



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240



April 16, 2024

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PROPERTY: **710 Baronne Street, New Orleans, LA**
PROJECT NUMBER: **46406 Part 1**
APPEAL NUMBER: **1676**
ACTION: **Final Administrative Decision**

Dear [REDACTED]:

I have concluded my review of your appeal of the May 26, 2023 decision of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), National Park Service (NPS), denying your request for certification of significance for the property referenced above. The appeal was made in accordance with Department of Interior regulations (36 CFR Part 67) governing certifications for the Federal income tax incentives for historic preservation as specified in the Internal Revenue Code. I thank you and your representatives, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for meeting with me via videoconference on August 30, 2023, and for providing a detailed account of the circumstances involved in your appeal.

After carefully considering the complete record of the project, including the information provided as part of your appeal, as well as additional research conducted, I have determined that at the time of your application for certification of significance, the building at 710 Baronne Street did not contribute to the Upper Central Business Historic District, in which it is located. Accordingly, the opinion issued by the NRHP on May 26, 2023, denying certification of historic status for this building, is hereby affirmed.

The Standards for Evaluating Significance Within Registered Historic Districts, incorporated in the NPS regulations at 36 CFR § 67.5, define a building which contributes to the significance of a district as “one which by location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association adds to the district’s sense of time and place and historical development.” Conversely, a building that lacks significance within a historic district is one that does not contribute to the special qualities and characteristics that identify the place or is one where particular features “have been so altered or have so deteriorated that

the overall integrity of the building has been lost.” The National Register (NR) Decision of May 26, 2023 references an earlier March 22, 2022 Denial Decision for this same property. The NR letter indicates that although the earlier denial was for a similar application under different ownership, it also states “the basis for the earlier denial has not substantially changed.” I concur with this statement and Decision by the National Register Program.

The building at 710 Baronne Street was constructed circa 1908 as an automobile showroom and garage. It first appears on the Sanborn map as the Abbott Motor Company. As built, the building’s main façade is ornate with exterior side walls of solid masonry construction. The façade is detailed with classical motifs with five ornamental pilasters dividing the façade into four equal bays along Baronne Street. Repeating diamond-shaped motifs in ornamental relief decorate the shaft of each pilaster. Each pilaster is capped by a molded capital with features of a shield embossed with fleur-de-lis flanked by decorative swags. Each bay retains its original multi-pane transom windows with four panes per bay. Above the transom windows within each bay are sets of four casement windows. The top of the façade contains an ornate frieze band across the full length of the façade, articulated into three distinct parts. Above the frieze is a parapet, featuring panels with decorative metal vents. With few exceptions, the existing building retains most all these original character-defining features and has changed little over time. The one exception being the lower retail storefronts, which have been replaced and are non-original. However, in 2020, a six-story steel framed addition was added to the rear portion of the building. The new addition sits atop the historic footprint of 710 Baronne Street and is set back approximately 25 feet from the front façade; and although, the new addition did not alter or obscure the primary front façade and its ornate detailing, it has changed the overall massing, scale, and feeling of how the building is experienced and viewed at the street level. The six-story high addition dominates the original building and literally overshadows its presence along Baronne Street. Although set back approximately 25 feet from the front façade of the original building, the sheer massing and size of the addition overwhelms the scale of the originally constructed circa 1908 two-story building.

In summary, after considering the project documentation, the additional information presented during the appeal, as well as viewing additional photos of the building along Baronne Street, I have determined that the placement of the highly prominent six-story addition atop the roof of the relatively smaller scaled two-story portion undermines the historic integrity of the building as an early 1900’s era commercial building. The New Orleans Upper Central Business District is characterized by masonry or masonry-clad construction, which tended to limit the heights of buildings constructed during the defined period of significance. While two, three, or even four-story buildings from the period of significance appear commonly throughout the District, this large, six-story, roof-top addition causes 710 Baronne Street to be inconsistent with the historic character and defined period of significance within the District. Although the front façade, with its historic detailing, remains intact; the 2020 addition’s scale and massing, cause the building as a whole to be incompatible with the district’s sense of time, place, and historical development. Accordingly, I have determined that 710 Baronne Street is not a “certified historic structure” for purposes of Federal tax laws.

As Department of Interior regulations provide, my decision is the final administrative decision regarding your appeal from the May 26, 2023, denial of certification of significance. A copy of this decision will be provided to the IRS. Questions concerning specific tax consequences of this decision or interpretations of the Internal Revenue Code should be addressed to the appropriate office of the Internal Revenue Service.

Sincerely,

**Michael
W Miller**

Michael W. Miller, AIA

Bureau Historical Architect & Chief Appeals Officer
Cultural Resources

Digitally signed by
Michael W Miller

Date: 2024.04.16

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cc: SHPO-LA

IRS