



**Testimony of**  
**Dan Holland, CEO, Young Preservationists Association of Pittsburgh**  
**in support of the nomination of the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange**  
**to be a City Historic Landmark**  
**Wednesday, July 1, 2009**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on YPA's nomination of the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange Building to be a City Historic Landmark.

YPA is supporting this nomination for three reasons.

First, the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange Building has a compelling history. Few American cities can claim such early advances in film industry history as Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Region—the first Nickelodeon, the first Warner Brothers theater, and important advances in the film exchange system. Paramount Pictures streamlined the film exchange system in the 1920s right here in Pittsburgh to make it easier to distribute films. Few other American cities can lay claim to such a combination of film innovations.

And yet, the last of our film exchanges sits forgotten, vacant, and decaying. This is no “ordinary” warehouse. The Paramount Pictures Film Exchange building is certainly not Heinz Hall, but few theaters in America are. What this building represents is a remarkably in-tact monument to Pittsburgh's prominent role in the film distribution business.

The building served in the capacity of a library, office space, and viewing rooms, thereby consolidating many separate entities under one roof. At the time of its construction, the building was among the most advanced film exchanges along Pittsburgh's Film Row, which featured reinforced, fireproof construction complete with seven automatically sprinklered film vaults. These features suggested that something far more precious than simple consumer goods were being stored in the building.

Second, the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange building is a critical part of the Uptown community's plan. The Uptown Community Partners voted unanimously on June 22, 2009, to support this historic nomination because



the Paramount building is a critical asset to the Uptown neighborhood. The Paramount building is a complement to the community's comprehensive plan, developed in partnership with Rothschild Doyno Architects, and is an important driver of the market economy in Uptown.

Uptown Community Partners is committed to working with institutions, government, developers, investors, and other partners to ensure that a new use for the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange building is found. One leading use is a "green" medical clinic. A developer from New York City who specializes in creating environmentally-sensitive medical clinics in historic buildings has expressed interest.

Finally, YPA is supporting this nomination because it represents the future of our city. In an age where the term "green" has come to dominate the world of architecture and preservation, the "greenest" building is one that is already built. In this sense, the Paramount Pictures Film Exchange is already a green building and one that can further advance the efforts of the Uptown Community Partners and the City of Pittsburgh to revitalize the Uptown neighborhood.