been Frank Ginechesi's stone quarry.<sup>28</sup> Stone from this quarry had been used to build the water tower at Fort Reno as well as the Metropolitan Memorial Methodist Church on Nebraska Avenue NW and other structures.<sup>29</sup> Crandall released a sketch of his planned 2,500-seat theater showing a towering, Neoclassical Revival structure (Figure 1).

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<sup>27</sup> "Harry M. Crandall Ends Life, Once Theater Magnate Here," *Star*, Feb. 26, 1937.

<sup>28</sup> "Plans to be Drawn for New Theater Here," *Star*, Jun. 27, 1931.

<sup>29</sup> Headley, 336.

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Figure 1: Sketch of the proposed Crandall's Uptown Theatre (Source: *Evening Star*, Aug. 26, 1931).

By September, Crandall had named accomplished theater architect John J. Zink (1886-1952) to lead the project, and ten construction firms submitted bids to build it.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, the Crandall project never came to fruition. The Great Depression was limiting theater construction around the country, and presumably Crandall was unable to raise funds for his project, despite taking out a full-page advertisement in the *Evening Star* in August.<sup>31</sup> Cleveland Park would have to wait a while longer for a neighborhood cinema of its own.

The inability to re-enter the theater business ultimately was a crushing blow for Crandall. When he committed suicide in 1937, he left behind a note explaining his motives: "You don't have to look for the cause of me taking my life. I'll tell you I have not committed any crime. Have no love affairs. Not insane. Have particularly good health. No. None of these are the reasons. Only it is I'm despondent and miss my theaters, oh so much." In reference to his attempt to build the Uptown Theatre, he remarked, "I have tried to get back in the game, but no luck."<sup>32</sup>

The last theater that Crandall had built before he sold his company was the Colony, at 4935 Georgia Avenue NW, also designed by Zink. Completed in 1926, this modest structure, situated on the ground floor of a 5-story apartment building, blended quietly into its surrounding

<sup>30</sup> "Ten Capital Firms Bid on New Theater," *Post*, Sep. 23, 1931.

<sup>31</sup> *Star*, Aug. 26, 1931, A-7.

<sup>32</sup> "Crandall, Ex-Theater Magnate, Kills Self," *Post*, Feb. 27, 1937.

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neighborhood. In sharp contrast, the city's most ostentatious movie palace, Loew's Capitol, was under construction at 1328 F Street NW at the same time. Opened in 1927, the Capitol was a massive 1920s movie palace, seating almost 4,000 and featuring an ornate, lavishly decorated lobby. It marked both the pinnacle and the end of the era of movie palaces.<sup>33</sup>

Such large and lavishly decorated cinemas rapidly became unaffordable for theater operators to build and maintain, and their opulence became an embarrassment as the hard times of the Great Depression set in. Technical advances also spurred changes in film theaters. The advent of the "talkies" in 1927 created new requirements for sound systems and acoustical design considerations. Orchestra pits and stages for vaudeville shows would no longer be needed. Future cinemas would be much more focused on clear sight lines and good acoustics, with few of the trappings of older theaters.

The Great Depression brought a near halt to theater construction, with no major cinemas constructed in Washington between 1928 and 1934. When large-scale theater construction resumed in 1935, it was in an entirely new style—the streamlined or *moderne* phase of the Art Deco, which would epitomize the look of the next generation of cinemas.

Art Deco theaters were not built in any American cities until the early 1930s. The previous generation of movie palaces had been in a wide range of revival styles. Influential movie critic P. Morton Shand, in his 1930 work, *Modern Theaters and Cinemas*, urged architects to adopt more modern styles for theaters in keeping with the look of Fritz Lang's futuristic *Metropolis* (1927). Thomas W. Lamb (1871–1942)—one of the foremost theater architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century--John J. Zink, John Ebersson (1875-1964), and other leading theater architects all responded with modernistic designs for their new theaters.<sup>34</sup>

By the early 1930s, Warner Brothers began planning a major campaign of neighborhood theater construction in Washington and the surrounding suburbs. The company purchased Crandall's property on Connecticut Avenue in late 1933 and restarted planning for a theater on that site.<sup>35</sup> In May 1935, local Warner Brothers general manager John J. Payette (Harry Crandall's son-in-law) announced that two new D.C. neighborhood theaters would be quickly constructed and opened that fall. One was the Penn Theater, at 650 Pennsylvania Avenue SE on Capitol Hill; the other was the long-awaited Uptown in Cleveland Park.

Warner did not meet its optimistic timeframes; the two projects were built sequentially rather than in parallel. Because the Penn Theater was completed first (in December 1935), it was the structure that marked the arrival of the *moderne* style to Washington movie theaters and their audiences.<sup>36</sup> Designed by Zink's archrival, John Ebersson, the Penn featured flamboyantly

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<sup>33</sup> Headley, 114-124.

<sup>34</sup> Hans Wirz and Richard Striner, *Washington Deco, Art Deco in the Nation's Capital* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984), 81-88.

<sup>35</sup> "Site Is Purchased for New Theater," *Post*, Dec. 21, 1933.

<sup>36</sup> The small Circle Theater, at 2105 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, was remodeled in a subtle Art Deco style in the summer of 1935, but this was a relatively modest redecoration compared to the construction of the Penn. The Circle Theater was demolished in 1987.

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streamlined decoration, particularly in its marquee and central façade. *Washington Post* theater critic Nelson B. Bell commented, “Stream-lined motor cars, stream-lined steamships, stream-lined railroad trains and now the lay mind is baffled in an attempt to determine precisely what a ‘stream-lined’ theater might be....” He termed the Penn “one of the first ‘stream-lined’ theaters in America,” and quoted from a Warner press release describing its appearance as “at once modern, without being merely modernistic.” Such a description, Bell observed, “conveys no great illuminating flood of mental enlightenment.”<sup>37</sup> Soon enough, Washington would have several *moderne* cinemas, and the style would become familiar to moviegoers. All that now remains of the Penn Theater, however, are elements of its façade and entrance, which were incorporated into a residential apartment complex built on the site in 1986.

The Uptown, completed the following year, is the earliest surviving *moderne* movie theater in Washington, and one of the best. Zink’s revised theater design, released in 1935, abandoned the neoclassicism of Crandall’s original proposal for the new streamlined look. In size, the planned 1,500-seat theater (as completed in 1936, it seated 1,300) was to be typical of cinemas built in the 1930s and 1940s—not as large as the biggest downtown theaters, which could accommodate 3,000 or more, but larger than the early neighborhood cinemas, which often seated less than 1,000. A newspaper notice observed that both the Penn and the Uptown would be air-conditioned and “streamlined to give the best in sound effects.”<sup>38</sup> They would also both include proscenium stages, which were to be included in case a decision were made in the future to include stage shows in the theaters’ offerings. With the arrival of sound movies in 1927, cinemas had gradually abandoned their old variety-show format, which featured a combination of live acts and films of varying lengths. The new trend was toward showing feature films prefaced only by one or two shorts, such as a newsreel or cartoon. Warner Brothers had decided to hedge their bets by including prosceniums in the design of their new theaters.

Groundbreaking for the Uptown took place in April 1936. The Associated Constructors of Washington and Philadelphia, which also had built the Penn, was the firm in charge of construction. The new theater was essentially built into the side of a hill—a former stone outcropping that had been hollowed out as a quarry. The rear of the theater abuts the stone hillside, with only the attic of the theater rising above the ground at the rear of the building. A parking lot was laid out on the slope of the hill behind and above the theater.

Echoing the company’s characterization of the Penn, Warner Brothers announced that the theater’s design would be “modern, but not extreme” and “embody the latest improvements.” *The Evening Star* provided the following additional details:

*The Uptown will be completely air-conditioned, assuring comfortable temperature all of the year, without drafts. The light will be by modern direct and indirect fixtures, and special outlets will be provided for effect lighting on the stage and other locations.*

<sup>37</sup> Nelson B. Bell, “Stream Lines and Sound Perfection Promised in Penn Theater, Opening Friday,” *Post*, Dec. 24, 1935.

<sup>38</sup> “‘Streamlining’ Features New Theater,” *Star*, May 24, 1935.

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*The theater will be of the two-floor type and will seat 1,000 persons in the orchestra and 500 in the balcony. It will be entered through an all-marble foyer which will run the full two stories. Six stores—five on one side and one on the other—will flank the entrance.<sup>39</sup>*

As the article states, the project included a short strip of four one-story retail stores in addition to the theater itself. The retail storefronts stand in a row immediately south of the theater, separated from it by a narrow court that provides employee access to the rear of the theater. The stores feature limestone façades and black granite footings that match those of the theater, although they are otherwise undecorated.

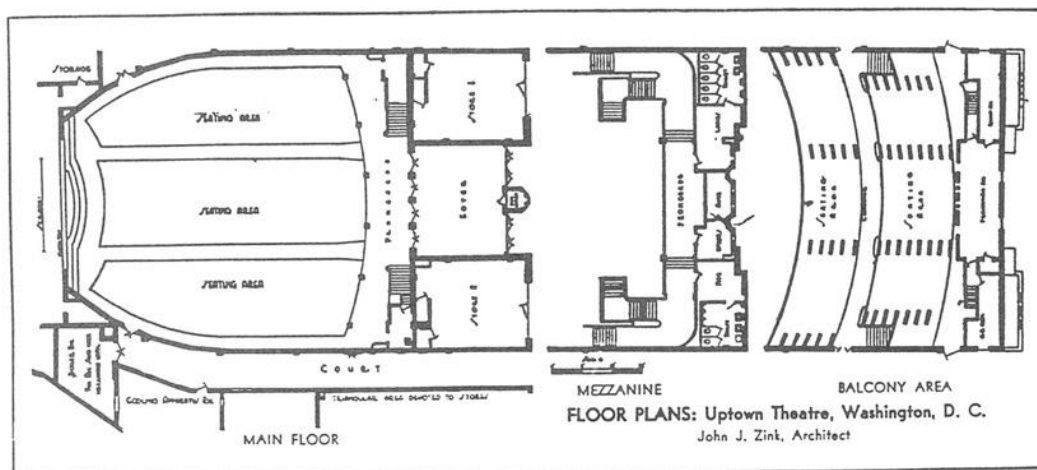


Figure 2: Zink's floor plans for the Uptown Theatre (Source: Headley, 337).

As originally designed, the theater's auditorium was striking, decorated in a color scheme of coral, silver gray, and black that echoed the exterior colors.<sup>40</sup> The color choices, bold geometric patterns, and decorative details seemed to some observers to evoke the colors and motifs of Southwestern American Indian cultures.<sup>41</sup> The coral, acoustic-plaster walls were divided into large, arched segments, five to a side, that each had a central panel featuring a stylized, almond-eyed female figure in shallow bas relief with long, flowing hair. The five figures on the left side of the auditorium all stood on their narrow perches holding allegorical items, while those on the right side danced energetically. The ceiling was elaborately decorated with scalloped and zigzag patterns, with the sections closer to the stage slatted to create coves for mounting concealed light fixtures (see figure 3).

<sup>39</sup> "Work Will Begin on New Theater," *Star*, Apr. 11, 1936. See also Nelson B. Bell, "About the Showshops," *Post*, Apr. 13, 1936.

<sup>40</sup> "Theater to Open within a Month," *Star*, Aug. 15, 1936.

<sup>41</sup> Vesta Cummings, "Uptown Theater Opens Tomorrow," *Star*, Oct. 28, 1936.

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Figure 3: The Uptown's auditorium at the time the theater opened. (Photo courtesy of Robert K. Headley).

Harold W. Rambusch (1891-1981) of the Rambusch Decorating Company, Jersey City, New Jersey, created the interior design and installed the auditorium's sophisticated array of custom lighting fixtures. In August 1936, the *Washington Post* reported, "At the proscenium in parallel rows will be hundreds of concealed lights of various hues and colors, which when lighted and blended will produce a sunrise painted in light.... The lighting fixtures...are most unusual and combine the double purpose of lighting and ventilating, thus doing away with all ventilating grills and plaques."<sup>42</sup>

The Uptown would become the 14<sup>th</sup> in the Warner Brothers chain in D.C. Warner had two more neighborhood theaters under construction—the Sheridan, at 6217 Georgia Avenue NW in Brightwood, and the Calvert, at 2324 Wisconsin Avenue NW in Glover Park—indicating its commitment to an expanded neighborhood presence throughout the District.<sup>43</sup>

In anticipation of the Uptown's opening, the *Evening Star* observed, "From now on Cleveland Park not only will know what to do with its children on Saturday afternoons, but will assist in solving the downtown parking problem by listening to Hollywood-made drama close to home. Pictures will run three weeks after appearing downtown and there will be early matinees if attendance warrants."<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> "Uptown Show Will Be Opened September 15," *Post*, Aug. 16, 1936.

<sup>43</sup> "Uptown Will Open to Public," *Post*, Oct. 27, 1936.

<sup>44</sup> Cummings, op. cit.



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Warner Brothers had a near monopoly on neighborhood theaters in Washington in the 1930s and 1940s. The theaters were organized into six distribution tiers that allowed the relatively few prints of a film that were sent to Washington to gradually work their way through all of Warner's venues. Films would have their first run at the Earle Theater on 13<sup>th</sup> Street downtown, near Pennsylvania Avenue and sometimes also played simultaneously at the Ambassador on 18<sup>th</sup> Street in Adams Morgan. The Uptown was next in line, in the second tier, which also included the Penn, the Tivoli (Park Road in Columbia Heights), the Calvert (Wisconsin Avenue in Glover Park), the Beverly (15<sup>th</sup> Street in Kingman Park), and the Silver (Silver Spring, MD).<sup>45</sup>

The grand opening of the Uptown Theatre occurred on October 29, 1936. It included an open house for the public to inspect the stylish new auditorium followed speeches by attending dignitaries and concluding with a showing of *Cain and Mabel*, a comedy/musical starring Clark Gable and Marion Davies. D.C. Commissioner Melvin C. Hazen spoke first, remarking briefly about how Cleveland Park had grown so quickly from rolling countryside to an urban neighborhood with a flourishing business district. "This new theater, modern in every respect, is a testimonial to the growth of this marvelous boulevard and also the growth of the movie industry," he observed. He was followed by Harry C. Grove, president of the Cleveland Park Citizens' Association, and Thomas E. Clark, president of the Cleveland Park Businessmen's Association. Also, in attendance were Harry Crandall, architect John J. Zink, and interior designer Harold W. Rambusch.<sup>46</sup>

Beyond the dignitaries, many other Washingtonians crowded Connecticut Avenue to see the spectacular new theater. "Lined with flags and multi-colored lights, Connecticut avenue for a five-block stretch presented Eight Precinct police with a major traffic problem as hundreds of Cleveland Park residents jammed their way into the new modern picture house, the *Washington Post* reported.<sup>47</sup> The *Evening Star*'s theater critic, E. de S. Melcher, observed "There were lights enough to knock your eye out all along the avenue" and "44 members of the police force sitting handsomely on their motorcycles." The theater itself he found "nicely air-cooled, and the decorations are effective without assaulting you in the face."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Headley, 148. Tiers 3 through 6 were as follows. Third tier: Avalon and Sheridan. Fourth tier: Apollo and Kennedy. Fifth tier: Colony and Takoma. Sixth tier: York, Avenue Grand, Seco, and Home.

<sup>46</sup> "Theater Opening Ceremonies Set," *Star*, Oct. 29, 1936; District of Columbia historic district nomination, *Cleveland Park Historic District*, 1987, sec. 8, page 41.

<sup>47</sup> "Crowd Attends Gala Inaugural of New Movie," *Post*, Oct. 30, 1936.

<sup>48</sup> E. de S. Melcher, "Hepburn's Naturalness Crowns Keith's Picture," *Star*, Oct. 30, 1936.

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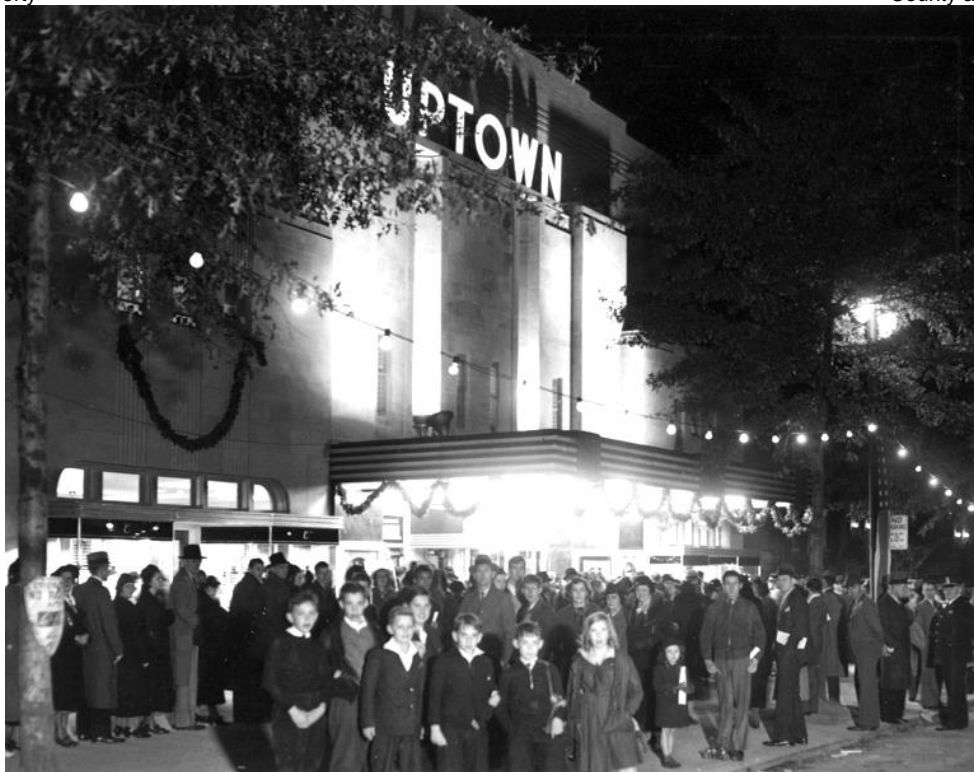


Figure 4: Grand opening of the Uptown, Oct. 29, 1936. (Photo courtesy of Robert K. Headley).

### **A Successful Neighborhood Theater**

The streamlined façade of the Uptown Theatre dominated the Cleveland Park commercial district along Connecticut Avenue, establishing the theater as a focal point for the community that went beyond just serving as a venue for film showings. During World War II, for example, a group of neighborhood youngsters who collected scrap materials for the war effort met on Saturdays at the Uptown. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt addressed the group at the Uptown in January 1943.<sup>49</sup> In 1947, the Cleveland Park Dad-and-Son Athletic clubs sponsored a free Saturday showing of football movies and comedies at the Uptown for boys accompanied by their fathers.<sup>50</sup>

As far as regular film showings were concerned, the Uptown was little different in its first two decades than any of the city's other neighborhood theaters. Film showings at the Uptown were not "events," as they would be in later years. Warner Brother's tiered system of film distribution, which prevented the Uptown from showing films immediately when they were released, kept the theater out of the spotlight for new releases. However, that was upended in the 1950s as downtown lost its primacy for the entertainment business. The downtown theater district gradually came to be seedy and unsafe, with moviegoers increasingly preferring suburban venues. In response, film distributors abandoned their outdated distribution policies. The K-B Ontario Theater, at 1700 Columbia Road NW in Adams Morgan, became the first D.C.

<sup>49</sup> "Scrap Body to Hear Mrs. Roosevelt," *Post*, Jan. 8, 1943.

<sup>50</sup> "Boys Will See Free Movies," *Post*, Sep. 25, 1947.

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neighborhood theater to regularly show first-run pictures when it opened in 1952. The Uptown followed suit in 1957.<sup>51</sup>

There had been some exceptions to the rule before 1957 for special events. In September 1952, for example, the Uptown hosted an invitation-only “exclusive world premiere” of *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, starring Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward, and Ava Gardner. The showing was held in conjunction with a convention of the Theater Owners of America being held at the nearby Shoreham Hotel. Ava Gardner was on hand for the showing, as was the U.S. Marine Band.<sup>52</sup> Though this was a specially arranged event, it presaged the Uptown’s future role as a venue for prestige film screenings.

### **A Premier Cinema Destination**

A turning point came in the 1950s, the film industry looked for ways to compete with television for viewers. Widescreen pictures were one solution that TV couldn’t match, and several widescreen formats were introduced in the industry. In 1956, the Uptown’s auditorium was substantially modified to show films in the 70mm Todd-AO format developed by film producer Mike Todd and the American Optical Company. As explained by the *Washington Post*’s theater critic Richard Coe, “Todd-AO is a process which closely resembles Cinerama except that it does with one camera and one projection machine what it takes the older technique to do with three of each. Hence, we’re without those three panels whose joining sometimes prove distracting. The screen is 50 feet wide by 22 feet high. We’ve also got a sound system so refined that a sigh can sound like a hurricane, which means the virtue of tonal depth as well as the occasional vice of ear-dunning.”<sup>53</sup> The initial showing at the Uptown was the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, *Oklahoma!* directed by Fred Zinnemann. No other area theater had installed Todd-AO, so the Uptown served as the exclusive venue for the film. A brief introduction called “The Miracle of Todd-AO” was shown before the film.<sup>54</sup>

The interior of the Uptown was remodeled several times, beginning in the early 1940s with installation of fabric over the Kalite acoustical-plaster walls of the auditorium. The ceiling was redone to eliminate all the original fanciful decoration. Further alterations were made in 1956 to the screen area to accommodate the wide Todd-AO screen. Then, in late 1962, a wholesale remodeling of the auditorium virtually eliminated any trace of the original layout and décor. By that time, the Cinerama process had been improved, and the Uptown was reconfigured for the even wider Cinerama screen. The original proscenium was removed, and an enormous new, wraparound screen was installed. The dramatic curve of the new screen—which audiences would come to adore—posed unique challenges for movie projection. Without a flat surface, it was difficult to get a picture properly focused across the entire screen. The screen itself, designed to

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<sup>51</sup> Headley, 180.

<sup>52</sup> “Ava Due Here for Premiere of Hemingway Movie,” *Post*, Sep. 14, 1952.

<sup>53</sup> Richard L. Coe, “‘Oklahoma’ Mighty O.K.!” *Post*, Nov. 2, 1956. The flagship downtown theaters were already showing widescreen films: The Warner Theatre was using Cinerama, while Loew’s Columbia adopted CinemaScope.

<sup>54</sup> Headley, 185.

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avoid distortion of the projected images, was made up of hundreds of spring-mounted, 1½-inch-wide vertical strips of fabric.<sup>55</sup>

Several rows of seats in the front of the theater had to be removed to accommodate the reconfiguration. The projection booth was moved down to a former storage room on the balcony level, where it would be more level with the screen, and two additional projection booths were constructed on concrete stilts in the pedestrian alleys on either side of the building's exterior. Seating in the auditorium was reduced from 1,300 to 964. In addition, an advanced seven-track, seven-channel sound system was installed that spread the sounds of the film across the curved surface so that voices and other sound effects seemed to come from approximately where they should.<sup>56</sup> "The recent renovation virtually left only the walls and the floor," noted the *Post*'s Richard L. Coe. "Rich brown curtains enclose the audience in an oval shape and the screen, nearly 5,000 square feet, ribbons across nearly a third of the house."<sup>57</sup>

The dramatic change to the interior of the Uptown did not just enhance the theater's technological wizardry. It essentially transformed the Uptown from an ordinary neighborhood theater into an elite venue for high-profile film events. With the old downtown movie palaces closing or no longer showing first-run films and newer suburban multiplexes designed to show many films simultaneously on relatively small screens, the Uptown stood fortuitously in a "sweet spot" between the two extremes. It was not downtown, but it still had the look and single-auditorium configuration of an old-fashioned theater and, most importantly, it featured a stunning, wraparound screen that immersed its audience in the movie experience. "[The Uptown] would have just been another suburban theater until they turned it into Cinerama," observed arts critic Bob Mondello in 2018. "When they did the Cinerama screen it became one of the prestige houses in the country."<sup>58</sup>

### **Blockbuster Screenings**

For at least 40 years—from 1968 to 2008—the Uptown served as Washingtonians' preferred destination to watch new blockbuster films as well as prestige re-releases of classic films.<sup>59</sup> Its first Cinerama showing was a minor one—a children's film called *The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm*. It was followed in 1963 by the epic John Ford film, *How the West Was Won*, which had a successful run for the better part of a year, until January 1964. At that point, the theater was closed again to update the Cinerama equipment with a new single-camera system that eliminated the annoying seams that were occasionally noticeable between the three separately projected segments of the film.<sup>60</sup> From that point forward, the theater soon gained a reputation as the best place in Washington to watch a film. The blockbuster era began with the world premiere of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* on April 2, 1968, just two days before Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated in Memphis. In contrast to the turmoil that

<sup>55</sup> Bob Mondello, "Uptown's Dream Screen," *Post*, Jan. 29, 1995.

<sup>56</sup> Headley, 193, 336.

<sup>57</sup> Richard L. Coe, "Cinerama Tells a Tale," *Post*, Nov. 8, 1962.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Chris Klimek, "An Oral History of the Uptown Theater," *Washington City Paper*, Aug. 2, 2018.

<sup>59</sup> Klimek, op. cit.

<sup>60</sup> "Uptown Closing Long Run," *Post*, Jan. 12, 1964.

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would strike Washington and other cities in the days ahead, the visually stunning movie, as shown at the Uptown, mesmerized audiences.<sup>61</sup>

In May 1977, record crowds swarmed to see George Lucas' *Star Wars* at the Uptown, which was one of only 32 theaters nationwide--and the only one in Washington--to screen the film when it was first released.<sup>62</sup> Lines of patrons stretched down the block and up Newark Street as enthusiastic customers waited to see the blockbuster film. Cars jammed the streets, sometimes parking illegally because they could find no other spots. "It's...it's an invasion," one Cleveland Park resident told the *Washington Post's* reporter, Karen De Witt. "There are people, people crawling up the streets constantly. We're constantly being awakened when people line up for the midnight show. My alley was blocked up once and I just wanted to scream and beat up the cars."<sup>63</sup> For *Star Wars*, the Uptown was equipped with the recently developed Dolby four-channel stereo sound system, which added substantially to the cinematic experience. The film's success at the Uptown cemented the unique role of the theater as the best spot in the city to see blockbuster films, particularly those with spectacular visuals and dramatic sound effects.

The following year, Ted and Jim Pedas, owners of the Circle Theater chain, purchased the Uptown. "The Uptown, when we acquired it, was for event films," explained Ted Pedas in 2018. "These are the real blockbusters that would only open in five markets in the U.S. and Canada: Toronto, New York, D.C., Chicago, and L.A. Those five screens had to be available if you wanted to launch a big movie in those days. There was a lot of power in a theater like the Uptown."<sup>64</sup> In 1988, the Pedas brothers sold the theater's operations (not the building itself) to the national Cineplex Odeon chain.

It has been said that Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, liked to host high-profile movie premieres at the Uptown to curry favor with lawmakers. The 1989 Washington premiere of *Batman* certainly seemed to be part of that strategy. Many senators, congressman, and administration officials attended the event, from Vice President Dan Quayle and Senator Patrick Leahy, to Virginia governor Church Robb and Office of Management and Budget director Dick Darman. Jack Valenti attended as well.<sup>65</sup>

The following year, two star-studded film premieres burnished the Uptown's reputation. In June, the world premiere of *Dick Tracy* was held, with stars Warren Beatty and Madonna in attendance. A mob scene ensued on Connecticut Avenue in front of the Uptown as the crowd craned their heads to catch a glimpse of Madonna and other celebrities. Government officials present included White House Chief of Staff John Sununu; senators Patrick Leahy, Al Gore, and Larry Pressler; Representative Pat Schroeder; New York Governor Mario Cuomo; and former senator George McGovern.<sup>66</sup> In October, *Dances With Wolves* debuted as a benefit showing to

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<sup>61</sup> "'2001': Unique and Awesome," *Post*, Apr. 3, 1968; "A Stunning Trip into the Future," *Star*, Apr. 3, 1968.

<sup>62</sup> "Record Setting 'Star'," *Post*, May 27, 1977.

<sup>63</sup> Karen De Witt, "The Movie That Ate Cleveland Park," *Post*, Jun. 23, 1977.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted in Klimek, op. cit.

<sup>65</sup> Martha Sherrill, "The Cave Dwellers' Opening," *Post*, Jun. 23, 1989.

<sup>66</sup> Martha Sherrill and Dana Thomas, "The Film, the Flash & the Smile," *Post*, Jun. 11, 1990.

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raise funds for the planned National Museum of the American Indian. Actor Kevin Costner and other members of the cast and crew attended.<sup>67</sup>

Another notable world premiere, *Jurassic Park* in 1993, was attended by actors Jeff Goldblum and Laura Dern as well as government VIPs and other celebrities, including boxer Muhammad Ali.<sup>68</sup>

### Final Alterations

In 1995, Cineplex Odeon replaced the aging, ribboned-fabric screen with a solid screen and upgraded its projection equipment, resulting in a brighter, clearer picture.<sup>69</sup> The following year a much more sweeping interior renovation took place, temporarily closing the theater for several weeks while the auditorium was largely gutted and remodeled. New wallpaper, flooring, carpeting, draperies, seats, and a concession stand were added. The new terrazzo floor in the lobby area was designed in an Art-Deco-like radial pattern, and the carpeting in the auditorium matched the new flooring. A new red-rust velour screen curtain with gold tassels was installed, as were new high-backed, burgundy velour seats. The walls were covered with black velour drapes. The theater reopened in October 1996 with the re-release of Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958).<sup>70</sup> The next year, crowds of *Star Wars* devotees once again swarmed the Uptown for the 20<sup>th</sup>-anniversary re-release of the legendary film.<sup>71</sup>

Cineplex-Odeon merged with Loew's Theatres in 1998. Loew's subsequently filed for bankruptcy in 2001, and its theatres, including the Uptown, were acquired by AMC Theatres in 2005. AMC converted the Uptown's projection equipment to a fully digital system in 2010. By the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Uptown had lost its appeal as a venue for blockbuster premieres, which no longer were as important as they had been before the rise of Internet-based streaming services. After the National Air and Space Museum began showing commercial films on its IMAX screen, the Uptown no longer had the city's largest and most impressive screen.

In 2017, AMC Theatres announced plans to replace the aging and unstable UPTOWN sign on the façade with a new AMC sign. When the proposal was made public, it was greeted by howls of outrage from members of the Cleveland Park community, who consider the theater and its iconic sign as emblematic of the historic community. "The sign is not disposable; the sign is central," said Carin Ruff, executive director of the Cleveland Park Historical Society. Within days, AMC responded to the complaints by withdrawing its plans and instead committing to restoring the existing sign. "We appreciate the passion and feedback from the community, and look forward to serving moviegoers at AMC Uptown 1 for years to come," Ryan Noonan, director of corporate communications, told the *Washington Post*.<sup>72</sup> In fact, while the company

<sup>67</sup> Judith Weinraub, "Costner's Sioux Ceremony," *Post*, Oct. 20, 1990.

<sup>68</sup> Roxanne Roberts, "Night of the Living Dinosaurs," *Post*, Jun. 10, 1993.

<sup>69</sup> Mondello, op. cit.

<sup>70</sup> Chris Nguyen, "Uptown Theater Premieres a New Look," *Post*, Oct. 3, 1996.

<sup>71</sup> Esther Iverem and Steve Vogel, "Space Invasion," *Post*, Feb. 1, 1997.

<sup>72</sup> Perry Stein, "For a few days, a neon sign and a corporation's failed plan united Cleveland Park residents," *Post*, Jul. 31, 2017.

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did restore the sign, it abruptly closed the theater in March 2020, creating further dismay in the community.<sup>73</sup>

### **Architect John J. Zink**

John Jacob Zink (1886-1952), one of the most important theater designers to work in Washington, was a native of Baltimore who first studied architecture at the Maryland Institute for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts (now Maryland Institute, College of Art), graduating in 1904. He then apprenticed with William H. Hodges at the Baltimore architectural firm of Wyatt and Nolting. By 1910, Zink had established an office in Baltimore's Builders' Exchange Building and was advertising his services in the Baltimore Business Directory. He subsequently moved to New York to attend Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, where he apprenticed with Thomas Lamb. Zink assisted Lamb with the design of the Hippodrome Theatre in Baltimore, a grand vaudeville and movie palace completed in 1914. Zink returned to Baltimore in 1916 to collaborate with Ewald G. Blanke (1880-1929) on a variety of motion picture theater projects, including both new construction and renovations. In 1917-18, he collaborated with Blanke on his first Washington, D.C., project, Tom Moore's Rialto Theater (demolished in 1940), one of the largest and most ornate ever built in the city. By 1921, Zink was working on his own, receiving his first D.C. commission with the Takoma Theater project in 1922. He eventually headed the architectural firm of Zink, Adkins & Craycroft, which specialized in movie theater design.

Zink's firm designed over 200 theaters in the mid-Atlantic region from the 1920s until the 1950s. Many were in the greater Washington, D.C., and Baltimore metropolitan areas. Zink designed at least 14 theaters that were built within the District of Columbia. Zink worked in a wide range of styles, and his projects spanned several generations of movie theater construction, beginning with the ornate Rialto Theater of 1917. His Takoma Theatre (1923), in contrast, is in a neoclassical style that appears to reflect the influence of Thomas Lamb. However, many of Zink's later works embody *moderne* styling, as reflected in the Uptown (1936) and the Newton at 3601-3611 12<sup>th</sup> Street, NE (1937) as well as several theaters he designed for the K&B Amusement Company, including the Atlas at 1313-1333 H Street, NE (1938); the Apex at 4813 Massachusetts Avenue, NW (1941/demolished 1977); the Senator at 3946-3956 Minnesota Avenue, NE (1941); the Naylor at 2834 Alabama Avenue, SE (1945); and the MacArthur at 4859 MacArthur Boulevard NW (1946).

Zink was considered one of the best theater architects in the *moderne* style, competing with John Eberson for the design of many of the Washington and Baltimore movie theaters of the 1930s and 1940s. Remembered as "a very shy sort of guy, thin and very serious," who was comfortable working on tight timeframes and with limited budgets, Zink had a flair for making the most of inexpensive materials to create theaters that had the attention-getting look that created excitement for moviegoers.<sup>74</sup> He had a reputation for focusing on the technical aspects of theater architecture, such as clear views for all movie-goers, ideal lighting and acoustics, and he

<sup>73</sup> Paul Schwartzman, "Uptown Theater, an iconic D.C. movie palace, shuts down," *Post*, Mar. 13, 2020.

<sup>74</sup> James D. Dilts, "A movie palace that prevailed and just matches its flick," *Baltimore Sun*, Jun. 3, 1975.

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typically incorporated such amenities as nurseries, lounges and smoking rooms in his movie house plans.<sup>75</sup> Some of his projects, including the Uptown, featured commercial retail space in addition to the theater itself. A theater critic for *The Washington Post*, commenting in 1936 on plans for the Newton Theatre, noted that “Mr. Zink is known to the trade as the man who can contrive more unusual features for the motion picture theaters he designs than any other architect, not excepting Tom Lamb...”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Alexandria Board of Architectural Review, case #2006-0165.

<sup>76</sup> Nelson B. Bell, “Another New Picture House Planned for Northeast,” *Post*, Dec. 16, 1936.



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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** 0.348

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.934936 | Longitude: -77.058922 |
| 2. Latitude: 38.934700 | Longitude: -77.058788 |
| 3. Latitude: 38.934841 | Longitude: -77.058339 |
| 4. Latitude: 38.935091 | Longitude: -77.058483 |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary includes all of Lot number eight hundred sixteen (0816) in the square number two thousand sixty-nine (2069).

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These are the boundaries used by the District of Columbia Property Tax Database.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Peter Sefton/Trustee, John DeFerrari/Trustee, Jessica Unger/Community Outreach and Grants Manager  
organization: D.C. Preservation League  
street & number: 1221 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 5A  
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20036  
e-mail info@dcpreservation.org  
telephone: (202) 783-5144  
date: \_\_\_\_\_

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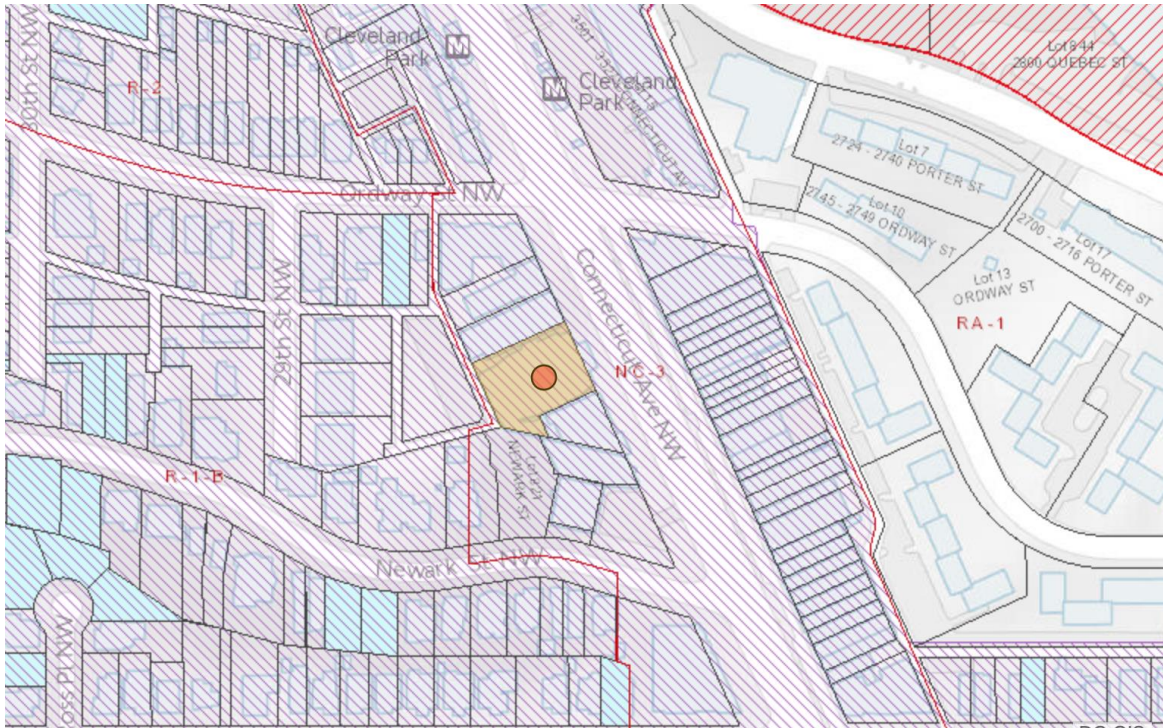
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Detail from a 2011 USGS Washington West quadrangle, showing the location of 3426 Connecticut Avenue NW

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Map showing location of the Uptown Theater, yellow highlight, 3424-3428 Connecticut Avenue NW, courtesy of propertyquest.dc.gov, 2020.

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### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5- or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered, and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property:

City or Vicinity:

County:

State:

Photographer:

Date Photographed:

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:



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