



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

919 Arctic Building Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 625-4501

LPB-108.1/77

REPORT ON DESIGNATION/REPEALER/120 DAY PROPERTIES

NAME OF PROPERTY: The Barnes Building
2320 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98121

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Lot 4, Block 27
Bell & Denny's First Addition

OWNER: Brooke A. Barnes
3055 Perkins Lane West
Seattle, Washington 98199

RECOMMENDATION FOR DESIGNATION:

On December 15, 1976, the Landmarks Preservation Board conducted a Public Hearing to consider the nomination of The Barnes Building as a Seattle Landmark. After reviewing the nomination and hearing testimony (see also Seattle Historic Data Sheet, copy attached) the Board voted to recommend designation to the Seattle City Council based on satisfaction of the following criteria of Ordinance 102229:

Section 6(1) - has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or Nation; or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or

Section 6(3) - exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the community; or

Section 6(4) - portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or

RECOMMENDATION FOR DESIGNATION:

Section 6(6) - is the work of a designer whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of Seattle; or

Section 6(9) - owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or city.

Central
PROTECTIONS:

In recommending designation on the basis of the above enumerated criteria, the following specific features were recognized which would require Certificates of Approval prior to implementation of any proposed work or changes or issuance of a building permit:

The Barnes Building -

the exterior of the building, including any interior changes which would affect the exterior of the building.

Review of any changes or improvements to the above elements of the complex other than in-kind maintenance and repair would require review by the Board and either issuance of endorsements or Certificates of Approval prior to the granting of applicable permits by the City.

Earl D. Layman
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City Historic Preservation Officer

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Landmarks Preservation Board

Seattle Historic Building Data Sheet

1. Name (common or present and/or historic) Barnes Building (Ionic Masonic Hall no.7)
Bell and Denny's First Addition
2. Street and Number 2320-2322 First Avenue Block 27 Lot 4 Year Built 1889
major por.
3. Present Owner Brooke A. Barnes Present Use offices, dance studios
4. Interim Owner(s) Masonic Lodge, B. Sterling Interim Use(s) lodge hall, taverns,
sleeping bag manufacturing
5. Original Owner Masonic Lodge after Original Use fraternal lodge
Odd Fellows
6. Architect credited to Elmer Fisher Builder _____
7. Assessed Value: Building _____ Land _____ Assessors File No. _____
8. Classification:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Open to Public:
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Object		in progress	Hours _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Threatened by	
		demolition	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	
9. Neighborhood Information:

A. Compatibility With Neighborhood	C. Architecturally Strong Neighborhood
Structure Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No _____	Comments <u>one of the original</u>
Use Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No _____	<u>buildings of Belltown, in scale and</u>
	<u>used for offices and small manufacturing,</u>
	<u>as were many of the structures in the</u>
B. Importance to Neighborhood	<u>area succeeding this one. Built by</u>
Great <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____	<u>son of area founder, to be a focal</u>
Moderate _____	<u>structure. Still one of most outstanding.</u>
Minor _____	
10. Special Research Sources (Be Specific, list name or item and where found)

City of Seattle Assessor's Office

Polk's City Directories

further references - see attached National Register form & Historic Bldg. form
11. Cross Street Reference
12. Photos Attached & Photographer Office of Urban Conservation

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

RECEIVED

MAY 7 1974

COM. DEV. DEPT.
DIV.

The building at 2320 First Avenue was begun in 1888 as an Odd Fellows Hall in Belltown, a separate city north of Seattle. It was located then on Front Street on the bluff which was the high hill of Belltown and shares a party wall with the Austin A. Bell Building built by the developer. The Odd Fellows fell into financial difficulty and sold their interests in the lot and basement construction to Masonic Lodge No. 7 in the fall of 1888. Austin Bell was at this time looking for an architect to design the apartments he had in mind for the adjoining lot and lured a prominent young architect from Vancouver B.C., Elmer Fisher, to Seattle to participate in the "greatest growth any western city had seen" and unfolded his plans based upon Seattle becoming the western terminal for the railroad, coming Statehood, the possibility of regarding the gorge between Belltown and Seattle, filling the marshlands, etc. Although Fisher came to town permanently in 1889 he had already submitted designs for the Seattle Armory which was begun in 1888. In 1889 construction began on both the Bell Building and the Masonic Lodge with Fisher as the architect of both. Washington was admitted to the Union in 1889 and in the same year Seattle had a fire which destroyed much of what was to become the Pioneer Square district. Fisher's works of the 1890's in that area, the Pioneer Building, etc., made him world famous.

The Masonic Lodge continued as the only masonic lodge in the Northwest until 1916. Most Masonic orders in the area that exist today trace this founding to 2320 Front Street. In 1916 the Masonic order built a new meeting place at Harvard and Pine but continued ownership of the original building leasing its upper floors as a warehouse and the lower floor as a tavern as the Alaskan Cove, and then the Cave Tavern until 1945 when Benton Sterling bought the building for \$18,000. The Cave Tavern continued in the first floor until 1956. Mr. Sterling moved his business Washington Quilt/Sterling sleeping bags into the upper floors after a total "renovation" as the building had been condemned due to lack of a back staircase for a fire exit. Mr. Sterling spent over \$100,000 bringing the building up to code for his business, including the installation of a freight elevator to serve the basement and three of the four upper floors, a loading dock, a sprinkler system in the basement, new wiring for all the required sewing machines, etc. The business had minor fires in nylon stored in the basement and freight loading area in the 1950's one of which happened while the sprinklers were being installed but it caused no structural damage. In 1956 Sterling Sleeping Bags expanded into the street level displacing the Cave Tavern. In June, 1973, they purchased a new facility, the old A & T Ski Equipment Company at 1735 Westlake North, and moved in November, 1973.

The building is being renovated now as open plan garden offices on the first and second floor, film studio on the third and architects' offices on the fourth floor. The basement may be used as a warehouse for all the above or a portion may be converted to an underground pub.

Renovation and financing is being handled by the present owner Brooke Barnes, of Robert Nyquist and Associates, the leasing party for Pier 70 and developers of the Old Tacoma City Hall.

The building is best described as one of ordinary masonry in that it has brick walls and wooden floor joints but is unusual in several ways. The basement walls are granite, 4 feet thick. Each floor has steel rods tying the outside faces of the building laterally, so although it was constructed in 1888 the building complies with current earthquake ordinances. The staircase which is entered from the right side of the face becomes an open wall, oak stained, twenty feet square on the upper floors.

The ballroom is coved ceiling plaster on lath of a 6 foot radius around the perimeter and opens onto a kitchen and changing room, the one used for social events, the other ceremonial. Maple flooring was used throughout the building except for the 4th level which is fir. A skylight is above the open wall staircase. Renovation includes exposing the brick on external walls, complete new mechanical and utility systems, and mezzanines on 1st and 2nd floors.