

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. 37/25

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____
<b>Specific dates</b>	1948;1950;1954	<b>Architect/Builder</b> Frank Grad and Sons (shopping center); John J. Zink (theater); Edwin Weihe (Woolworth's)		
<b>Construction dates</b>	1949-50;1954			

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

## SUMMARY

The Flower Theater and Shopping Center (1950; 1954) is significant as a postwar example of a Park and Shop type of shopping center, a type of shopping-parking complex indigenous to the Washington DC area. The shopping center was leased and managed by Shannon & Luchs, who pioneered the Park and Shop concept. Their pioneering business model called for advance leasing, careful selection of chain stores and staple local businesses, strict property management through deed restrictions, integrated parking, and defined parking area to store area ratio. The prototype was the Connecticut Avenue Park and Shop with ell-shaped arrangement of stores built around a parking forecourt. In the immediate postwar years, developers in the metropolitan Washington area began to include supermarkets in shopping centers, and experimented with a variety of layouts that could include off-street parking and street frontage. The Flower Shopping Center includes a parking forecourt that served the Whelan's drugstore, an arcade section of stores, and, after 1954, the Woolworth's store. A large side parking lot accommodated the Giant Food Store and Flower Theater which both faced directly onto the street. Grocery stores were integrated into shopping centers for the first time in the postwar era.

The modernist Flower Shopping Center was designed by Frank Grad and Sons, a Newark NJ firm that established a Washington DC satellite office in the wartime years. It was built in an age when accomplished architects included shopping centers in their portfolio of projects. Specialty architects designed components of the shopping center. John J. Zink, theater architect, designed the Flower Theater in a modern classic style. Commercial architect Edwin Weihe, known for his office buildings, pedestrian arcades, and graduated setbacks, designed the F. W. Woolworth & Co. store. More than a style, modernist design was a program solution intended to be a product of its own times, using industrial forms and materials. Conservative modernism characterized metropolitan Washington architecture in this era. Principles evident in the Flower Shopping Center are the balanced asymmetry of dynamic volumes that pull back from lot lines and above roof lines, as well as the sculpted glazed fronts, flat roofs, and ribbon windows. By the mid-1950s, after the Flower was built, shopping centers changed in architecture and plan. Developers returned to more traditional layouts with parking forecourts, and shopping center design slipped out of consideration as serious architecture.

Fred S. Kogod was the primary developer of the Flower Shopping Center. Retail entrepreneur and leader in the Jewish community, Kogod was a movie theater executive who founded the K-B Entertainment Company, with partner Max Burka. The company became the longest lived chain of family-owned theaters in the metropolitan region. John J. Zink designed all of the K-B theaters built during his lifetime. The Flower Theater is the only extant county example of a K-B theater in the county built during the lifetime of either Kogod or Zink. It also represents the end of the era of the large-screen neighborhood theater, built before regional shopping centers and multiplex theaters gained favor.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 1

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The Flower Shopping Center served an increasingly diverse and booming population of the Long Branch area. Designed in 1948 and opened in 1950, it was a community center providing shopping, entertainment, and parking in a largely residential suburban area. The Flower Shopping Center included advance leasing of a diverse retail blend of established national and local chain stores and staple local businesses. Businesses at the shopping center ranged from grocery, bakery, restaurant, housewares, liquor, hardware and post office to personal services of barber, clothing, and florist. In addition, the Flower Theater offered space to community groups including Community Arts Cooperative and Montgomery County Jewish Community, at a time when few community facilities were available in the Silver Spring area. The shopping center includes the earliest extant county example of a Giant grocery store building, a local chain established in 1938; and a locally rare extant example of a F. W. Woolworth & Co. store, a national chain recognized as a pioneer in the history of chain stores and variety stores.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Flower Theater and Shopping Center lies east of downtown Silver Spring and north of the municipal boundary of Takoma Park. Suburban development in the Silver Spring-Takoma Park area began with commuter rail service on the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad (1873) and continued with streetcar lines in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the post World War I era, the area prospered and development expanded in the 1920s with increased availability of the automobile. While Americans elsewhere struggled during the Depression, the federal workforce grew dramatically under Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal programs. Workers flocked to the Washington, DC area and demand for housing grew accordingly. Large expanses of farmland and estates northeast of the city remained undeveloped into this era. The combination of inexpensive, undeveloped land and greater mobility brought on through higher rates of automobile ownership made the Silver Spring area a prime location for new development.

Large tracts of land in and around Silver Spring were owned by members of the Blair-Lee family. Francis Preston Blair, *Washington Globe* editor, had established his 300-acre "Silver Spring" summer estate in 1842. The community that grew around the estate and nearby train station was named after Blair's estate. In the interwar era, E. Brooke Lee, a World War I hero, real estate magnate, and county political boss, became the single most significant influence on the development of Montgomery County, generally, and Silver Spring, particularly. Lee played a key role in establishing the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (1927). He worked with the State Roads Commission to establish East-West Highway (1934), an early beltway connecting Silver Spring with Chevy Chase and Bethesda. In the Silver Spring area, Lee developed large expanses of land. He also established schools and donated land for parks, including Sligo Creek Park. Lee and his cohorts founded real estate, bank, and construction companies.<sup>1</sup>

Envisioning the Silver Spring area as a bedroom community for federal workers in the post World War I era, Lee founded a development company in 1920 and named it the North Washington Realty Company. In the New Deal era, E. Brooke Lee and his real estate partners contemplated a new vision for the Long Branch area of eastern Silver Spring, with well-designed, affordable houses marketed to middle class families.

The Federal Housing Administration, created in 1934, boosted the residential development of Silver Spring. The FHA encouraged multiple family housing developments by insuring mortgages for garden apartment complexes. The first

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<sup>1</sup>Ray Eldon Hiebert and Richard K. MacMaster, *A Grateful Remembrance* (Rockville: Montgomery County Govt & MCHS, 1976), p264. Clare Lise Kelly, *Places from the Past: The Tradition of Gardez Bien in Montgomery County, Maryland* (Silver Spring: M-NCPPC, 2001), p296. Sam Stavinsky, "Gamble Paying Off in Coin of Big Business," *The Washington Post*, September 5, 1948.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 2

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federally insured garden apartments in Montgomery County were the Falkland Apartments built in 1936 on the newly opened East-West Highway, at 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Others followed, including Piney Branch Apartments (1941) in the Long Branch area.

Retail development closely followed the residential development. A retail component included in the comprehensive plan for Falkland Apartments was unrealized and supplanted by the Silver Spring Shopping Center, which opened in 1938 with stores and a movie theater. Located at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road, this retail and entertainment complex was a regional shopping center that shifted the focus of Silver Spring's commercial district several blocks north of the train station.<sup>2</sup>

It was during the World War II era that the area's population experienced exponential growth. The postwar decades introduced enormous changes to Washington and its suburbs. As the federal bureaucracy expanded, newcomers flocked to the government boomtown. Returning veterans and newly arrived government workers contributed to Washington's transformation from capital city into metropolitan region. Seeking new homes, they joined an exodus from the city to the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Housing developments mushroomed in this era. In the 1940s and 1950s, Washington, DC suburbs were the third-fastest growing area in the country. In 1940, 28,877 people, or approximately one-third of the county's residents, had a Silver Spring address. Between 1940 and 1948, permits were issued in the Silver Spring area for 8,796 single family dwellings and 2,712 apartments, which were as many buildings as had been constructed in the entire county up to 1930. For the first time, Silver Spring was arguably the largest community in the state after Baltimore. By 1956, Silver Spring accounted for half the county population.<sup>3</sup>

### LONG BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

The Long Branch area derives its name from the Long Branch stream, which runs parallel and between Sligo Creek and the Northwest Branch. The area remained largely farmland until the New Deal era. Before 1920, Flower Avenue, originating in Takoma Park, terminated at Piney Branch Road, then known as Blair Road. James H. Cissel acquired a 323-acre tract flanking Sligo Creek and platted a subdivision in 1920 with large, residential lots averaging around five acres.<sup>4</sup> Flower Avenue was later extended north of Piney Branch Road, terminating near the Indian Spring Golf Club, which was established in 1924. The Flower Shopping Center is located on what was Lot 21 of Cissel's subdivision. William Becker bought Lot 21 in 1925 and built a house on a 2.6 acre lot. Next door, Edward and Alma Carey bought Lot 20, immediately north on Flower Avenue, in 1932.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Kelly, *Places from the Past*, 40-41. Ronald L. Andrews, "Silver Theater and Shopping Center," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form M: 36-7-1, Maryland Historical Trust, 1988. Richard Longstreth, "The Mixed Blessings of Success: The Hecht Company and Department Store Branch Development After World War II," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, Vol 6, Shaping Communities, 1997, pp 244-262. E. Brooke Lee built his North Washington Shopping Center (1936) near the old commercial center by the train station, on Georgia Avenue.

<sup>3</sup>Hiebert and MacMaster, pp 265, 329, 315-317, 336. "Washington Md' Towns Described by 'Sun' Writer," *Maryland News*, July 29, 1949. Stavinsky, op cit. *The Washington Post*, Sept 24, 1947 and April 25, 1948.

<sup>4</sup>Deets and Maddox map, 1916. "Plat of James H. Cissel's Addition to Silver Spring, Montgomery County, MD," Montgomery County Circuit Court, Plat 3:209, June 17, 1920.

<sup>5</sup>Deed 372:4 (March 13, 1925). 1931 Klinge Real Estate Atlas shows 'W G Becker' on the parcel with 3 structures. The Carey House remains standing north of the Flower Shopping Center.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 3

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Cissel was a business associate of E. Brooke Lee. A promoter of suburban development, Lee served as Montgomery County's political boss from 1919 to 1946, and was the architect of the county's modern governmental structure. Lee founded his North Washington Realty Company in 1920 and built many Silver Spring subdivisions over the next two decades. Lee and Cissel, along with Frank Hewitt together organized and/or owned a variety of related Silver Spring businesses, including the Silver Spring National Bank (later the Sovran Bank) and the Silver Spring Building and Supply Company. In 1932, the Silver Spring Investment Company, with James H Cissel, President, and E. Brooke Lee, Secretary, initiated the subdivision of several sections of Highland View, located directly north of the Flower Shopping Center. Advertising land for sale here in 1934, Lee promoted its proximity to downtown jobs: "average driving time, 20 minutes" from the White House. In support of his real estate ventures, Lee touted three major planned components in the area: parks, highways, and residential communities. In a North Washington Realty Company promotional brochure of 1933, Flower Avenue stretched from Takoma Park to the Indian Spring Golf Club, while Piney Branch connected University Boulevard, a new State Highway, with Sligo Creek Park and downtown Silver Spring.<sup>6</sup>

Flower Avenue, in the 1930s, was envisioned as a boulevard lined with handsome houses. The deeds drafted at the time included restrictive covenants giving the developers design review for proposed houses. The deed restrictions followed the model set in the 1890s by the Chevy Chase Land Company, with minimum costs established for the construction of houses, with higher costs set for corner lots fronting Flower Avenue. By 1936, Flower Avenue was considered "a fine concrete State Highway" and public utilities were installed.<sup>7</sup> Starting in 1937, Lee offered custom houses for his Forest Hills subdivision, located west of Flower Avenue, along Sligo Park. Lee revised Cissel's 1920 plan for the development, promoting well-designed houses on smaller lots. The following year, Lee began marketing custom houses designed by George DeFranceaux's Permanent Homes Company in Highland View. In its first year, the company designed 90 houses, 75 of which were in Highland View. Permanent Homes featured furnished model homes for prospective buyers, and was approved by the Federal Housing Administration.<sup>8</sup>

A contemporary of Lee was Abraham Kay, who bought the Indian Spring Golf Club in 1939. Kay established the County's first recreation place available to Jews, when he opened club membership to the Jewish community. He proceeded to develop adjoining residential districts, which became one of Silver Spring's first largely Jewish communities, out of which the county's first Jewish organization, Montgomery Lodge of B'nai B'rith, was organized.<sup>9</sup> More on Silver Spring's Jewish community follows in a later section.

Multi-family housing came to the Long Branch area when E. Brooke Lee built his 214-unit Piney Branch Apartments in 1941. The complex, located on Piney Branch Road at Sligo Parkway, was insured by the FHA and valued at \$1,020,000

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<sup>6</sup>Lee was Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates, and later Governor Ritchie's secretary of state. Sources on E. Brooke Lee include Hiebert and MacMaster, *A Grateful Remembrance*; George H. Callcott, *Maryland and America, 1940-1980*; biographical files at MCPL Rockville and MNCPPC Historic Preservation Office. Highland View plats, 1932. North Washington Realty Company brochure, 1933, MCHS.

<sup>7</sup>Highland View Section One, August 1932, Plat 447, Silver Spring Investment Company. The deed restrictions in Deed 542:53, Aug 29, 1932 were time limited to January 1, 1952. "Highland View of Sligo Park Tract Opened," *The Washington Post*, April 19, 1936.

<sup>8</sup>"New Residences Easily Modified to Suit Buyer" (June 13, 1937), "Corporation Sells 90 Homes in First Year" (July 30, 1939) and "Home Sold in Highland View," (November 20, 1938), *The Washington Post*.

<sup>9</sup>Indian Spring Country Club was established by Fayette Thomas "Tom" Moore, owner of a movie theater circuit that included Rialto and Tivoli theaters. Robert Headley, *Motion Picture Exhibition in Washington, DC*, p76; Klinge Real Estate Atlas 1931 William Offutt, "A Short History of County Country Clubs," *Montgomery County Story*, November 2003; Sally Gagné, *North Hills of Sligo Park*, p154; Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, *Jewish Washington: Scrapbook of an American Community*, pp40, 46. The Indian Spring Club relocated to the Layhill area in 1957 when plans were announced for the Capital Beltway.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 4

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at the time of construction. Several other apartment complexes followed in the 1940s and 1950s, built largely with the help of FHA and Veterans benefits.<sup>10</sup>

Recreation facilities and schools were expanded to meet the growing population's needs. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission built the Long Branch Recreation Center in 1950—to be opened to residents in 1951. At the same time the Commission bought a 2½ acre tract to expand the Long Branch Valley Park. In 1947, Kay planned a new clubhouse for the Indian Spring Golf Club, with an estimated cost of \$250,000, but it got caught a backlog of construction projects during the war years. Robert Senseman designed his award-winning Oak View Elementary School, which opened in 1948.<sup>11</sup>

Although Long Branch emerged as a desirable residential neighborhood during this period, retail development did not keep pace. Into the postwar era, Long Branch residents shopped in downtown Silver Spring, Takoma Park, or in the district, because there were few stores available within the neighborhood. An exception was the Zig Zag Shopping Center, established about 1939 at the northwest corner of Piney Branch and Flower Avenue. With the opening of the Flower Shopping Center in 1950, followed by a Donald Johnson-designed shopping center south of Piney Branch Road, the intersection of Piney Branch Road and Flower Avenue evolved into a commercial node by the early 1950s.<sup>12</sup>

### FLOWER SHOPPING CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Isadore Gudelsky, who arrived on the Silver Spring scene about 1930, was remembered as one of the first Jewish businessmen in the area. Gudelsky owned the Contee Sand and Gravel business, in White Oak. In 1945, Gudelsky and associates assembled land where the Flower Shopping Center now sits, acquiring the Becker House parcel (Lot 21) in July, followed by part of the Carey House property (Lot 20) in October. By the time Gudelsky had purchased the Becker property, he had already developed the Montgomery Arms apartments near downtown Silver Spring in 1941. The Gudelsky group later went on to develop other projects including the Wheaton Plaza mall.<sup>13</sup>

Gudelsky's initial plans for the parcel are unknown. By 1945, news was out that plans were afoot for a shopping center. The *Washington Post* theater columnist, Nelson Bell, reported in August 1945 that "Kogod and Burka have [engaged] that able theater specialist John J. Zink" to design a new theater at Piney Branch, and also he reported plans were underway for a shopping center. Fred S. Kogod and Max Burka operated a chain of movie theaters. A

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<sup>10</sup>Hiebert and MacMaster, p328. M-NCPPC GIS database. *The Washington Post*, January 2, 1941; December 17, 1940; May 4, 1941; Nov 3, 1950. In 1948, the FHA announced 2,186 new apartment units in the Washington area. The Long Branch area, near White Oak, included significant amounts of FHA housing, including the Charles A Block Apartments, on Flower Avenue, and the Goodacre Apartments, at Domer and Glenview, featuring 300 apartments in 37 buildings designed by architects Corning and Moore. The Piney Branch Apartments, at Manchester and Piney Branch Roads, appear on the 1941 Klinge Real Estate Atlas.

<sup>11</sup>*The Washington Post*, Conrad P. Harness, "Can't Hurdle High Costs, Restrictions," May 18, 1947; November 3, 1950. Robert Senseman, American Architects Directory, AIA Award 1950.

<sup>12</sup>Klinge Real Estate Atlas, 1941, 1948. *The Washington Post*, March 21, 1948.

<sup>13</sup>Deeds 976:66 and 976:70 (July 1945) and 987:95 (Oct 1945). After William Becker died, in 1943, his widow, Theresa Becker, sold the property to Sadie Milestone in July 1945, who, in the same week, conveyed a portion to the Gudelsky group. The group included Charles and Fannie Scheffres, Isadore and Bertha Gudelsky, Harry and Lea Gudelsky, Homer Gudelsky (unmarried), Ida Gudelsky (widow), and Anna Gudelsky (unmarried). The Gudelskys bought the Carey property in October the same year. Milestone sold an additional portion of land to the Kogod group in 1946. Jack Neumann, Oral history, in "Recollections of Happenings in Montgomery County," Austin L. Carlin et al, Aug 27, 1987. Montgomery County Land Records, Grantor Index, 1942-1952. Montgomery Arms, 36/7-2, MIHP form and Master Plan file, Historic Preservation office, M-NCPPC.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 5

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theater insider, Bell had worked for Harry Crandall, the District's most influential theater builder, and had also worked with local movie theater pioneer Joseph Morgan. The same week, trade publication *Boxoffice* repeated the news. When these reports were made in 1945, the property was still owned by the Gudelsky group. When the much anticipated Flower Theater finally opened in 1950, Richard Coe, Bell's successor, would report that "the Piney Branch property was settled on six years ago, but only last fall was construction started." It was the Gudelsky transaction that had taken place nearly five years earlier.<sup>14</sup>

The Gudelsky group conveyed 2.5 acres in April 1946 to Fred S. Kogod, Harry Burka, and M. David Dubb. Over the next four years, the Kogod partnership assembled several parcels of adjacent land for the Flower Shopping Center. In 1947, they acquired two parcels totaling 4,000 square feet. Another 2,000 square feet was added in 1949. In 1950, more land was added (January 31 and February 13) for additional parking spaces.<sup>15</sup>

At the time the Flower Theater and Shopping Center was planned, Fred S. Kogod and Max Burka were already known for their chain of movie theaters, known popularly as the K-B theater chain, which by this time included four theaters in northwest, northeast, and southeast Washington, DC. Kogod and Burka, who were brothers-in-law, had previously established a business relationship as owners of a string of grocery stores in the District. Kogod was the entrepreneurial force behind the company and development activities. More on Fred S. Kogod follows in a later section.

While Max Burka was a partner with Kogod in the K-B theater chain, it was Max's brother Harry Burka who was a co-owner of the initial land acquisition for the Flower Shopping Center. Harry, who owned and managed apartment buildings including Arlington's Fillmore Garden Apartments, subsequently conveyed his interest in the Flower Avenue property to Herman Eig, in 1949.<sup>16</sup> Eig and M. David Dubb, the other co-owner, were business affiliates of Kogod. Kogod and Dubb owned appliance and store fixture businesses in northwest Washington. Like Kogod, Dubb had a leading role in the national Jewish Welfare Board, and was active in the Woodmont Country Club.<sup>17</sup> Herman Eig was a fellow grocer who in 1944 served as Vice President of United Food Stores, Inc. In this era, United Food Stores was an active grocery cooperative, with 265 members, most of whom were Jewish grocers.<sup>18</sup>

Though plans for the Flower Shopping Center had been in the news in 1945, it would be another five years before the complex opened. One factor that may have contributed to the delay in construction was the wartime economy. In the metropolitan Washington area, as in the rest of the country, construction projects were largely stalled during World War II. In 1941, Kogod, acting as an independent entrepreneur, planned the Senator Theater, a shopping and

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<sup>14</sup>*The Washington Post*, August 20, 1945. *Boxoffice*, Aug 25 & Sept 8, 1945. Headley, pp110-111, 371, on Nelson Bell. Richard L. Coe, "New Movie House Opening," *The Washington Post*, February 12, 1950. Coe's statement is echoed in Headley's, *Motion Picture Exhibition in Washington, D.C.*

<sup>15</sup>Deeds 1012:157 (May 6, 1946); 1097:111 (August 25, 1947); 1099:474 (September 18, 1947); 1246:105(April 20, 1949); 1350:197 (January 31, 1950); 1350:199 (February 15, 1950). The name Flower Shopping Center appears, for example, in the 1955 lease for the Flower Theater. Liber 2049, Folio 131.

<sup>16</sup>*The Washington Post*, Jan 29, 1966 (Max Burka obituary); Aug 10, 1974 (Harry Burka obituary).

<sup>17</sup> *The Washington Post*, July 18, 1940; December 2, 1949; and October 26, 1953. Dubb resided at 3425 Garrison St, near Friendship Heights.

<sup>18</sup> Eig was vocal in addressing the plight of grocers and butchers in the war economy. *The Washington Post*, March 5, 1939; January 4, 1944, July 1, 1945, October 24, 1946. "Half a Day on Sunday," Exhibit by Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington. No established familial connection has been made between Herman Eig and real estate developer Sam Eig who donated land for the MCJC synagogue on East-West Highway.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 6

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entertainment complex on Minnesota Avenue NE. Contemporary press accounts described it as likely the last significant, private-sector project to be built in Washington during the war. Though the Senator Theater did open in 1942, the shopping center was only partially realized.<sup>19</sup>

Another potential factor relating to the delay in constructing the Flower Theater and Shopping Center was ongoing litigation involving national theater chains. The practice of Hollywood movie production houses owning the majority of movie theaters across the country to control distribution was being challenged. The K-B theater chain clashed with the Warner Brothers' Company over the construction of MacArthur Theater. In 1945, both Kogod-Burka and Warner Brothers planned theaters on MacArthur Boulevard. Ultimately, the MacArthur Theater opened in 1946 as a joint venture between the two companies. In 1948, a Supreme Court ruling prohibited movie production companies from owning theaters. According to one source, plans for actually starting construction of the Flower Shopping Center were announced two weeks after the ruling.<sup>20</sup>

In June 1948, Blair Lee revealed the design for the Flower Shopping Center by Frank Grad and Sons, in his "Business Briefs" column in the *Maryland News*.<sup>21</sup> Frank Grad & Sons was an architectural firm based in Newark, NJ, that opened a Washington, DC office in 1944. Kogod had an established a relationship with Frank Grad though his role as building campaign manager for the new Adas Israel synagogue, which Frank Grad and Sons designed in 1947 for a new site in Northwest. The same year, Grad designed a commercial building for Kogod on H Street Northeast.

The design date of 1948 for the shopping center is further established by leases signed by tenants late that year that reference "a blueprint prepared by Frank Grad & Sons, Architects."<sup>22</sup> Lee eagerly anticipated the start of construction of the Flower Shopping Center, affirming that "the long awaited shopping center is actually on its way" and the lot was being prepared for construction. Plans called for the project to start that summer, and to be finished early in 1949. It would be another year before construction actually got underway. An advertisement for the planned Flower Shopping Center appeared in a June 1948 edition of the Evening Star:

TAKOMA PARK, MD: corner Piney Br Rd & Flower Ave. New large park and shop development to be started soon, with modern 1,000 seat theater. Giant super market and large chain drug store are leased and several

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<sup>19</sup>DC Building Permits. *The Washington Post*, February 22, 1942; Jun 29, 1945; May 4 & Sept 7, 1947; Hans Wirz and Richard Striner, *Washington Deco: Art Deco Design in the Nation's Capital* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984). Douglas Gomery, "A Movie-Going Capital: Washington, D.C. in the History of Movie Presentation," (*Washington History*, Spr/Summer 1997), p17. During World War II, developers and builders in the Washington DC area suffered high construction costs, shortage of material, and government restrictions on new construction. Even though the war ended in 1945, the construction industry was stymied for years by a backlog of projects. The majority of planned projects from 1942 to 1948 were not built. *The Washington Post* reported, "For every home, apartment of commercial structure under construction here, two more have been postponed." *Architectural Record's* "Washington" column provided regular reports on war-related restrictions continued to affect the industry (for example Vols 86-87, 1947-1948). Robert Friedel, "Scarcity and Promise: Materials and American Domestic Culture during World War II," *World War II and the American Dream* (Donald Albercht (Ed), National Building Museum and MIT Press, 1995), pp42-89. Harness, op cit. Fred S. Kogod, with Burka, did manage to obtain building permits for other projects throughout the war, including the Naylor Theater (1944). Kogod announced plans in 1945 for his million dollar shopping-entertainment-parking complex on South Capitol Street. By 1947, a scaled back eight-store complex was built. In 1947, Kogod and Burka also built a Frank Grad-designed commercial building on H Street NE.

<sup>20</sup>Rotenstein suggests this factor in his report, p6. Gomery, pp4-23. Kenneth Turan, "The Washington Movie Kings," *The Washington Post*, Feb 24, 1974. EHT Traceries, MacArthur Theater, DC Landmark Nomination, 1997.

<sup>21</sup>Blair Lee, "Business Briefs," *Maryland News*, June 4, 1948 and July 29, 1948.

<sup>22</sup>See, for example, the lease for 8707 Flower Avenue, the Flower Deli, made November 23, 1948, in Land Records 1426:386.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 7

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others. Openings for beauty shop, florist, bakery, children's wear, delicatessen, hardware and variety stores. Consult Mr. Taylor, Shannon & Luchs Co Realtors<sup>23</sup>

Shannon and Luchs pioneered the Park and Shop type of shopping center, an automobile-oriented commercial center that followed a business model calling for advance leasing and strict property management (see following section). By getting commitments in advance of construction, the owners were able to ensure both well established businesses and a diversity of stores. Leases for the Flower Shopping Center included covenants to control the exterior appearance of the shopping center, including signs, awnings, and reserved parking areas for customer use. More information on Flower businesses follows in a subsequent section.<sup>24</sup>

In July 1949, a construction contract was finally awarded for the Flower Shopping Center, going to the Roscoe Engineering Company for \$450,000. The same year, Harry Burka conveyed his interest to Herman Eig, and the partnership also acquired additional acreage.<sup>25</sup>

The site of the Flower Shopping Center had been selected to fill a commercial business void. The primary commerce in the area had been the ten-year old Zig Zag Shopping Center (c1939) on the northwest corner of Flower and Piney Branch. Frank J. Luchs appraised the proposed Flower Shopping Center in February 1949, finding that it would be the highest and best use of the property. Luchs description stated that "the property is bounded on two sides by heavily traveled highways, namely Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road", was located "in the heart of a well established growing section of Montgomery County, Maryland", and "within one mile of the homes of approximately 26,000 people, living in over 4,000 single family homes, and nearly 3000 apartment units."<sup>26</sup>

Stores were doing a booming business by January 1950 when the Giant grocery store opened. According to the company account, the opening met an enthusiastic welcome from the community. The corner of Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road was a commercial hub by the early 1950s, with shopping centers on three corners. The accelerated postwar development in the Flower Avenue area had led to the need for increased local commerce. In April 1950, I. G. McNayr, County Manager, assured Long Branch residents that Wayne Avenue would be extended to "the populous and growing Flower Avenue" area. In addition, a new Flower Avenue bus route was planned.<sup>27</sup>

The Flower Shopping Center was built in two stages. The first phase, being the majority of the shopping center, was built in 1949 and opened early in 1950. The second phase, built in 1954, was the Woolworth's store, to the right (south) of the theater section. It was not uncommon for commercial projects to be built in phases, just as it is not an unusual practice today. The Connecticut Avenue Park and Shop was built in phases, with the automobile service facility constructed in 1932, two years after the shopping center opened. The F. W. Woolworth & Co. store in

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<sup>23</sup>*Sunday Star*, Jun 13, 1948.

<sup>24</sup>Land Records 1426:386. F. Wallace Stoeber, "Park and Shop Developments, Washington D.C.," *National Real Estate Journal*, December 1938, p32. For Shannon and Luchs Park and Shop principles, see discussion below. According to Rotenstein, Whelan Stores Corp signed a lease in August 1946 (undocumented lease cited, p7).

<sup>25</sup>*The Washington Post*, July 17 & 24, 1949. On July 24, *The Washington Post* credited the entire complex to John J. Zink, though he only designed the theater. The design that the Post published in that issue is the same that the *Maryland News* had published a year earlier, which bears the signature block of Frank Grad & Sons.

<sup>26</sup>Shannon and Luchs Archives, Box 5, American University.

<sup>27</sup>"Neighboring shopping centers", *The Washington Post*, January 15, 1950. *Maryland News*, April 17, 1950.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 8

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Wilmington Delaware was initially built in 1940 and expanded in 1959 with an upper story that was part of the original design. The construction of a project in stages does not affect its architectural significance--both the Connecticut Avenue Park and Shop and the Wilmington Woolworth's are listed on the National Register.<sup>28</sup>

The shopping center was designed by Frank Grad and Sons. Specialty architects worked on the project as well. Frank Grad's design for the entire complex was published in the *Maryland News* in June 1948. Leases for stores that were executed through October 1948 bear reference to a blueprint executed by Grad. The Flower Theater was designed by John J. Zink, theater architect for all theaters built by the K-B chain during his lifetime. In 1954, commercial architect Edwin Weihe designed the F. W. Woolworth & Co. store which was built in 1954. His plot plan of that date shows the Woolworth's building outline and a new parking scheme for the north lot. More information on the shopping center architects follows below.<sup>29</sup> Additional information on the architects follows in a subsequent section.

The Flower Theater and Shopping Center was a community center for residents in the Long Branch area. Among its offerings were entertainment, restaurant dining, take-out food, groceries, housewares, hardware, postal services and personal services. The neighborhoods of adjacent Highland Park and Sligo Creek were home to young families whose members could easily walk to the shopping center. Ample parking was available in front and behind the center for those who drove. Children attending the nearby Oak View Elementary School, built in 1948 at E Wayne and Walden Road, could walk to the center on their way between home and school, and the soda fountain was a popular hangout for local youth.<sup>30</sup>

The Flower Theater was used by local groups in an era when community facilities were limited. The opening of the Flower Theater was celebrated with a concert by the Takoma Park High School Band, broadcast on radio station WGAY. The theater included a party room known as the Maryland Room. Available by reservation, the room could accommodate a buffet table and had seating for a party of 21.<sup>31</sup> The Community Arts Cooperative held creative drama classes at the Flower Theater. In addition, the theater was an interim facility for the nascent Jewish community at a time when no permanent facility was available in the community. In the early 1950s, Montgomery County Jewish Community used the Flower Theater for fundraising and religious services.<sup>32</sup> See section below for more on the relationship of Flower Theater and Shopping Center and the Jewish community.

### SHOPPING CENTERS AND SHANNON AND LUCHS

The Flower Shopping Center was built as a community Park and Shop — a shopping, entertainment, and parking center that served the local community. The shopping center followed accepted real estate practices according to site

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<sup>28</sup>Richard Longstreth, "The Neighborhood Shopping Center in Washington, D.C., 1930-1941," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (March 1992): p14. Cynthia Johnson, "F.W. Woolworth Building" Lexington, KY, National Register of Historic Places form, 2008. "Cleveland Park Historic District", National Register of Historic Places form, 1987.

<sup>29</sup>*The Maryland News*, June 4, 1948. *The Washington Post*, July 7, 1949. Land records 1426: 308 (Oct 7, 1948); 1426:337 (Dec 22, 1948). In November 1948, John J. Zink prepared a blueprint for the shopping center. The Washington Post published Zink's design in July 1949. It bears no visible difference from Grad's design. Plot plan provided in Rotenstein report.

<sup>30</sup>Klinge, Atlas, 1948. *The Washington Post*, March 17 & July 24, 1949. Tanya Schmieler and Eileen McGuckian interviews, Marcie Stickle correspondence.

<sup>31</sup>Richard Coe, *The Washington Post*, February 12, 1950. Opening day brochure, February 1950.

<sup>32</sup>*The Washington Post*, September 15 & 30, 1951; September 6, 1950 "Children's Theater Party to Be Benefit"; September 2, 1952 "Jewish Center Sets Services".

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 9

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selection and layout, advanced leasing of tenants, parking to retail square footage ratio, and property management. Furthermore, the Flower Shopping Center was planned and managed with the services of Shannon and Luchs, who pioneered the particular Washington, DC form of drive-in shopping center with parking forecourt, known as the Park and Shop.<sup>33</sup>

In 1930, Shannon and Luchs developed the Connecticut Avenue Park and Shop (1930), now a recognized paradigm for the automobile oriented retail center. Designed by architect Arthur Heaton, the Connecticut Avenue Park and Shop incorporated an L-shaped arrangement of stores with an anchor grocery store, aligned around an integrated parking forecourt. Unlike earlier shopping centers, the Park and Shop was not built as part of a residential development.<sup>34</sup> Shannon and Luchs formed a corporation called "Park and Shop, Inc.," and copyrighted the name. By 1938, the company had seven Park and Shops completed or underway.

Herbert Shannon and Morton Luchs founded the Shannon and Luchs Company in 1906. By the 1920s, the firm had established a reputation for expert leasing and sales, especially with chain store companies. Before launching into the development of shopping centers in the 1930s, Shannon and Luchs' innovations included the use of the cul-de-sac and parking garage. To realize their model for developments catering to automobile-driving customers, the firm employed architect Arthur Heaton, who was known for advancing automobile oriented architectural design.<sup>35</sup>

By the World War II era, shopping center design had been methodically analyzed. The Urban Land Institute published guidelines for the number and composition of stores and services, site plans, and parking ratio. Architects Geoffrey Baker and Bruno Funaro were shopping center specialists who published a shopping center building type study in 1949, published in 1951 as *Shopping Centers: Design and Operation*.<sup>36</sup>

Baker and Funaro identified three types of shopping centers: neighborhood, community, and regional centers. According to Baker and Funaro's definitions, the Flower Shopping Center is a community center, in terms of its size and variety of services. The smaller neighborhood center, which served a minimum of 750 families, contained anchor stores of supermarket, drug store, and possibly a variety store, as well as several basic service stores such as shoe repair, barber/beauty shop, and dry cleaner/laundry. A community center served a larger area, contained more stores, and included more public services than a neighborhood center, yet less than the regional shopping center

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<sup>33</sup>Richard Longstreth has identified Washington DC as a proving ground for the drive-in neighborhood shopping center and established the significant role of the Washington DC Park and Shop as a particular building type. "The Neighborhood Shopping Center in Washington, D.C., 1930-1941," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (March 1992): 5-34; and *The Drive-In, The Supermarket, and the Transformation of Commercial Space in Los Angeles, 1914-1941*. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), pp158-9. Longstreth defines a true shopping center as one with central management and control over tenancy and physical appearance. *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950*. (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 1997), p196.

<sup>34</sup>In Montgomery County, the first planned shopping centers were built starting in the late 1920s. Early examples were built in Tudor Revival styles including the Leland Shopping Center, on Wisconsin Avenue, built as part of the Leland development (1926) and the Montgomery Hills Shopping Center (1930), at Georgia Avenue and Seminary Road, Silver Spring. Built by a single developer, these complexes were small, with less than 10 stores. Andrea Rebeck, "Twentieth Century Commercial Resources in Montgomery County," 1987.

<sup>35</sup>Richard Longstreth, "Neighborhood Shopping Center", pp12-14. A local example of collaboration between Heaton and Shannon & Luchs is Chevy Chase Park, in the Town of Chevy Chase, 1929-30. Kelly, *Places from the Past*, pp327,332.

<sup>36</sup>Geoffrey Baker and Bruno Funaro, *Shopping Centers: Design and Operation*, Progressive Architecture Library, Reinhold Publishing Co, 1951. "Shopping Centers: A Neighborhood Necessity" *Urban Land*, Oct/Nov 1944. Stoeber, p22. John E. Mertes, "The Shopping Center—A New Trend in Retailing," *The Journal of Marketing*, 13:3 (Jan 1949) 374-379.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 10

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which served many thousand families within a half-hour's drive, included a department store, and covered 20-50 acres. The Flower Shopping Center served several thousand families and provided diverse, community oriented amenities including the theater, with movie entertainment, as well as community space for parties, drama classes and religious services; a post office, located in the hardware store; and other additional diverse services including restaurant, gifts, clothing, toys, sporting goods, and hardware store.<sup>37</sup>

Before World War II, supermarkets were rarely integrated in shopping centers. By the 1950s, the supermarkets proliferated and were incorporated into shopping centers. By 1950, the Giant Food Store Company had 20 stores in the metropolitan area. Appraiser Frank Luchs, of Shannon and Luchs, found the company, in 1949, to be "a very successful local super-market chain, gearing each store to a minimum of \$1,000,000 volume and being quite successful in attaining this goal." A popular arrangement for the community shopping center in the immediate post war era had the supermarket and drug store on opposing ends and variety stores in the middle. For centers providing more than just the basics, stores were grouped according to type of merchandise. At the Flower Shopping Center, the children's toys and women's clothing stores were placed together, while gifts and candy were grouped with the theater.<sup>38</sup>

Chain stores were standard components of suburban shopping centers by this time. True chain stores have been defined as those with centralized management, standard operational components, and multiple outlets rather than one main facility.<sup>39</sup> In addition to the local Giant Food Store, anchor units at the Flower Shopping Center represented national chains of F. W. Woolworth & Co, Whelan Drug Stores Inc., and the local K-B Entertainment Company theater. Of all chain stores, the variety store was especially important to the success of shopping centers nationwide. F.W. Woolworth & Company, established in 1879, became one of the first chain store businesses in the nation. The success of Woolworth's, according to historian Cynthia Johnson, was based on the company's "ability to buy goods from manufacturers at bulk prices which enabled the chain store to sell items at lower prices than the local merchants."<sup>40</sup> The Whelan Drug Stores company, which originated in New York City, had about 1,000 stores coast to coast when the Flower Avenue store opened. In the 1940s and 1950s, Whelan Drug Stores, Inc. was a progressive company, among the first to sell records, to experiment with piped-in music for shoppers, and to sell inexpensive remainder books.<sup>41</sup> The K-B theater chain was the longest lived family owned theater chain in the region, which operated from 1924 until 1992. The Flower Theater was the seventh theater built by Kogod and Burka and the first in the Kogod-Burka chain built outside of Washington, DC.<sup>42</sup>

Washington DC area shopping centers in the immediate postwar era were varied in their configuration of stores and parking areas. Like Frank Grad and Sons, other area architects were designing shopping centers that deviated from

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<sup>37</sup>Baker and Funaro, p10. Filling stations were considered by some to be standard for a neighborhood center, but in the Washington DC area this feature was often omitted. Longstreth, "Neighborhood Shopping Center", p21.

<sup>38</sup>Longstreth, *The Drive-In*, p162. Baker and Funaro, p11. Giant Food Stores, corporate history, [www.giantfood.com](http://www.giantfood.com). Washington Post display advertisements. Shannon and Luchs Archives, American University.

<sup>39</sup>Longstreth, *City Center*, pp71-74.

<sup>40</sup>Johnson, "F. W. Woolworth Building", Lexington, KY, National Register form, 2002. This Kentucky example, listed on the National Register under Criterion A, was found to be locally significant in the area of commerce within the historic context, "The Rise of Woolworth's Five and Dime as a National Retail Chain Store, 1879-1997".

<sup>41</sup>*Billboard*, Oct 25, 1947; Mar 6, 1948. *The New York Times*, Jun 18, 1950; Aug 15, 1951.

<sup>42</sup>*The Washington Post*, advertisements 1942-1953. Celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Giant Food Store Company created in-store history displays. A newspaper advertisement illustrates one panel, with the caption: "Between 1950 & 1952, Giant opens five new stores, growing to 21 locations. The Washington newspapers chronicle every new addition."

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 11

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the traditional Park and Shop model which had an L-shaped configuration of stores with parking forecourt. Leon Chatelain, Jr. oriented his Michigan Avenue Shopping Center (1947) at right angles to an intersection of two busy streets on a triangular lot. Corning and Moore faced the storefronts of Washington and Lee Shopping Center (1945), in Arlington, directly on a side street, serviced by two parking areas—one next to the supermarket and the other across the road. By the late 1950s, the more standard forecourt configuration was revived, along with an increase in the proportion of parking spaces.<sup>43</sup>

The Flower Shopping Center had a split parking arrangement to serve short and long term customers. The facility had a complex form, with one end defined by a U-shaped plan with shallow parking forecourt, and the other a rectangular plan with angled parking spaces on the street and parking lots. The split parking arrangement provided short-term parking for quick shopping at service stores, and bigger lots for longer trips as to the supermarket and theater. Division between pedestrians and drivers was also an important consideration. The sidewalk in front of the theater and related stores brought pedestrians off the street. A rear alley accommodated delivery trucks.<sup>44</sup>

Adequate parking was a key issue for shopping center customers. In the post war era, the prevailing wisdom for the ideal parking to store square footage ratio was 2:1. This was promoted by ULI and by Washington, DC, shopping center expert Waverly Taylor. Baker and Funaro advised a ratio of 3:1, particularly for centers exclusively dependent on customers arriving by car. The Flower Shopping Center had a ratio of 3:1 even though it was pedestrian accessible to the Long Branch community. Earlier Park and Shops had a parking to store area ratio of 1:1. By the mid-1950s, developers were providing three times the amount of parking compared to the postwar years.<sup>45</sup>

Shopping center guidelines highlighted amenities for customer convenience and aesthetics. These included overhangs to protect shoppers from weather and encourage window shopping, and uniform signage with restrained lettering. Guidelines recommended that the site be located at the intersection of two well-traveled roads, adjacent to dense residential development. At the Flower Shopping Center, the grocery store was placed at the front of the lot and an alley located to the rear for truck loading and trash removal. A group of stores was set back to accommodate automobile parking in front, easily accessible from the street.

Fred S. Kogod engaged Shannon and Luchs to lease and manage the Flower Shopping Center. Shannon and Luchs secured lease commitments from tenants in advance of construction. Leases for the Flower Shopping Center used the term "Park and Shop store development".<sup>46</sup> In his article on Park and Shop retail centers in *National Real Estate Journal*, F. Wallace Stoeber of Shannon & Luch outlined his company's design and business model for these neighborhood shopping centers. A key component of Shannon and Luchs plan was the careful selection of tenants. As

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<sup>43</sup>Longstreth, "Building for Business: Commercial Architecture in Metropolitan Washington," in C. Ford Peatross, *Capital Drawings*, 2005. Baker and Funaro, pp 110-111. *The Washington Post*, November 30, 1947.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid, pp37-39, 87.

<sup>45</sup>Baker and Funaro, pp 36-37. Longstreth, "Building for Business," p142. In later years, the angled on-street parking spaces at the Flower Shopping Center were removed, creating a shortage of spaces for customers of the arcade shops along the forecourt.

<sup>46</sup>Another consideration stated by Shannon and Luchs was a location on the homebound side of the road. The Park and Shops on Connecticut Ave, Massachusetts Avenue, Wisconsin and Georgia are all located on the homebound (east) side of these major arterials leading out of Washington DC. The Flower Shopping Center too is located on the east side of Flower Avenue. Liber 1426, Folio 391.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 12

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Stoever stated, "We decided that we wanted only those tenants whose reputations as progressive merchants would draw customers of the development, and that we must have diversity of businesses."<sup>47</sup>

Raymond M. Taylor was the Shannon and Luchs rental agent responsible for the Flower Shopping Center. According to company records, Taylor promoted and leased more shopping centers from 1931 to 1956 than any other person in the metropolitan area. A native of Washington DC, Taylor started working for Shannon and Luchs in 1926 and eventually served as the company's Vice President. Taylor was President of the Washington Real Estate Board, and member of the Washington Board of Trade. By June 1948, Taylor had secured the Giant Food Store for an anchor store in the Flower Shopping Center.<sup>48</sup>

Another important factor was property management. According to Stoever, Shannon and Luchs found: "It was necessary to prohibit the display and sale of merchandise on the sidewalk and in the parking area. Exterior signs of tenants must be limited to approved size and design. To maintain prestige and a high standard of tenants, the exterior of the building and all paving must be kept in first class condition." In addition, it was imperative that "the parking space is used only by customers while making purchases in the stores, and require delivery trucks to load and unload in the rear alley." Use of a property superintendant and parking attendant were encouraged to ensure these rules were followed.<sup>49</sup>

Shannon and Luchs was involved with at least two earlier shopping centers in Montgomery County. In the New Deal era, Shannon and Luchs worked with E. Brooke Lee on his 1936 North Washington Shopping Center, 7709-7723 Georgia Avenue. The other was Porter and Lockie's Bethesda-Chevy Chase Shopping Center (1936-7, partially demolished), 7101-7139 Wisconsin Avenue, in Bethesda.<sup>50</sup>

Frank J. Luchs, son of founder Morton Luchs, worked with Fred S. Kogod in initial and subsequent appraisals of the Flower Shopping Center. In February 1949, Luchs described the property:

The subject property is located in the heart of a well established and growing section of Montgomery County, Maryland, which is bounded on the south by Takoma Park and which lies approximately two miles east of Silver Spring. This property is bounded on two sides by heavily traveled highways, namely Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road, which bear a great portion of the flow of traffic to and from Washington.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Stoever, pp32-33.

<sup>48</sup>Shannon and Luchs Archives, American University, Box 11, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Scrapbook. Stoever, 32-33. Blair Lee, June 4, 1948. Fred S. Kogod may well have worked with Shannon and Luchs on earlier projects. Shannon and Luchs are credited a shopping center at Minnesota Ave and Benning Rd, SE with John J Zink architect (Longstreth "Neighborhood Shopping Center", 34). Kogod obtained building permits for a theater and in Southeast Washington in 1941 and 1947. Kogod secured building permits for the John J Zink-designed Senator Theater and stores at 3946-3954 Minnesota Avenue, and, in 1947, for a Woolworth store at 3932 Minnesota Avenue SE, Frank Beatty, architect. Kogod obtained a building permit for the Naylor Theater in 1944. DC Building Permits.

<sup>49</sup>*National Real Estate Journal*, December 1938, pp32-33.

<sup>50</sup>"Park and Shop", *American City*, October 1937, 71-2. "Richard Longstreth, "The Neighborhood Shopping Center in Washington, DC, 1930-41," *JSAH* 1992, pp 12-14 ,17, 33-34. Lizabeth Cohen, "From Town Center to Shopping Center," 1996. NREJ, op cit. Bethesda-Chevy Chase (Lakeview) Shopping Center, 1948 photograph, M-NCPPC Archives. Anne Cissel, "Congressional Shopping Center", MIHP Form 26/21-6, October 1986.

<sup>51</sup>Frank J. Luchs Appraisal Report, Flower Avenue Theater and Shopping Center, Feb 25, 1949, Shannon and Luchs Archives, American University, Box 5.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 13

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Luchs studied the development of the Long Branch area and found that the Flower Shopping Center was “located within one mile of the homes of approximately 26,000 people, occupying over 4,000 individual homes and nearly 3,000 apartment units.” Luchs found the construction of the Flower Shopping Center to be “better than that usually found in neighborhood shopping centers.” In addition, he wrote, “It is the opinion of this appraiser that the rentals of this shopping center are in line with comparable shopping centers containing similar high class tenancies” in the metropolitan area. Luchs found that “shopping centers of this type with several good tenants of the chain type and with some independents have been selling for eleven times their annual income.” Just as the first wave of automobile oriented shopping centers were built to serve New Deal residents and garden apartment dwellers, the Flower Shopping Center served the postwar communities in the Long Branch area.

### K-B THEATERS AND THE WASHINGTON AREA MOVIE INDUSTRY

The Flower Theater was the first K-B Theater built outside of Washington, DC. The earliest movie theaters were the so-called picture palaces, grand architectural jewels built in city centers in the 1910s and 1920s. Local examples included the Tivoli (Thomas Lamb, architect, 1924), built by Harry M. Crandall, and the Earle [Warner] Theater (C Howard Crane, architect, 1924), built by the Stanley Company of Philadelphia. Starting in 1928, the Warner movie studio began buying theaters in Washington. This was part of a national trend in which the top five major Hollywood studios, by the late 1920s, acquired all the major movie theaters across the country. Washington’s theaters were largely owned by Hollywood studio companies Warners and, to a lesser extent, Loews (owners of MGM).<sup>52</sup>

Emerging from the Depression, the Warner studio made clear that suburban neighborhoods were the wave of the future for theater development and parking was a key factor to success. The Uptown Theater (Zink, 1936), was built near the ample parking lot of the Cleveland Park’s 1930 Park and Shop. The next two Warner theaters were integrated into park and shop complexes, first with the Sheridan Theater (Eberson, 1937), in Brightwood, and then the Silver Theater (Eberson, 1938), Silver Spring.

During this era, entrepreneurs brought competition to the national theater chains. Sidney Lust, a former Warner employee, built the Milo [Villa] Theater in Rockville (Zink, 1935) and the Boro Theater (Eberson, 1938) in Bethesda. The Boro Theater, later known as the Bethesda, was originally designed as part of a larger shopping complex and while ultimately constructed with only single flanking stores, retained a large 500 space parking lot.<sup>53</sup>

It was Kogod and Burka, however, who created the biggest threat to the Warner chain. The pair started a partnership with John J. Zink with the Atlas Theater and Stores (1938), the first theater they built. Located near the Princess Theater, which they had acquired in 1924, the project was a test that proved a success. The next K-B Theater was the Apex Theater and stores (Zink, 1938), which, following the model of the Uptown, was located adjacent to the Park and Shop on Massachusetts Avenue in Spring Valley. Kogod next worked with Shannon and Luchs to plan a shopping center that would incorporate a theater in Southeast. Though the project was not fully realized, the Senator Theater with adjacent stores opened to the public in 1941.

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<sup>52</sup>Headley; Douglas Gomery, “A Movie-Going Capital: Washington DC in the History of Movie Presentation,” *Washington History*, 9:1 (Spr/Sum 1997).

<sup>53</sup>Kelly, 283, 305.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 14

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During World War II, movie theaters had a new role in the community as newsreels provided information about the war and promoted patriotism. In this era, theaters became the “absolute center of American cultural life.” In the postwar era, shopping center specialists were beginning to advise against neighborhood theaters, in favor of theaters in larger regional shopping centers. Yet developers in the Washington area continued to include theaters in neighborhood shopping centers and the venues continued to be a place to escape, socialize and be entertained. Starting in the mid-1950s, neighborhood theaters began to fall out of favor and theaters were more commonly built in regional shopping centers.<sup>54</sup>

Commercial developers, alert to an emerging market, sought locations for theaters near postwar housing complexes and residential communities in rapidly expanding neighborhoods. Kogod and Burka built the Naylor Theater (1944), located in southeast Washington near the newly opened Naylor Gardens, a garden apartment complex built in 1943 by the Defense Homes Corporation. Likewise, Kogod sited the Flower Theater and Shopping Center near Piney Branch Apartments and other housing that developed in this era. Skidmore Owings & Merrill designed the Aero Theater and Shopping Center (1942), in conjunction with Aero Acres residential development to serve the workers of the Glenn L. Martin Aircraft Company, near Baltimore.<sup>55</sup>

Developers identified movie theaters as an ingredient in the model for successful post-war neighborhood shopping center development. Shopping center historian Richard Longstreth explains that “a theater as part of a shopping center could significantly enhance patronage. Motion picture exhibitors likewise saw the benefits of cooperation, for the shopping center fit well into their new program of building moderate-sized, neighborhood-oriented facilities where attendance would seem like a routine pastime more than a special occasion.” In addition to the Flower, local examples of shopping center complexes that included a theater in this era include Kaywood Theater, in Mt. Rainier (1945); Viers Mill Theater, Viers Mill Road, Rockville (1950); Allen Theater, New Hampshire Ave, Takoma Park (1951); and Langley Theater, New Hampshire Avenue, Langley Park (1952).<sup>56</sup>

Studio-owned theater chains disbanded after a 1948 Supreme Court case prohibited movie companies from owning theaters. From the 1950s into the 1980s, theaters in the metropolitan region were largely locally owned. While there was a surge in theater building locally in the immediate postwar years, the increasing number of household televisions eventually began to affect movie theater attendance. This issue is reflected in theater critic Harry MacArthur’s February 1951 editorial in the *Washington Star* entitled “Is the Neighborhood Movie Washed Up?”<sup>57</sup> Multi-screen movie theaters, starting in 1965, often located in suburban shopping malls, helped boost the movie business.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Maggie Valentine, *The Show Starts on the Sidewalk: An Architectural History of the Movie Theater*, Starring Charles S. Lee (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994): 6 and Kevin J. Corbett, “The Big Picture: Theatrical Moviegoing, Digital Television, and Beyond the Substitution Effect,” *Cinema Journal* 40, No. 2 (Winter 2001): 23. Baker and Funaro. In Montgomery County, the first theater built after the war was not in the Washington suburbs but far north, in Damascus. The Druid Theater, constructed in 1945-1947, was said to be based on John J. Zink’s design for the Apex Theater. It has one story commercial wings on both sides and was acclaimed for its air conditioning. M-NCPPC files, Resource 11/6-2.

<sup>55</sup> Holly Chamberlain, “Permanence in Time of War: Three Defense Home Corporation Projects in the Washington Metropolitan Area,” in *Housing Washington*, Richard Longstreth (Ed), Center for American Places, 2010, p181-201.

<sup>56</sup> Longstreth, “Neighborhood Shopping Centers,” p21. Baker and Funaro, p128.

<sup>57</sup> Headley, pp176-177.

<sup>58</sup> Valentine, 6-7 and Corbett, pp23-24.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 15

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Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, three independent theater businesses dominated the metropolitan theater market: Paul Roth's Roth Theater Circuit, Circle Theaters owned by brothers Jim and Ted Pedas, and Marvin and Ron Goldman's K-B Theaters. For a decade ending in 1978, K-B Cinemas was owned by Max Burka's son Fred and grandson David, and Fred S. Kogod's son-in-law Marvin Goldman and grandson Ronald. The Burkas left the business in 1978, leaving the Goldmans as sole proprietors of K-B Theaters. In 1980, K-B Theaters operated 24 screens, Paul Roth operated 28, and Circle Theater operated 36. In an era when there were over 200 screens operating, these three companies were dubbed Washington's "first families of film". The theater scene began to change in the late 1980s with the return of national chains. By 1987, AMC, General Cinema and United Artists were buying or building theaters in the area. The same year, Toronto's Cineplex Odeon bought the Circle Theaters owned by the Pedas brothers. Ron Goldman sold the K-B Theater Company in 1992, though he retained five of the theaters, called Apex Cinemas, a name recalling the theater built by his grandfather, Fred S. Kogod, 52 years earlier.<sup>59</sup>

### MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE

"Modern design -- design of our time -- is not a style. It is a solution to modern problems in modern terms."  
*Progressive Architecture*, 1948<sup>60</sup>

The concept of modern architecture was to express the spirit of an age and not the traditional values of preceding generations. In the conservative Washington, DC area, this spirit was slow to take hold. The earliest manifestation of modern architecture was in the New Deal era with Art Deco and Art Moderne projects, built to serve new federal agencies and the influx of government workers. Such buildings were modern mainly in surface decoration.<sup>61</sup>

In the postwar era, modern architecture took deeper root, celebrating industrial forms and materials and promoting a new Machine for Living philosophy. The basic principles were a balanced asymmetry of dynamic volumes, rejection of applied ornament, use of flat roofs and ribbon windows, and employment of new technology and materials.<sup>62</sup>

More than just as a feature of suburbanization, the shopping center was a testing ground for modernist architecture, from the interwar to the immediate postwar years. The term pedestrian modern has been used to describe the manner in which ordinary retail brought modernist design into everyday life. In an era when industrial designers entered the realm of architects, shopping center design was accepted as respectable work for the profession. Shopping centers were among the portfolio of projects of such well known architects as Holabird and Root, Eero Saarinen, Pietro Belluschi and Walter Gropius. Their work was featured for example in the Pittsburgh Plate Glass publication, *There is a New Trend in Store Design* (1945), which cataloged modernist shopping center design. Popular techniques included extensive glazing, sculpted fronts, and volumes pulling back from lot lines and above roof lines.

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<sup>59</sup>Kenneth Turan, "The Washington Movie Kings," *The Washington Post*, February 24, 1974. Christian Williams, "The New Moguls," *The Washington Post*, August 10, 1980. Thomas Goldwasser, "K-B Theaters: Father and Son Star," *Washington Business*, *The Washington Post*, June 21, 1982.

<sup>60</sup>"Architecture - Not Style," *Progressive Architecture* (December 1948), pp. 49, 120, 122, 138, quoted by Sandy Isenstadt, "Modern in the Middle", *Perspecta*, Vol. 36, Juxtapositions (2005), pp. 62-72.

<sup>61</sup>Isabelle Gournay and Mary Corbin Sies, "Modern Movement in Maryland: Context Essay." University of Maryland, 2002, pp3-4, 12. GSA Modern Buildings, p30.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid, p5. GSA Modern Buildings, pp30-31.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 16

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By the mid-1950s, shopping center design slipped out of consideration as serious modern architecture. In historian David Smiley's words, shopping center design since the 1950s became a whipping post for the profession.<sup>63</sup>

Such modernist techniques are evident at the Flower Shopping Center. Window walls of the Giant and the Woolworth's stores give the sensation to the outsider of already being in the store. Varied setbacks positioned the Woolworth's, with its undulating transparent walls, away from the lot line, and the arcaded stores stepped back farther still. A varied roof line is found not just in the separate volumes of anchor stores, but within the arcaded section as well. The technique of stepping-up the arcade roof was also found, for example, in Skidmore Owings & Merrill's Aero Acres Shopping Center (1942), a modernist shopping center highlighted in Baker and Funaro's Shopping Center study.<sup>64</sup>

The centerpiece of the shopping center, the Flower Theater, has a stylized temple-like form with classical detailing. Early forms of modernism in the Washington, DC, area drew on traditional architecture in a style described as modern classicism. Paul Cret's Federal Reserve Board (1932) employs a stylized temple form and his Bethesda Naval Hospital Tower (1942) features classical medallions, while Eggers & Higgins used a temple form for the Naval Ordnance Laboratory's Administration Complex (1945), White Oak. Warner Brothers engaged Mihran Mesrobian to remodel theaters in the 1940s and he chose classical modernist designs such as those found on his Savoy Theater (1942).<sup>65</sup>

### SILVER SPRING'S JEWISH COMMUNITY

The Flower Theater and Shopping Center represents an era when a Jewish community was taking root in Montgomery County. The product of Jewish developers and architect, the shopping center initially served a growing Jewish community. Following World War II, a large concentration of the estimated 500 Jewish families in Montgomery County lived in the Silver Spring area. The first census that recorded the population of the Jewish community in the Washington metro region, taken in 1957, found that there were more Jews in lower Montgomery County than anywhere else in the region. The first organized Jewish group in the Silver Spring area was the Montgomery Lodge of B'nai B'rith, formed in 1942.<sup>66</sup>

The Montgomery Lodge of B'nai B'rith was composed entirely or almost entirely of Indian Spring Club Estates residents. Developer Abraham Kay had bought the Indian Spring Country Club in 1939 and opened it to Jewish members, making it one of the few clubs at the time where Jews were welcome. He developed Indian Spring Village with 300 houses near the golf course. The proximity to the county club and the affordability of Kay's houses attracted young Jewish families from the District. The community apparently formed a core of Jewish residents in the late

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<sup>63</sup>David Smiley, *Pedestrian Modern: Shopping, Modern Architecture and the American Metropolis, 1935-1955*, PhD Thesis, Princeton University, 2006.

<sup>64</sup>Smiley, 14-16, 76. Aero Acres in Baker and Funaro, p128.

<sup>65</sup>In the commercial realm, Donn Hougen's Port Edwards shopping centers uses temple forms for the town hall centerpiece and a bank end unit, in Baker and Funaro, p113. Greenhorne & O'Mara, Naval Ordnance Laboratory, MHT SHSIF form #33-25, 1997; Karin Alexis, "Government Office Buildings in Montgomery County," 1988.

<sup>66</sup>Jewish Community Council demographic study, 1957 population chart, *Jewish Washington*, p51. Saul Mindel, oral history, April 21, 1988, Ohr Kodesh collection, JHSGW Archives. Hiebert and MacMaster, p337. A parallel effort in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase community led to the organization in 1945 of Montgomery County's first Jewish group west of Rock Creek.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 17

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1930s-40s. Saul Mindel, who was second president of Montgomery Lodge B'nai B'rith, moved to 9621 Flower Avenue in 1941. According to Mindel, about a third of Indian Spring Club Estates' residents were Jewish.<sup>67</sup>

As early as 1941, discussions were underway to establish a permanent building for the Jewish community. Late in 1946, Sam Eig came to a B'nai B'rith meeting unannounced with an offer of land along East-West Highway for a permanent Jewish facility. Within a year, the group merged with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Community to form the Montgomery County Jewish Community in order to embark on a fundraising campaign to construct a facility.<sup>68</sup>

From 1947 to 1950, MCJC operated out of Sam Eig's construction office, an abandoned house on Colesville Road, near Fenton Street. As funds were being raised for their permanent facility, MCJC sought interim facilities for religious services and Sunday School programs. Bette Eig, Sam's wife, was president of the Women's Council of MCJC which took on the responsibility for finding interim facilities. MCJC used several Silver Spring facilities for services, Sunday School and fundraising events during this interim period. These included the Jesup Blair House, Silver Spring Armory, Silver Spring Elementary School, and Montgomery Blair High School.<sup>69</sup>

The Flower Theater, which opened in February 1950, was among the only privately owned facilities used by MCJC. Saul Mindel, MCJC President, recalled the challenges of moving equipment from Friday night services at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, at Carroll and Flower Avenues, to the theater for Saturday morning services.<sup>70</sup> MCJC used the Flower Theater for regular services, holiday services and fundraiser benefit events. In September 1950, the Montgomery County Jewish Community group held a fundraiser benefit event at the Flower Theater. In addition, Yom Kippur services were held in the Flower Theater. By this time, MCJC membership included over 600 families. A synagogue didn't open in Montgomery County until 1958 when MCJC's facility, later named Ohr Kodesh, opened on East-West Highway.<sup>71</sup>

The Jewish community remembered the years when the Flower Theater served as their community center. At the 1958 dedication ceremony for the long-awaited synagogue at the Montgomery Jewish Community Center, Rabbi Tzvi Porath remarked, "After ten years of *valgerin* around in churches, gymnasia, schools we are finally in our own home. Now, no longer will a child point to the Flower Theater, as one did six years ago, and say, "This is my *shul*." The significance of this period of operating without a permanent place was not lost on the group. As the Rabbi went on to observe, "Worship in makeshift quarters has been a *makko*, an affliction, a problem that began at the dawn of Judaism with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, our patriarchs." The year 1948 marked the beginning of the state of Israel. This event

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<sup>67</sup> Mindel believed the Montgomery B'nai B'rith to be the first Jewish organization in the county. According to Frances Edelstein, the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Community met in 1936, but didn't formally organize until 1945. Architect John J. Zink designed the original Indian Springs Clubhouse for founder Thomas Moore, theater owner. Fred S. Kogod had ties with Abraham Kay, as a fellow member of Ohr Kodesh and working with him, for example, on the building campaign for the new synagogue.

<sup>68</sup> MCJC Dedication Ceremony program, December 8, 1950. Mindel oral history. Sam Eig also donated land near East West Highway and Grubb Road for Catholic and Methodist churches, as well as the Red Cross.

<sup>69</sup> MCJC Dedication Ceremony program. *Maryland News*, July 29, 1949. In later years, the founding year for MCJC has been given as 1948, coinciding with the origins of the State of Israel, and also Brandeis University. (Ohr Kodesh Congregation Bulletin, March 2008 and History of Women's Council of MCJC; Ohr Kodesh Vertical File, JHSGW Archives) According to one member, Frances Edelstein, B-CCJC organized informally in 1936, and, after formally organizing in 1945, met at the River Road Unitarian Church, Bethesda. Frances Edelstein, Oral history, January 4, 1988, JHSGW Archives.

<sup>70</sup> Saul Mindel oral history, op cit.

<sup>71</sup> The original MCJC building opened in 1950, containing classrooms, offices and a social hall.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 18

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came to bring a special significance for the local Jewish population in search of a home, in the form of a permanent facility.<sup>72</sup>

A large contingent of developers and builders in the DC area were Jewish immigrants who earned their wealth as entrepreneurs, most often in the grocery business. The food retail business was frequently a stepping stone for Jewish immigrants in this era. This group included those associated with development of the Flower Theater and Shopping Center--Fred S. Kogod and his wife Celia Kogod, and Max and Harry Burka--as well as developers Sam Eig and Abraham Kay. Flower Shopping Center co-owners M. Daniel Dubb and Herman Eig were also active in the Jewish community. These individuals represent a generation of Jewish immigrants who fled Czarist Russia, arrived in the DC area in the 1910s, settled in southwest DC, and later expanded to real estate enterprises in Montgomery County in the New Deal era.<sup>73</sup>

A civic leader, Fred S. Kogod was active in the Adas Israel congregation, serving first on the Board of Managers and then President of the Congregation. In 1956, he was elected to the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Kogod led the building campaign for Adas Israel when Frank Grad and Sons were hired for a new synagogue. Known as Newark's first Jewish architect, Grad had designed landmark buildings in the New York metropolitan area, including Beth Israel Hospital (1931), Newark, and the Rego Park Jewish Center (1948), Queens. After setting up a satellite office in the Washington area, Grad also designed projects for Morris Cafritz and Abraham Kay. More on Kogod and Grad are in following sections.

The area's Jewish community grew in the 1930s as many Jews relocated to the nation's capital to work for the federal government, which expanded greatly under the New Deal. Over a third of Jewish workers in Washington in that era were federal employees. In Montgomery County, Abraham Kay opened the door for the Jewish community when he bought Indian Spring Country Club, opened up its membership, and built a residential development. Fred S. Kogod was closely associated with Abraham Kay, belonging to the Ohr Kodesh congregation, and working with Kay on the building campaign for a new synagogue. In the 1930s, while Kay was developing Indian Spring, Kogod was working in Bethesda, his first known venture in Montgomery County.

With the influx of federal workers in the World War II era came another wave of Jewish residents. By 1956, half of the area's 81,000 Jews lived outside the city limits. Isadore and Mildred Gromfine exemplified this movement to Washington and thence to the suburbs. In 1942, Isadore accepted a job with the Department of Labor, and the couple moved from Buffalo, NY, to an apartment in southeast DC. In 1948, with two school-age children, they moved to Silver Spring and bought a house in Sligo Park Hills.<sup>74</sup>

Through the 1940s and 1950s, enclaves were established in the Silver Spring area. Rosemary Hills was located near the Montgomery Jewish Community Center, on East West Highway. Gerry Meltz moved to Rosemary Hills in 1948 (Block G, Lot 5), and joined MCJC, finding several other Jewish women living on her street. By 1952, MCJC had engaged a

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<sup>72</sup>Rabbi Tzvi Porath, speech, September 14, 1958, Ohr Kodesh collection, Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington. Sources for Jewish history in metropolitan Washington include the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington archival material; *Jewish Washington: Scrapbook of an American Community*, op cit; and online exhibits including "Through the Lens: Jeremy Goldberg's Washington" at [jhs gw.org](http://jhs gw.org).

<sup>73</sup>*Jewish Washington*. The first wave of Jewish immigrants had arrived in the District in the 1850s-60s, attracted by opportunities of business and commerce.

<sup>74</sup>Isadore Gromfine oral history, 1-22-1989, Ohr Kodesh, JHSGW Archives. History of Women's Council of MCJC. Deed 1161:271 (May 5, 1948).

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 19

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fulltime rabbi, and, in 1959, a synagogue was open for use, at 8300 Meadowbrook Lane. In 1966, MCJC changed its name to Ohr Kodesh Congregation.<sup>75</sup>

By 1952, the Langley Park neighborhood of Prince George's County, just east of the Flower Avenue area, had a growing Jewish community. The Langley Park Hebrew congregation acquired land on University Boulevard and built the synagogue later known as Temple Israel. The first building used for worship was a former war barracks donated by the University of Maryland. Sam Eig donated money for a permanent building.<sup>76</sup>

Businesses and services grew to support the Jewish community. When the Flower Delicatessen opened in 1950, it provided Zion kosher salami, Manichevitz kosher wine, smoked New York white fish, and Hanukah candles. The deli was open on weekdays and Sundays, but closed on Saturdays in observance of the Sabbath. The Parkside Deli, established in 1961, served the Ohr Kodesh area.

Jewish builders and real estate developers played a major role in shaping Silver Spring's built environment, before and especially after the war. In the New Deal era came Isadore Gudelsky and his Montgomery Arms apartments, and Abraham Kay and the Indian Spring Club development. Albert Small built the Silver Theater and Shopping Center in 1938. Sam Eig started to make a significant impact on Silver Spring's built environment near the end of World War II. According to the *Washington Star*, Eig "entered the picture in 1944" when he bought the Silver Shopping Center. From 1944-1965, Eig estimated that he developed some \$100 million worth of real estate, including commercial buildings in downtown Silver Spring. In addition, he donated land for religious facilities along East-West Highway-- Catholic and Methodist churches, and the Montgomery Jewish Community Center facility (later Ohr Kodesh synagogue).<sup>77</sup>

### **BIOGRAPHIES - FLOWER SHOPPING CENTER**

DEVELOPER: FRED S. KOGOD (1899-1956)

Fred S. Kogod was a theater chain executive, retail entrepreneur, commercial developer, and a leader in civic groups and in his Jewish community. A central element of Kogod's development model would become the establishment of retail and entertainment centers in growing, largely residential areas.

A native of Russia, Kogod arrived in the Washington area about 1913. In 1918, he married Celia Burka, also a Russian native, and, by 1921, the pair opened Kogod's Market at 1200 Sixth Street SW, where they also resided.<sup>78</sup> Kogod was a leader in the development of the District Grocery Stores (DGS) cooperative. According to the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, the aim of DGS organizers was "to improve their competitiveness by using their combined power to extract better prices from wholesalers. Then, through the cooperative's warehouse, members could buy goods at cost. Store owners also benefited from joint advertising, such as full-page ads in the local newspapers that

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<sup>75</sup>On opening of the synagogue: Isadore Gromfine oral history, p16.

<sup>76</sup>Leon & Betty Altschuler, Temple Israel, Oral history, 10-29-1989. JHSGW Archives.

<sup>77</sup>JHSGW Archives, MCJS files. Charles A McAleer, "Tall Buildings in Spotlight as Silver Spring Grows Up," *Washington Star* July 14, 1965.

<sup>78</sup>Fred S. Kogod obituary, *The Washington Post*, December 14, 1956. Kogod's age at death was 57. He came to the US at the age of 14, which would have been about 1913. Celia emigrated from Russia in 1914 and first settled in New York before moving to Washington in 1916. Celia Kogod obituary, *The Washington Post*, October 25, 1989. Kogod's father, Charles Kogod (c1876-1949), a Russian immigrant, had been a Washington grocer until he retired about 1934. Charles Kogod obituary, *The Washington Post*, February 27, 1949.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 20

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featured specials at all DGS stores. Besides these economic gains, the cooperative fought the anti-Semitism they encountered in business and social relations. By threatening boycotts, they forced food manufacturers to abandon overtly discriminatory employment practices.”<sup>79</sup>

The Kogod and Burka families were closely tied, as they emigrated from Russia about the same time and established grocery businesses in the District. Another Burka sibling, Harry, was a merchant and real estate developer, who partnered with Kogod in the initial acquisition of the Flower Shopping Center land.<sup>80</sup> Max Burka (1891-1966) operated a grocery store at 8<sup>th</sup> and C Streets NE, by 1913. Burka became a partner with Kogod in the movie theater business. Like Kogod, Burka continued to operate other businesses in addition to the theater partnership. The last third of his life, Burka was known for his University Market on Wisconsin Avenue NW, which he had established in 1934 (now the Cactus Cantina restaurant).<sup>81</sup>

Kogod and Max Burka formed a partnership which launched a long career in the movie theater industry. By all accounts, their entrée into the field was somewhat accidental, beginning with the purchase of a block of real estate in the 1920s. The pair purchased the North East Masonic Temple, at 12<sup>th</sup> and H Streets NE, which included the 1909 Princess Theater (architect C E Webb), at 1119 H St NE.<sup>82</sup>

With this beginning, the pair began to build entertainment complexes, eventually operating a chain of movie theaters. Over the next three decades, the entrepreneurial pair established a number of companies operating under various names, including Kogod & Burka Enterprises, Inc. (1945) and K & B Amusement Co (1947), as well as companies named after their theaters, such as Langston Theater Corporation (1947). Their earliest name may have been Northeast Amusements, perhaps in recognition of the Washington quadrant in which their first properties—the Princess and the Atlas—were located. Kogod, president of the company, spearheaded the company’s activities and served as the spokesman.<sup>83</sup>

In 1938, Kogod and Burka built their first development--the Atlas Theater project in Northeast. Located at 1315-1331 H Street NE, the Atlas Theater and stores complex cost was given at \$130,000. The pair hired architect John Jacob Zink to design a Streamline Modern movie theater and four stores. Two years earlier Zink, a Baltimore architect, had designed the Warner Brothers’ Uptown Theater in Cleveland Park. The Atlas marked the beginning of a lifelong relationship between Zink and K-B Theaters. Zink would design all Kogod-Burka theaters during his lifetime.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, database of stores. Also *The Washington Post*, October 21, 1989.

<sup>80</sup>Harry Burka obituary, *The Washington Post*, August 10, 1974. JHSGW store database.

<sup>81</sup>*The Washington Post* September 2, 1934; October 9, 1915; Obituary January 29, 1935. JHSGW store database.

<sup>82</sup>Kogod acquired this property in 1924, according to his obituary, *The Washington Post*, December 14, 1956. Burka went into partnership with Kogod in 1926 according to his obituary, *The Washington Post* January 29, 1966. The Princess Theater was considered part of the chain of Kogod-Burka theaters. Kogod and Burka replaced the Princess with a Frank Grad designed office building. The Washington Post February 3, 1945 and September 7, 1947. Bldg permit 301697. According to Rotenstein, Princess Theater owner Joseph Morgan retired in 1928, and Kogod & Burka were doing business as Northeast Amusements by c1928-29. Rotenstein p4 .

<sup>83</sup>Kogod’s name appears on many building permits. Others were issued to Life Amusement Co, (1940 for Apex Theater), Langston Theater Corp (1945), K & B Amusement Co (1945 for MacArthur Theater). Max Burka obituary, *The Washington Post*, January 29, 1966.

<sup>84</sup>DC Building Permit 210377, 1938. Nelson Bell, *The Washington Post*, March 30, 1945.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 21

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The next Kogod-Burka project was the Apex Theater and stores (1940), 4811-1819 Massachusetts Avenue NW, located near the Spring Valley and American University Park neighborhoods. As contemporary accounts noted, in selecting this site for the new theater, Kogod and Burka brought this underserved, outlying area “within the orbit of the Capital’s theatrical activities.” By selecting a parcel adjacent to the Massachusetts Avenue Park and Shop, Kogod and Burka were again following the model set by the Warner Brothers who built their Uptown Theater opposite the Connecticut Avenue Park and Shop. The developers provided three acres of parking behind the theater, and, in a later phase of development, built two more stores facing an interior street, and additional stores were located facing Yuma Street. By now fully invested in the movie theater company, Kogod and Burka located their corporate offices in the Apex Theater complex.<sup>85</sup>

Many of the Kogod-Burka projects included a commercial component in addition to the theater. Through the 1940s the partnership built theater and shopping complexes in Northeast, Northwest, and Southeast Washington, including the Naylor Theater (1944), Langston Theater and store (1945), and MacArthur Theater (1945). They targeted residential areas that had grown during the New Deal era and were underserved by commercial and recreation facilities. In 1947, Kogod and Burka engaged Frank Grad and Sons to design a \$340,000 two-story commercial building, on the site of the Princess Theater, at 12<sup>th</sup> and H Streets NE.<sup>86</sup>

Kogod and Burka operated under such a wide variety of business names that even contemporaries had trouble keeping track. The owner of the Apex Shopping Center (1940) project was described in building permits as Life Amusement Company, while *The Washington Post* described the owner of the Apex Theater alternately as Apex Amusement Co and Kogod & Burka (1941). The advertisement for the Apex Theater listed the K-B Amusement Company with offices in Apex Theater, 4813 Mass Avenue, located on the mezzanine level. Popularly, the chain was known as K-B Theaters.<sup>87</sup>

Fred S. Kogod developed and managed other commercial projects outside the K-B Theater realm. He had a team of professionals with which he regularly worked, including architects John Jacob Zink, Frank Grad and Sons, and Frank Beatty; leasing agent Shannon and Luchs; and retail chains Giant Food Stores and F. W. & Company. Kogod built the Senator Theater and store complex (1941) on Minnesota Avenue SE, independent of Burka, engaging Zink for the design. On South Capitol Street, SW, Kogod planned a shopping, entertainment, parking complex designed by Frank Beatty. The Woolworth’s store and several shops were built; however a planned theater and parking garage were not realized. Kogod hired Beatty to design commercial buildings in downtown Bethesda, including a Woodward and Lothrop’s.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>DC Building Permit 234430, 1940. Nelson Bell, *The Washington Post*, November 21, 1935. Gomery, pp16-17. Two stores built on Yuma St between 48<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup> Street NW *The Washington Post*, April 23, 1950.

<sup>86</sup>Kogod’s projects included the Atlas Theater and Shopping Center, Senator Theater and Shopping Center, and S. Capitol Street Shopping Center. Contemporary records refer to the Apex Shopping Center. For example, Giant Food Stores advertisement, Sept 14, 1953. It is unknown if this refers to Kogod’s development, or is a reference to the adjacent Massachusetts Avenue Park & Shop (not developed by Kogod). Dates are when building permits were issued. Fred S. Kogod built the Senator Theater solo, yet it became part of the K-B Theater chain. Kogod and Burka had the Princess Theater taken down for the site redevelopment.

<sup>87</sup>*The Washington Post*, 11-21-1940. Offices were located in the Apex by 1940 through at least 1952 and probably until the Apex was demolished in 1977. The new office building built on the Apex Theater site housed K-B Theaters corporate offices. The owners were Fred Burka and his son David. *The Washington Post*, 3-17-1977; *Washington Business*, June 21, 1982.

<sup>88</sup>The Woodward and Lothrop store was burned in 1954 and was replaced by a larger store. Richard Longstreth correspondence, June 20, 2011.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 22

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Kogod also operated appliance businesses. The Kogod-Dubb Electrical Appliance Company was located at 1731 14<sup>th</sup> St NW by 1939, and sold products including typewriters. Kogod's appliance endeavors were called variously Kogod & Dubb Store Fixture Company (by 1945), and the Washington Refrigeration Company (by 1950) and the York Refrigerator Company (1956).<sup>89</sup>

Kogod and his family, which included four daughters, lived in Crestwood NW, by 1941. Kogod was active in the Piney Branch civic group in the Crestwood neighborhood. The Kogod family later resided in Cleveland Park. Known as a quiet genial gentleman and nicknamed "smiling Fred", Kogod was nonetheless a fervent community leader who publicly spoke his mind on social welfare issues. He served on the DC Welfare Board, and on the Board of Directors for Hamilton National Bank.<sup>90</sup> A philanthropist, Kogod was president (known as "chief barker") for the Variety Club, an international charitable organization of the entertainment industry. The local Variety Club group, organized in 1934, had clubrooms in the Willard Hotel under the presidency of Carter Barron, regional manager of Loew's theater group. Kogod was president of the Variety Club in 1950 when membership exceeded 500.<sup>91</sup>

A leader in the Adas Israel congregation, Kogod was elected to the Board of Managers in 1940. Kogod had led a building campaign to construct the new Adas Israel synagogue that was designed by Frank Grad and Sons in 1947. By 1956, Kogod was president of the Adas Israel congregation. In June of that year he was elected to the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, in New York. He died, at the age of 57, in December. Leaving a \$1 million estate, Kogod established a welfare foundation, the Fred S. Kogod Foundation. The Variety Club made a memorial contribution in his name to Children's Hospital, commemorated in the Children's Hospital Variety Club Research Center.<sup>92</sup>

In 1953, Fred S. Kogod and Max Burka had retired from the theater business, selling the company to Fred Burka, Max's son, and Marvin Goldman, Fred's son-in-law. Goldman had joined the K-B Theater company in 1946 as assistant manager, having previously worked for Kogod in his Washington Refrigerator Company, before serving in the war. In 1964, Fred Burka's son, David, joined the company, followed, in 1967, by Marvin Goldman's son, Ronald. In 1978, the Burka's conveyed their shares to the Goldmans.<sup>93</sup> In 1992, Ron Goldman, faced with competition of national chains, sold 10 of the chain's 15 theaters. He renamed the remaining theaters Apex Cinema and kept the business running with second-run films.<sup>94</sup>

### ARCHITECT: FRANK GRAD (1882-1968)

Best known for designing skyscrapers, symphony houses, and sports arenas, Frank Grad, and his firm, Frank Grad and Sons, designed landmark buildings in Manhattan, Washington, DC, and Newark, N.J. Of all the firm's projects, perhaps the most recognized is the Art Deco landmark Essex House (Park Tower) on Central Park South. Founded in 1907, the

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<sup>89</sup>The Senator Theater was not part of the 1952 scheme in which K-B Theaters were leased to Burka family members. *The Washington Post*, March 29, 1939; Aug 17, 1952.

<sup>90</sup>In 1943, the Kogods lived at 1615 Buchanan St NW. Kogod was the taxation committee chair of the local citizens association by 1941. Upon his death in 1956, the family home was at 2916 Ablemarle Street NW, in Cleveland Park.

<sup>91</sup>*The Washington Post*, May 13, 1951.

<sup>92</sup>*The Washington Post*, January 11, 1950; January 4, 1957; April 10 and March 20, 1959.

<sup>93</sup>Headley, p375. Thomas Goldwasser, *The Washington Post*, June 21, 1982.

<sup>94</sup>*The Washington Post*, March 28, 1994.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 23

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architectural firm of Frank Grad and Sons operated for over a century. A versatile designer, Grad turned to government projects during World War II, and designed large-scale military bases overseas.

Frank Grad, an Austrian native, was trained at Vienna Technical School and immigrated to the US in 1905. In 1906, Grad established his architectural practice in Newark, becoming one of the first Jewish architects in New Jersey. Grad was elected to the American Institute of Architects in 1921. In his solo career, his noteworthy projects included the neoclassical Salaam Temple, now Newark's Symphony Hall (1925), and the Stanley Theater (1927). Both of these Newark landmarks are listed in the National Register. In the flush decade of the 1920s, Grad designed many multi-million dollar projects in the New Jersey-New York area. His highest profile project was Essex House, a 40-story Art Deco landmark on Central Park South, New York City (1929). His firm contributed significantly to Newark's skyline, designing the Raymond Commerce Building (1929), an Art Deco tower that was New Jersey's tallest structure, at 37 stories. Frank Grad and Sons grew to become the state's largest architecture firm, and is credited with having its signature at one point on half of New Jersey's high-rises.<sup>95</sup>

In the post-Depression era, Grad's sons Howard and Bernard joined the practice. Bernard (1908-2000), attended the École des Beaux Arts, in Paris (certificate, 1930), and received a B.S. of Architecture from University of Pennsylvania, in 1932. Bernard was elected a member of the AIA in 1948, and advanced to Fellow in 1961. Howard was a Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers.<sup>96</sup>

Frank Grad was remembered for his keen ability to change his practice to meet the needs of the day. During the World War II era, the firm designed a variety of military installations along the East Coast. Frank Grad and Sons established a Washington, DC, office in 1943. In addition to undertaking large-scale government projects, the firm supplemented its practice with commercial projects small and large for local developers. In 1943, Frank Grad registered for architect's licenses in Washington, DC, and Maryland. The firm's office in 1952 was located at 1739 Connecticut Avenue NW.<sup>97</sup>

The first known Washington area project Frank Grad and Sons worked on was a \$20 million hotel, touted in 1944 as the most expensive hotel ever proposed to be built in the United States. Called the Diplomat Hotel, the luxury project was proposed for land on the Corby estate in Rockville, but was not realized. Frank Grad and Son's Washington Circle Apartment building, a complex with 261 luxury apartments, basement garage, and five stores, was completed. Located at Pennsylvania Avenue and K Streets, NW, the project was heralded in 1947 as the first elevator apartments to be built with FHA funding.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup>George S Koyl (Ed), *American Architects Directory*, Second Edition, 1960. "Frank Grad" entry, in Frank John Urquhart, *A History of the City of Newark, New Jersey: Embracing Practically Two and a Half Centuries, 1666-1913, Volume 3*. Chicago & New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co, 1913. Read, op cit. D. Fitzgerald, *Window on the Park: New York's Most Prestigious Properties on Central Park*. Images Publishing, 2009, p153. National Register forms for Salaam Temple (Newark Symphony Hall), 1976; Stanley Theater, 1986. Salaam Temple was listed on the National Register when it had barely reached 50 years of age, the guideline for historic designation.

<sup>96</sup>American Architects Directory, 1970. AIA listing. The Book of the School, 1874-1934, University of Pennsylvania. Robert E. Koehler, "Frank Grad & Sons: Practice Profile," *AIA Journal*, October 1968 (Vol 50).

<sup>97</sup>AIA Archives, letterhead dated March 18, 1952. Directories summary from EHT Traceries, architects file.

<sup>98</sup>Lucius Beebe, "Nation's Most Costly Hotel on Postwar Docket Here," *The Washington Post*; Dec 17, 1944; "NW Gets Luxury Apartments," July 20, 1947.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 24

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The majority of the Washington, DC, area projects Frank Grad and Sons designed were commercial and/or recreational facilities. The firm designed the 12-store Arlandria Shopping Center in 1947 for Godden and Small. Plans for another shopping center on Georgia Avenue NW, promoted the same year, included a movie theater, but evidently the project was not constructed. Frank Grad and Sons designed at least two other movie theaters: the Dupont Theater (1947) on Connecticut Avenue NW for the Grosvenor family, and the Rex Theater (1948) on 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW for Morris Cafritz.

Another type of recreational project the firm designed were sports halls for America on Wheels. The Capitol Arena (1946), 1661 Kalorama Avenue NW, included a rollerskating rink, gymnasium and parking garage. In later years, the Kalorama roller rink was converted to a movie studio, where *Peggy Sue Got Married* was filmed in part. Called a "remarkable example of streamline aesthetics," the structure has been renovated and is now the Harris Teeter Citadel store. Another roller rink by Frank Grad and Sons in Bladensburg (1948) included a bowling alley.<sup>99</sup>

Frank Grad and Sons did brisk business with many clients in the years following World War II, as many private sector projects had been put on hold during the war.<sup>100</sup> Frank Grad worked with Fred S. Kogod on a variety of projects, including the \$1.25 million Adas Israel synagogue (1947), an office building at 12<sup>th</sup> and H streets NE (1947) and the Flower Shopping Center (1948). In 1949, the firm designed was the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Exchange Building, on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street NW. The facility combined a wide variety of purposes including auditorium, film storage, sales department, and offices.

Considered Newark's first Jewish architect, Frank Grad had a close connection with the Jewish community. Several of Grad's greatest commissions, the Young Men's & Young Women's Hebrew Association Building (1921); the Stanley Theater (1927), and Beth Israel Hospital (1931), all in Newark NJ; and the Rego Park Jewish Center (1948), in Queens, were for Jewish patrons. In the Washington area, he worked with prominent Jewish developers Morris Cafritz and Abraham Kay. In 1947, the year before Frank Grad and Son's plans were announced for the Flower Theater and Shopping Center, the Adas Israel congregation unveiled the firm's design for Adas Israel's new \$1.25 million synagogue.<sup>101</sup>

Frank Grad was known for his strong interest in city planning issues. He designed an early scheme for an underground parking garage on an urban site, under Military Park in downtown Newark. Conceived as early as 1929, when the project was finally built in 1959 it was recognized as one of the first of its kind in the New York area.<sup>102</sup> In the post-war era, Frank Grad's projects were known for the clean lines and efficient solutions to client's program requirements. Grad excelled at bringing a variety of functions into a cohesive design in projects that ranged from corporate complexes for IBM, AT&T and Xerox, to government center for the New Jersey State Capitol. The American Institute of Architects cited Grad's legacy for understanding the balance of design talent with business knowledge so creativity is not wasted on projects too expensive to complete. Grad remained active in his profession until his death in 1968. His firm was then one of the largest in the nation (in the top 30), and a major project was yet under construction--the

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<sup>99</sup>Wirz and Striner, p88. *The Washington Post*, June 20, 1948. DC SHPO and Historic Marker program.

<sup>100</sup>Beebe.

<sup>101</sup>"Building for Y.M. & Y.W.H. Association," Newark, NJ, *American Architect and Architecture*, Vol 120 (July 20, 1921). Rego Park Jewish Center, New York Landmarks Conservancy, [newyorklandmarks.org](http://newyorklandmarks.org). Adas Israel temple rendering, in *The Washington Post*, August 16, 1947. According to Oheb Shalom records, Grad was Newark's first Jewish architect. <http://www.newarkhistory.com/ohebshalomcemetery.html>

<sup>102</sup>Obituary, *The New York Times*, Jan 21, 1968. In his research, Richard Longstreth has found other earlier garages more widely publicized including Union Square, San Francisco (1941) and Pershing Square, Los Angeles (1951). *City Center to Regional Mall*, p214.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 25

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James Forrestal Federal Building, a joint venture project at Pennsylvania Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Street, NW. Grad established an architectural fellowship funds at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania.<sup>103</sup>

After Frank Grad's death, his sons continued the upward trajectory of the firm, renaming it The Grad Partnership in 1971. In later years, the firm continued to take on government work, designing U.S. Air Force bases in France, defense installations in England and Pakistan, and government facilities in Thailand. The firm is credited with designing U.S. military bases in some 17 countries worldwide. After the death of Howard Grad, in 1992, and Bernard Grad, in 2000, the firm continued without direct family involvement. The firm disbanded in 2010.<sup>104</sup>

ARCHITECT: JOHN JACOB ZINK (1895-1952)

John J. Zink was one of the region's great movie theater architects. As described by theater historian, Robert K. Headley, "The early 1950s provided a coda to the career of one of the great movie theater architects. In Maryland and adjoining states, during the great age of movie theater construction, Baltimorean John Zink was a theater architect *par excellence*." Zink designed nearly 200 theaters in Maryland, Washington DC, Virginia and Delaware, including all eight Kogod and Burka theaters built during his lifetime. (See list of Zink projects in a following section.) The Flower Theater is the only remaining Zink theater in Montgomery County, designed in collaboration with Frederick L. W. Moehle.

Zink was born in Baltimore in 1895 and received training at the Maryland Institute and then worked for the firm of Wyatt and Nolting before traveling to New York to train with renowned theater architect Thomas Lamb, a pioneer who developed theater prototypes by the mid-1910s. Zink returned to Baltimore in 1916 and worked with Ewald H. Blank designing the Rialto Theater at Ninth and G Street, NW, Washington, DC, completed in 1918. The Rialto was part of a theater chain owned by Fayette Thomas "Tom" Moore. Zink designed several theaters for Moore, and also was hired to design a clubhouse for Moore's Indian Spring Golf Club, in Silver Spring.<sup>105</sup>

Zink's theaters were designed in varying traditional and modernist styles. Examples of his traditional designs are seen in the classical detailing of his 1922 Takoma Theater and the Colony Theater (1926) in Washington, DC.<sup>106</sup>

Zink's theaters for Kogod and Burka were more modernist in design. The first theater Zink designed for Kogod and Burka was the Atlas (1938), at 1331 H Street NE, a Streamline Moderne movie theater accompanied by four

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<sup>103</sup>Obituary; "Unified Image in a Three-Unit Complex," *Architectural Record*, Vol 136 (July 1964), pp166-167; NJ State Library, AIA Award of Merit, *AIA Journal* Vol 46 n2 (Aug 1966), p51; *Progressive Architecture*, Jan 1966, p75. "A No-Nonsense Approach to Practice: Frank Grad & Sons Practice Profile," *AIA Journal*, Vol 50 (Oct 1968), pp59-66; AIA Archives, Frank Grad file. *The New York Times*, April 6, 1959. Christopher Weeks, *The AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington DC*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed, 1994, p275. Charles DuBose worked in Grad's Washington DC office from 1948 until at least 1952, and later designed Independence Plaza, Hartford, CT. Grad's wife had died in 1959 following a long illness. Frank Grad was buried at the cemetery of Oheb Shalom, Newark's second oldest synagogue. Newarkhistory.com.

<sup>104</sup>Philip Read, "The Firm that shaped Newark, NYC skylines closes after 104 years," *The Star-Ledger*, March 25, 2010. Jennifer L. Nelson, "GRAD Associates Celebrates 100 Years" *New Jersey Business*, Nov 1, 2006. According to the AIA Archives, the chronology of the firm was: Frank Grad 1907, Frank Grad & Son 1932, Frank Grad & Sons 1935, and The Grad Partnership 1971. At the time it terminated in 2010, the firm had been known as Grad Associates.

<sup>105</sup>Headley, *Motion Picture Exhibition in Washington DC, 1999*, and *Motion Picture Exhibition in Baltimore*, 2006, pp 155-156. Zink left Moore's employ after a dispute when the Indian Spring Clubhouse project was in progress. It's unknown if his clubhouse design was carried out. The Silver Spring YMCA includes a building that historically was the Indian Spring Clubhouse. AIA Archives correspondence.

<sup>106</sup>"Takoma Park Gets \$130,000 Film House" October 15, 1922: 52 and "Work Will Begin At Once on New Crandall Theater" July 19, 1925: R1; *The Washington Post*.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 26

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storefronts. Two years later, Zink designed the Apex Theater (1940), located next to the Massachusetts Avenue Park and Shop. With its handsome Art Deco façade and state of the art facilities, the Apex raised the bar locally for movie theater architecture. For Kogod and Burka, Zink also designed the Senator (1942), Minnesota Avenue NE; the MacArthur (1945), MacArthur Boulevard NW; the Naylor (1945), Alabama Avenue SE; the Flower (1950), Flower Avenue, Silver Spring; the Langley (1951), Langley Park; and the Ontario (1951), Columbia Road NW. Zink also designed the National Register-listed classic Art Deco Senator Theater in Baltimore (1939). Zink has been described as a “versatile designer; each of his buildings was different, and all were very well adapted to particular site conditions” and achieving in them all, “a harmonious articulation of façades.”<sup>107</sup>

Of the 15 Zink-designed Washington, DC theaters, only three are structurally intact: the Uptown, the Takoma, and the MacArthur (and of these, only the Uptown continues to serve as a movie theater). Eight other Zink theaters in the District stand but have been altered. In addition to the Flower Theater, the 1935 Milo Theater (also known as the Villa), at 120 Commerce Lane in Rockville was the only other Zink-design theater constructed in Montgomery County. The Milo was demolished. Zink’s Langley Theater in Prince George’s County still stands though altered. Zink died in 1952, making the Flower Theater one of his last theaters.

#### ARCHITECT: EDWIN ARMSTRONG WEIHE (1907-1994)

Edwin Weihe had a major influence on the development of downtown Washington. Known as “Mr. Zoning” for his active role in modernizing city codes, he pioneered the innovative use of concrete in Washington, DC, and was known for his use of pedestrian arcades and graduated setbacks.<sup>108</sup>

A native of Washington, D.C., Weihe graduated from Central High School in 1925. He received his Bachelors of Architecture from George Washington University in 1931. Weihe worked for Charles H. Thompson, a construction company, for five years, designing subdivision houses and custom houses. He also taught at George Washington University.

Weihe opened his own practice in 1939 which operated under a succession of names. Weihe specialized in office buildings, hotels, apartment buildings, mixed use buildings and other commercial structures. During his lifetime, his firm designed more than 90 office buildings in the K Street corridor and elsewhere in the District, and more than 100 large buildings in Crystal City, Bailey’s Crossroads, and other urban centers.

Weihe designed several mid-century projects in the Silver Spring area including a store and apartment at 7614 Georgia Avenue NW (1940); Rock Creek Gardens apartments (1948), near Grubb Road and East West Highway; and Cape Cod houses for Carroll Knolls subdivision of 200 dwellings (1948), Forest Glen; F. W. Woolworth & Co. store (1954), Flower Avenue Shopping Center; and the Bank of Silver Spring office building (1961), Georgia Avenue.

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<sup>107</sup>Wirz and Striner, 85-86.

<sup>108</sup>Benjamin Forgey, “Architect Awards to Weihe, Others”, Washington Post, November 3, 1990. J.Y. Smith, “Architect Edwin Weihe Dies, Helped Shape D.C. Skyline.” Washington Post, December 29, 1994. AIA *Architect*, Obituaries, Edwin “Eddie” Weihe, April 1995, p3. AIA Membership file. Bowkers, American Architects Directory, 1956; 1970. D.C. Building Permits Database. John B. Willmann, “The Weihe Trademark is Pragmatic Design,” Washington Post, December 22, 1979.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 27

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Weihe has been described as an unapologetic pragmatist. "Architecture should not direct attention to the sculpture of a building, which is meant to provide shelter and a center for activity," he said, in a 1979 interview. "I do not endorse eyesores or extravagance in private buildings." Weihe was known for his use of graduated setback and arcades. He is said to have sold the D.C. zoning commission on the idea of arcades for pedestrian shelter as well as architectural interest.

Weihe, a member of the AIA from 1946, received the first lifetime achievement award of the Washington Chapter of the AIA, when he was presented with the Centennial Award in 1991. He was recognized for being the first to promote flat plate concrete construction as a solution to the city's building height restriction, as well as his pioneering the use of precast concrete as building cladding in the District. Edwin Weihe retired from active practice in 1987. He died in 1994, at the age of 87.

### FLOWER SHOPPING CENTER BUSINESSES

Using the services of Shannon and Luchs, Fred S. Kogod and associates obtained leases in advance for the Flower Shopping Center in order to obtain the preferred blend of national chains, regional chains, and independent local businesses. The keystone of the complex was the Flower Theater, supported by three anchor stores: Giant grocery store, a burgeoning local chain, and Whelan's drug store. F. W. Woolworth & Company, an established national variety store chain, opened four years later. Other businesses included a deli, florist, cleaner, gift shop, hardware, and children's clothing store.

### Flower Theater

The Flower Theater, 8727 Flower Avenue, is the only theater in Montgomery County built for the K-B theater chain, the longest lived family owned theater chain in the region, which operated from 1924 until 1992. The Flower Theater was the seventh theater built by Kogod and Burka and the first in the Kogod-Burka chain built outside of Washington, DC.

News of the planned Flower Theater plans broke in August 1945.<sup>109</sup> The theater and shopping center were inextricably connected. The Flower Theater's general manager Frank Boucher described the shopping center as a "natural magnet for the area" and the *Theater Catalog* of 1949-50 called it "an integral part of a modernistic shopping center in a fashionable suburb of Washington, D.C....the amusement focal point of a commercial area..."<sup>110</sup>

An article covering the opening of the Flower Theater described the appeal of local theaters:

This week adds one more to the 70-odd neighborhood theaters in our sprawling area...The 'Nabes,' as the trade has them, always have been good business, but especially since the war, they've taken a great surge ahead. The magnates view the downtown palazzos as showcases, spots for a special evening out, or haunts of the Washington tourist. But the 'Nabes' have it when it comes to solving the parking problems and the ultimate in comfort.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> *Box Office*, August 1945.

<sup>110</sup> Richard L. Coe, "New Movie House Opening" *The Washington Post*, February 12, 1950: L1 and "Flower," *Theater Catalog*, 8th Annual Edition, 1949-1950 (September 1950).

<sup>111</sup> Richard L. Coe, "New Movie House Opening," February 12, 1950: L1 and "New Shopping Center Opens," January 15, 1950: R3; *The Washington Post*.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 28

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The theater's grand opening was on February 15, 1950. The festivities included a performance by the Takoma Park High School Band, broadcast on the radio, and featured the showing of Paramount's "The Great Lover," starring Bob Hope. The state-of-the-art theater, promoted as the "Most Beautiful Theater in This Area--One of America's Most Modern," was outfitted with push back seats, clear vision seating, air conditioning, gas heat, a RCA projection and sound system and free, easy parking in the 600 parking spaces designed so that there would be "no need for backing and scratching that new fender." The theater could seat 949 and included a sound proof nursery and party room upstairs. The theater was credited with the area's first built-in candy bar. In April 1950, ownership of the theater and lobby shops was conveyed to the Flower Development Corporation.<sup>112</sup>

### F. W. Woolworth & Company

The F. W. Woolworth & Company store, 8715 Flower Avenue, is a rare extant example of a Woolworth's store in Montgomery County, and is representative of this pioneering business. Woolworth's has been recognized as a significant corporation in the history of American commerce in establishing the chain store business model and in creating the high quality variety store. The Flower Avenue Woolworth's store was one of several that Fred S. Kogod built or owned in the DC area.

The firm F. W. Woolworth & Company is nationally significant for pioneering the concepts of the chain store and the variety store. Frank W. Woolworth opened his first successful variety store in 1879, in Lancaster, PA. He pioneered the concept of the five and dime store, using the philosophy that high sales volume and low profit margins would turn a handsome profit. This concept became so popular it was copied by other companies including Kresge, and it laid the basis for such successful models as today's Target stores. F.W. Woolworth & Company became one of the first chain store businesses in the nation. "The power of the chain," according to historian Cynthia Johnson, "was fed by the ability to buy goods from manufacturers at bulk prices which enabled the chain store to sell items at lower prices than the local merchants."<sup>113</sup>

The Flower Avenue Woolworth's store opened during the most successful period of the variety store's business, which lasted from the 1930s to the 1960s. During the Depression, the company had abandoned its fixed nickel and dime prices. This not only increased the profits of the company, it allowed the stores to expand their range of goods. The Woolworth's variety store targeted people of modest means, presenting a wide array of goods at bargain prices. Summing up this philosophy was the company logo: "Everybody's Store."

The sign for the Woolworth's store in the Flower Shopping Center used dimensional red letters that were applied to a base and which floated on top of the limestone facing. In this era the standard Woolworth's sign was a red metal band with raised gold lettering. Edwin Weihe's design for the Flower Avenue Woolworth's used limestone facing that matched the rest of the shopping center, and this special lettering treatment preserved the expanse of limestone facing on the building. Though part of a chain, the Woolworth's stores retained significant individualized features.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Deed 1397:297.

<sup>113</sup> Cynthia Johnson, "F. W. Woolworth Building (1948)", 106 Main St, Lexington, KY, National Register of Historic Places Registration form, 2002. This Kentucky example, listed on the National Register under Criterion A, was found to be locally significant in the area of commerce within the historic context, "The Rise of Woolworth's Five and Dime as a National Retail Chain Store, 1879-1997".

<sup>114</sup> Wirz and Striner, pp68, 110. Debra Seltzer, roadsidearchitecture.com

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 29

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Kogod had worked with architect Frank Beatty to construct two Woolworth's stores in 1947, located at 3932 Minnesota Avenue, NE and 4001-5 South Capitol St SW.<sup>115</sup> Kogod owned the 1938 Woolworth's in Bethesda at 7207 Wisconsin Avenue (north of Willow Lane), which was demolished c1984 for construction of the Gateway Building. The ceiling of the store was preserved and reused at Montrose School, the historic site on Montrose Road, Rockville.<sup>116</sup>

### Giant Food Store

The Flower Avenue Giant represents an era when grocery stores were first incorporated into shopping centers. The Flower Avenue store was the first Montgomery County Giant integrated in a shopping center, and the first built outside a commercial business district. It is also the earliest extant Giant Food grocery store building in the county. Only two Giant stores preceded the Flower Avenue store, neither of which are still standing. One was in Silver Spring's shopping district, on Georgia Avenue, and a second in Bethesda, near Wisconsin Avenue and Georgetown Road.<sup>117</sup> The Flower Avenue store was equipped with air conditioning--a new convenience in the post-war era. Half of the Giant stores in the metropolitan region were not air conditioned.

Promoting their new store, at 8733 Flower Avenue, the Giant Food company trumpeted the design of their new "food palace" and featured the advertising tagline: "Score Another 'Eyeful' for Giant". The company proudly promoted the store design as an illustration of its use of "the country's finest, most skilled architects, designers, contractors, service specialists, food buyers, display engineers, and a host of others" in designing and equipping its stores. The modern design was considered so attractive that the company featured photographs and descriptions of the store in their advertisements that ran over the next month.<sup>118</sup>

"In our new Flower Avenue store, you'll find the most recent improvements this gigantic [food] industry has developed." The ad's text describes a building type well known today as a supermarket, yet was such a new concept for county residents that the company was compelled to devote five paragraphs to modern features including year-round air conditioning, self-service racks arranged along wide aisles, refrigerated display cabinets, and separate food departments.

The Giant store exemplifies a successful local example of the regional grocery chain. Like many that dominated the region's commerce, the Giant company was Jewish owned. In 1936, Nehemiah Cohen and Samuel Lehrman opened the first Giant self-service supermarket at Georgia Avenue and Park Road, NW.

By 1950, the company had 20 stores in the metropolitan area. Several of these were located in shopping centers, including the Massachusetts Avenue Park and Shop, Arlandria Shopping Center, and Parkington Shopping Center. The company promoted openings with full-page newspaper ads featuring a rendering of the latest new store. Appraiser

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<sup>115</sup>Wirz and Striner, p111.

<sup>116</sup>Kogod acquired the building in 1942 (Deed 869:411) and assumed the lease to Woolworths in 1949 (1225:309). Catherine Crawford, "Bethesda Commercial District," MHT Inventory Form #35/14, 11-1983. Eleanor Cunningham, *Montrose School: The First Ninety Years*, p35. William Offutt, *Bethesda: A Social History*, p406. Vera Hough, "Shopping in the Chevy Chase Area," *Town of Chevy Chase History*, p51. Georgetown Woolworths (1940) at 3111 M St, NW, with its parapet roof, which has been an Urban Outfitters retail store since 1983.

<sup>117</sup>The other early stores were at 8703 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, and 7536 Georgetown. Road, Bethesda.

<sup>118</sup>*The Washington Post*, advertisements January 20, February 1, 1950.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 30

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Frank Luchs of Shannon and Luchs found the company, in 1949, to be “a very successful local super-market chain, gearing each store to a minimum of \$1,000,000 volume and being quite successful in attaining this goal.”<sup>119</sup>

The company was closely tied to local history. In 1948, the year that the Flower Shopping Center was designed, the company bought the Sheridan Bakery in Silver Spring and renamed it the Heidi Bakery, marketing the name for their baked goods, and personified in a cartoon character. The company had grown into a large regional chain by 1959, with over 50 stores, and reached the 100 store mark in 1974.<sup>120</sup> Today the Flower Avenue Giant store encompasses a restaurant, at 8739 Flower Avenue, and a laundromat.

### Whelan Drug Stores Inc.

The Whelan’s drug store opened at 8701 Flower Avenue in 1950. Whelan Drug Stores Inc. was a chain store company that originated in New York City. When it opened the Flower Avenue, the company had about 1,000 stores coast to coast. In the 1940s and 1950s, Whelan’s was a progressive company, among the first to sell records, to experiment with piped-in music for shoppers, and to sell inexpensive remainder books.<sup>121</sup>

Washington, DC, had a Whelan’s store by 1928, located at 14<sup>th</sup> and Pennsylvania NW, opposite the new Willard Hotel. By 1941, there were 300 stores in the chain and the company was the third largest in the nation. A 1948 Whelan advertisement identified stores in DC, Virginia suburbs and Mt Ranier, but none yet in Montgomery County.<sup>122</sup>

The Flower Avenue Whelan’s store offered fountain service and prescription drugs. In later years, Whelan’s was replaced with the county liquor store, which moved a few doors up from its original smaller location at 8709. By November 1988, the store was remodeled as glass walls were replaced with solid walls and single windows.

### Flower Delicatessen

Flower Delicatessen, 8707 Flower Avenue, is an early local extant example of a Jewish delicatessen. The delicatessen in the United States was initially a mainstay for the large German immigrant population in East Coast cities, providing foodstuffs not found in American stores. By the 1890s, the specialty shops became generally popular. In 1895, a *New York Times* reporter described a new kind of store in New York City known as a delicatessen, operated by German merchants and frequented not only by German customers but by “all classes and conditions of people, from Fifth Avenue to the borders of the river.”<sup>123</sup> Locally, Fred Albrechts Café, at 219 Pennsylvania Ave SE promoted its “Restaurant a la Carte” in 1901, featuring a “large variety of German Delicatessen” along with German wines and beer.<sup>124</sup>

Deli offerings were later modified by influences from Eastern Europe and Russia. The Jewish deli provided kosher options to a growing Jewish population. The National Kosher Delicatessen offered home-cooked meals at 1205 7<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>119</sup>*The Washington Post*, advertisements 1942-1953. Celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Giant Food Store company created in-store history displays. A newspaper ad illustrates one panel, with the caption: “Between 1950 & 1952, Giant opens five new stores, growing to 21 locations. The Washington newspapers chronicle every new addition.”

<sup>120</sup> Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington. Giant Archives timeline, [www.giantfood.com/about\\_us/company/company\\_history.htm](http://www.giantfood.com/about_us/company/company_history.htm)

<sup>121</sup>*Billboard*, Oct 25, 1947; Mar 6, 1948. *The New York Times*, Jun 18, 1950; Aug 15, 1951.

<sup>122</sup>*The Washington Post*, Jul 31, 1928; C. A. Whelan obituary, Dec 11, 1941; Mar 16, 1948.

<sup>123</sup>*New York Times*, July 21, 1895.

<sup>124</sup>*The Washington Post*, Nov 22, 1901.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 31

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Street NW in 1935.<sup>125</sup> In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, delis, like diners and lunch counters, fulfilled the need for quick meals. In addition to sandwiches made to go, delicatessens offered cold cuts and other prepared foods for making quick meals at home.<sup>126</sup>

The Flower Delicatessen catered to the local community with its kosher products and operating hours. The deli was open on Sundays but closed on the Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. The business was part of the Washington Suburban Delicatessen Association, a company that included a Mt. Rainier business and was formed in order to bring customers “the finest delicatessen products at chain store prices.” The Flower Deli offered restaurant dining as well as take-out sandwiches made to order.<sup>127</sup> By 1955, there were 16 delicatessens in Montgomery County, according to a directory of Montgomery County businesses. Most of them were located in Silver Spring.<sup>128</sup> Other early Silver Spring delicatessens are the Parkway Deli, built about 1963 and located in the vicinity of Ohr Kodesh, and the Woodside Deli, in Montgomery Hills, dating from about 1947. While traditional downtown delis were becoming an endangered species by the late 1950s, delis in the suburbs were growing as they became part of the American culture. In 1979, the Flower Deli was no longer considered “the ‘in’ spot for kosher club sandwiches.” Though offering a different menu, a Flower Deli operates today in the same location, at 8707 Flower Avenue.<sup>129</sup>

### Piney Branch Hardware

One of original businesses when the shopping center opened in 1950, Piney Branch Hardware, at 8703 Flower Avenue, had long been a local institution when it closed in 2008. The business had earlier roots when it began, by 1948, in the Zig Zag Shopping Center, at the northwest corner of Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road. The hardware store moved to the new Flower Avenue Shopping Center and became a community institution. By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the business offered postal services to local residents.<sup>130</sup>

Piney Branch Hardware had three proprietors over its long history. Ted Stafford was the last owner of the business, which he operated from 1979 until it closed in 2008. He specialized in building parts to supply the, by then, older houses in the community.<sup>131</sup> Stafford ran an “I found it at Piney Branch Hardware” advertising campaign, featuring the specialty products customers found in his store.<sup>132</sup>

### County Liquor Store

A liquor store has operated in the Flower Shopping Center throughout its history. The site was strategically located just outside the border of Takoma Park, a city that prohibited the sale of alcohol, and home of the headquarters of the Seventh Day Adventist Church which advocated temperance.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> *The Washington Post*, Feb 3, 1935.

<sup>126</sup> William Grimes, *Appetite City: A Culinary History of New York*, p89. David Sax, *Save the Deli*, 2009. Chester Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*. p194

<sup>127</sup> *The Washington Post*, Oct 24, 1952 and Dec 5, 1952.

<sup>128</sup> 1954-55 Polk's MD-Washington Suburban directory.

<sup>129</sup> *The Washington Post*, Dec 3, 1979.

<sup>130</sup> Piney Branch Hardware “Home and Garden Guide” 1948. Eileen McGuckian interview, 2010.

<sup>131</sup> *Takoma Voice*, August 2008, p23. In March 1950, Piney Branch's display ad still included its old address, 8484 Piney Branch Road. By November 1, 1950, the store's ad listed its new location at 8703 Flower Avenue.

<sup>132</sup> Photo sources: *Takoma Voice*, August 2008. Jeff Krulik, November 2008

<sup>133</sup> Montgomery County liquor stores were operated by the Liquor Control Board with governor appointed members. In 1951, the County Council created the Dept of Liquor Control with county appointed members. League of Women Voters, “Know Your County”, Rockville, Md: Montgomery



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. 37/25

Name Flower Theater and Shopping Center  
**Continuation Sheet**

Number 8 Page 32

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Montgomery County opened a liquor store at 8709 Flower Avenue, when the shopping center opened in 1950. The store was established by the Liquor Control Board, which operated from 1933 until 1951 with members appointed by the governor. In 1951, the Liquor Control Board was replaced by the Department of Liquor Control, enabling the County Council to appoint board members. The liquor store is thus illustrative of the shift from state control to county rule. In Montgomery County, the sale of alcohol had been prohibited from 1880 to 1933. After the repeal of Prohibition, hard liquor could only be sold in a county dispensary. There were only eight county liquor stores in 1954. In 1954, however, there were still 6 of 13 election districts, so-called dry districts, which prohibited the sale of alcohol. Though located mainly upcounty, they included Kensington and Takoma Park. The districts that allowed the sale of alcohol were downcounty and included Silver Spring. Montgomery County's Flower Avenue store moved in later years to the larger space at 8701 Flower Avenue, in the former Whelan's drugstore. Today the location is one of 25 retail stores operated by Montgomery County.<sup>134</sup>

### Additional Businesses

The Flower Barber Shop at 8721 Flower Avenue represents a great continuity in commerce. A barber shop opened here in 1950. The business was operated in 1953 by S & P Grawitz. A historic photograph from that era shows a neon sign for "Flower Barber Shop." The business in this location today is called Flower Barber Shop. Bernstein's Bakery was a popular local bakery located at 8709 Flower Avenue, after the liquor store moved to 8701. The bakery was still operating in 1979 when Felix Nedel's photograph was taken by the *Washington Post* photographer.<sup>135</sup> Aristo Cleaners, which operated at 8705 Flower Avenue, was part of a local chain operating by 1949. Branches included 1505 Maryland Ave NE and 807 11<sup>th</sup> St NW.<sup>136</sup>

### RECENT HISTORY

In 1960, the Flower Avenue Development Corporation sold the shopping center property.<sup>137</sup> While the theater continued to operate in the 1960s with "lines around the block," it eventually closed in 1978 after business "trickled down to almost nothing."<sup>138</sup> Soon after, a multi-million dollar, ten-year revitalization program of the Flower-Piney Branch commercial area, funded by property owners and federal block grants, began. Revitalization efforts included new storefronts, paving, streetlights, trees, sidewalks and crosswalks.<sup>139</sup> In the Flower Avenue Shopping Center, continuous signboards with diagonal boards, in the Environmental Look esthetic of the day, were placed over the limestone facing that Kogod et al had once so proudly protected. Under new ownership, the Flower Theater was twinned, or divided in half to make to two smaller theaters, and a grand reopening was held in September 1980. Two

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County Government, 1954. In 1947, leaders of the Seventh Day Adventist Church organized the International Temperance Assn. Gary Land, *Historical Dictionary of Seventh-Day Adventists*, Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2005.

<sup>134</sup>Hiebert and MacMaster, p197. League of Women Voters, "Know Your County", 1954. Montgomery County Department of Liquor Control, History, montgomerycountymd.gov.

<sup>135</sup>*The Washington Post*, Dec 3, 1979.

<sup>136</sup>*The Washington Post*, Jan 26, 1949 and May 28, 1949.

<sup>137</sup> Thomas Goldwasser, "K-B Theaters: Father and Son Star," *The Washington Post*, June 21, 1982: 14 and Montgomery County Land Records, deed 2724/171, April 14, 1960.

<sup>138</sup> Stephanie Mansfield, "Melting Pot on the Edge of Affluence," *The Washington Post*, December 3, 1979: A1. Rutlege Hawn, who operated the gift shop in the theater building from 1959 to 1969, recalled when there were lines around the block to get into the theater.

<sup>139</sup> Beth Kaiman, "Flower Avenue Area in Full Bloom," *The Washington Post*, November 3, 1988: MD31.