

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6

other names/site number _____

Name of Multiple Property Listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 7613 N. Paulina Street not for publication

city or town Chicago vicinity

state Illinois county Cook zip code 60626

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date _____

Illinois Department of Natural Resources - SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:): _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/warehouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH CENTURY AND 20TH CENTURY
REVIVALS/Renaissance Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick, terra-cotta, concrete

roof: Bitumen

other: _____

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Narrative Description

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

Summary

Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6, located at 7613 N. Paulina Street in the Rogers Park community area on the far north side of Chicago, was designed by architect George S. Kingsley and completed in 1922. The building is a six-story, rectangular, concrete and brick structure with an ornate Renaissance Revival style façade rendered in polychrome terra cotta and buff-colored face brick. The main entrance to the building is centered on the primary west façade and flanked by original storefronts with green terra-cotta framing. The upper floors of the west façade are regularly fenestrated with original multi-light wood casement windows.

Typical of early-twentieth century storage warehouses, the secondary elevations of the building are unornamented and utilitarian, with common brick walls and exposed concrete structure. The north and south elevations are unfenestrated; the east (alley) elevation is regularly fenestrated with two-over-two steel sash windows. A metal fire escape is located on the north end of the east elevation, and a one-story garage extends from the south end of the east elevation, facing the alley.

The roof of the building is flat with bitumen roofing. Two common brick penthouses, one near the center of the building and one at the southeast corner, extend above the roofline.

Narrative Description

Site

Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6 is located at 7613 N. Paulina Street, in the Rogers Park community area on the far north side of Chicago. The building faces west onto North Paulina Street, just north of West Howard Street, and is one of a cluster of commercial buildings centered on the Howard CTA elevated rail stop. West of the building is the Howard CTA depot and railyard.

The six-story building has a rectangular footprint, with a rectangular one-story garage extending from the south end of the east elevation to the alley. A surface parking lot is located directly north of the building, and a one-story commercial building is located directly to the south.

Exterior

West Elevation

The primary (west) elevation of the building is three bays wide and clad in buff-colored face brick and white terra-cotta with ornate Renaissance Revival style detailing. This façade is vertically divided into three compositional levels—an ornamented two-story terra-cotta base, a four-story brick midsection with terra-cotta ornament, and an elaborate terra-cotta cornice. The two-story base houses the central entrance and flanking storefronts, which are framed in green terra cotta and set within segmental-arched openings

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with decorative rope molding. The primary entrance within the central opening features an exuberant green terra-cotta surround with heavily ornamented piers and entablature surmounted by a scroll cartouche. Large single-pane sidelights flank the entrance, separated from the second-story windows by terra-cotta spandrel panels. Bronze colored letter signage above the entrance reads "Werner Bros." and similar lettering above the storefronts reads "Fireproof" and "Storage." The north and south openings house angled storefronts with ornamented spandrel panels that feature the words "Moving" and "Packing" in raised lettering. The second-story windows above these storefronts are three-part windows with large expanses of glazing. A projecting terra-cotta cornice above the second-story, set on elaborate terra-cotta brackets, separates the two-story base from the upper stories.

The four-story brick mid-section of the west elevation is regularly fenestrated with rectangular window openings that house original multi-light wood casement windows. The third-story windows feature terra-cotta surrounds with molded architraves, scallop ornament, and broken pediment hoods. The sixth-story windows feature even more elaborate terra-cotta surrounds flanked by pedestal columns with volute capitals, set on ornamented balconettes with scrolled brackets, and topped by pedimented window hoods that are incorporated into the terra-cotta entablature above. Slender twisted columns near the north and south ends of the façade extend from the terra-cotta base to the cornice above the sixth story. The west elevation is topped by an elaborate terra-cotta entablature. The architrave of the entablature features acanthus leaf and foliate brackets, and the frieze is decorated with foliate panels separated by pedestal blocks with bell-flower ornament. The molded cornice is topped by rondelles.

North and South Elevations

The building's secondary north and south elevations are four bays wide and unfenestrated, with common brick between the exposed concrete framing. Typical of secondary elevations on early twentieth century storage warehouses, both elevations are utilitarian and unornamented. The first story of the south elevation is obscured by an adjacent one-story commercial building.

East Elevation

The tertiary east elevation, facing the alley, is also clad in common brick between exposed concrete framing but is regularly fenestrated with original two-over-two steel sash windows. A metal fire escape is located at the north bay of the east elevation.

A one-story garage clad in common brick extends from the south end of the east elevation. Non-historic overhead doors are located on the north and east elevations of the garage.

Roof

The roof of the building is flat and covered with bitumen roofing material. Brick parapets on the secondary north, east, and south sides are capped with terra-cotta copings. A tall common brick penthouse rises from the southeast corner of the roof, marking the location of the rear freight elevator. A second common brick penthouse is located near the center of the roof, at the center stair and passenger elevator. A square brick chimney is located east of the center penthouse.

The roof of the garage is flat with bitumen roofing material.

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Interior

First Floor

On the interior of the first floor, the main west entrance opens into an ornate and intact entrance lobby. The lobby features a barrel-vaulted ceiling and checkerboard patterned terrazzo flooring. A large, curved service desk with stone countertop and base is located at the east end of the space. An open mezzanine extends across the east wall of the lobby, accessed by a passenger elevator and enclosed stairs west of the lobby. The west wall of the lobby houses an elaborate plaster door surround that mimics the exterior surround of the main entrance. Above the door is a sunburst-shaped medallion emblazoned with the Werner Brothers logo, "We Know How." The north and south walls of the space are identical, with large storefront windows at the first and second floors. The first-floor openings on the north wall have been infilled, but original glazing is intact in the remaining openings. The storefront windows are vertically separated by plaster pilasters scored to mimic ashlar stone. Large acanthus leaf brackets at the top of each pilaster support shallow beams with rope molding that extend across the barrel-vaulted ceiling. A plaster cornice with double rope molding extends between the pilasters above the second-floor openings. The first and second floor storefronts are horizontally divided by plaster spandrels with decorative panels and rope molding, similar to the balustrade at the mezzanine. Original chandeliers and sconces remain in the space.

North and south of the lobby are small retail spaces with non-historic finishes. The north retail space currently houses a post office, and the south retail space is vacant.

Upper Floors

The second-floor spaces north and south of the lobby are open with few partitions and are accessed from the mezzanine. Unlike the upper floor storage areas, these spaces feature flat plaster walls with stone base, and a low plaster ceiling. The flooring throughout is concrete. The second floor most likely served as offices and storage space for pianos and other household goods that required climate-controlled conditions and were meant to be visible from the main lobby through the large areas of glazing between the columns. The glazing on the second floor is intact but has been painted.

The third through the sixth floors of the building are utilitarian storage spaces. A central stair/elevator core constructed of clay tile provides access to the upper floors and houses a concrete stair with pipe railing and a small passenger elevator. A large freight elevator is located at the northwest corner of the building. The perimeter brick walls, concrete columns, and concrete ceilings are exposed and painted. The floor throughout is concrete. The fourth floor of the building is divided into small fireproof storage rooms, with painted clay tile walls and metal fire doors. The remaining floors are open with no partitions outside the elevator/stair enclosures.

Integrity

The Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6 retains excellent exterior integrity, with its overall historic massing, roofline, and brick exterior with terra-cotta detailing intact. The historic entrance surround, storefronts, and windows remain on the primary west elevation.

The interior of the building is also well preserved. The ornate entrance lobby on the first floor remains intact with very little alteration, and the upper floors of the building retain their utilitarian character.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1922

Significant Dates

1922

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

George S. Kingsley

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

The Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6, designed by noted Chicago architect George S. Kingsley and completed in 1922, is locally significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent and well-preserved example of a storage warehouse, a distinct building type that developed in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century to provide secure and fireproof storage and moving services for a wide variety of items ranging from furniture and household goods to automobiles. Architect George S. Kingsley's design for the Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse features an elaborate Renaissance Revival-inspired façade that served as advertising for the company, while the solid concrete and masonry construction behind the facade ensured that client's valuables were protected. On the interior, the building's ornate lobby provided a high-end customer experience in contrast to the utilitarian storage spaces beyond. Kingsley was well-known across the country as an expert in storage warehouse design. In addition to his work on the Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse, Kingsley also served as architect for the many of Chicago's most distinctive storage warehouses, including a Neo-Classical example at 6325 N. Broadway (1920), an Italian Renaissance Revival warehouse at 6542 N. Clark Street (1920), and Neo-Classical example with Sullivanesque ornament at 5951 West Madison Street (1921). Kingsley's Egyptian-Revival-style design for the Reebie Storage Warehouse at 2325 N. Clark Street, which features a profusion of polychrome terra-cotta ornament including pharaoh sculptures and Egyptian columns, is considered one of the finest examples of the "Academic Egyptian Revival" style in the United States.

The Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6 was constructed in a time of expansion for Chicago's storage warehouse and transfer industry, which arose in the late nineteenth century in response to the city's increasingly mobile and affluent population. Founded in 1892 by Swedish immigrant brothers, Eric and Emil Werner, Werner Brothers Fireproof Storage Company was among the earliest businesses related to the moving and storage of household goods in Chicago. By 1920, the company owned and operated five storage warehouses on the north side of Chicago, primarily located on Broadway (formerly Evanston Avenue), which served as a major commercial thoroughfare connecting the city to suburban Evanston. These warehouses (three of which are extant) were two-to-four-story utilitarian masonry structures with minimal architectural detailing. The Werner Brothers' sixth storage warehouse at 7613 N. Paulina Street, with its ornate Renaissance inspired façade, was a distinct stylistic departure from their previous warehouses, reflecting the company's growth and success in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6's period of significance under Criterion C is 1922, the year of the building's construction. The proposed National Register listing boundary encompasses the property that was historically associated with the building.

The Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6 is designated an "orange rated" building in the Chicago Historic Resources Survey, as it "possess[es] some architectural feature or historical association that made [it] potentially significant in the context of the surrounding community."

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

Early History of Household Goods Storage in Chicago

Household goods storage and transfer emerged as a distinct industry in the United States in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, spurred largely by the increasing mobility of residents within large urban centers and "a rise

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in wealth per capita” that “financed more expensive and valuable household possessions.”¹ Earlier in the century, the expansion of the country’s rail network led to the establishment of warehouses for commercial goods; at that time, the storage of household items was “in the hands of upholsters and furniture movers who had vacant loft rooms, and they conducted a storage business in a slipshod way as a side issue.”² The earliest warehouses used exclusively for the storage of household items first appeared in New York City in the 1860s, and the first purpose-built household goods storage warehouse in the city was constructed for former bank director John H. Morrell in the early 1870s. Like many other pioneers in the industry, Morrell initially started his household goods storage business to productively use vacant space within buildings that he already owned; however, the business proved so successful that he purchased an adjoining lot on 32nd Street and constructed a new 100’ x 200’ warehouse.³ Morrell is credited with bringing a level of professionalism and standards to the nascent industry, using itemized receipts to properly account for goods stored and removed; organizing a group of reliable warehouse packers; standardizing and upgrading packing methods; and separating individual storage spaces with tight board partitions.⁴ His storage business continued to thrive until 1881 when a fire at the nearby Fourth Avenue Railway car barn destroyed his warehouses.⁵

The devastation to John Morrell’s storage business underscored the threat that fire posed to valuable goods stored within these warehouses, and several storage companies in the city subsequently began to build warehouses out of fire-resistant materials—the newly-organized Manhattan Storage and Warehouse Company and the Lincoln National Bank both constructed the first fire-resistant warehouses on 42nd Street in 1882, and others soon followed suit.⁶

By the early 1880s, the household good storage industry had spread west to Chicago. The first company to offer storage for household goods in the city was the Fidelity Storage Warehouse on East Van Buren Street. Founded in 1875, the company began advertising for household storage in their buildings around 1880, and by 1883 was offering “increased facilities for the storage of household goods” and “private compartments.”⁷ Geroge Parry was also an early participant in the industry in Chicago, running a warehouse for the storage of furniture, buggies, and other household items on West Monroe Street as early as 1880.⁸ An advertisement for the company in the August 9, 1885 edition of the *Chicago Tribune* encouraged “all who contemplate storing their household goods, either temporarily or for a long term,” to “inspect my warehouses, which have every facility for careful handling of furniture, are dry, safe, and clean, with separate compartments.”⁹

Many of the pioneers of the household goods storage industry in Chicago were movers or expressmen who expanded their existing businesses to include household storage. In large cities like Chicago, households became increasingly mobile through the second half of the nineteenth century. The impetus behind this mobility varied by economic class. For upper-class families, moves were usually precipitated by the desire to live in the most desirable neighborhoods and the most up-to-date and fashionable dwellings. As multi-unit apartment buildings, flats, and residential hotels gained acceptance in urban areas, middle-class residents were also able to upgrade their living arrangements on a regular basis. Working- and lower-class residents also moved

¹ David Mitch, “Public Warehousing,” *Handbook of American Business History: Extractives, Manufacturing, and Services*, ed. David O. Whitten and Bessie E. Whitten (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 387.

² United States Department of Commerce and Labor, “The Warehousing Industry in the United States,” October 1903, 1062.

³ Walter C. Reid, “The Development of the Household Goods Storage Business,” *The Transfer and Storage Directory, 1916* (New York: Transfer and Storage Publishing Corporation, 1916), 17.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁵ Aspinwall, *Warehousing in the United States*, 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁷ *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 1883, 16.

⁸ *Chicago Tribune*, December 30, 1880, 7.

⁹ *Chicago Tribune*, August 9, 1885, 14.

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regularly—out of precarity rather than fashion—often to avoid eviction or in search of more sanitary living conditions. In Chicago, the custom of May first as moving day—a tradition that can be traced back to the English and Dutch festivals during which servants would change employers—was well established by the 1850s. By the late nineteenth century, as many as one-third of Chicagoans moved annually, and moving companies provided a vital service for relocating households.¹⁰

The combination of moving services with household goods storage within a single business model was a practical one—families in need of storage also required experienced packers and movers to bring their items in and out of the warehouse, and storage facilities were often used as a temporary holding place for larger households in the process of moving from one house to the next. Because of the seasonal nature of the moving business, many early storage and transfer companies also developed side businesses that could sustain them in the off-season—several companies rented out storage space to local retailers for merchandise and offered other services like rug cleaning or baggage transfer for travelers.¹¹

By the first decade of the twentieth century, the number of household goods storage and transfer companies in Chicago had increased dramatically, and many of the larger firms owned warehouses across the city. The Becklenberg Express and Van Company, which operated four fire-resistant warehouses on the city's South Side, is typical of the more successful storage and transfer companies that expanded during this period to meet the demands of an increasingly mobile urban population. In an advertisement in the 1905 *Lakeside Annual Directory of the City of Chicago*, the company highlighted the distinguishing features of their facilities, which included “vaults for trunks and valuables, steam-heated piano rooms, and specially constructed elevators of sufficient capacity to carry full van loads from the street entrance to the top floor without unloading.” Included in the company's moving fleet were “Moving Vans, Trucks, Piano Wagons, and Baggage Wagons, which enable us to have any wagon that you wish at your door in half an hour from the time you phone us.”¹² Other prominent household goods storage and transfer firms in the city at that time included Reebie Brothers Fireproof Storage, Hollander Express and Van Company, and Harder's Fireproof Storage and Van Company.¹³

Evolution of Storage Warehouse Design in the Early Twentieth Century

In the earliest days of the household good storage industry, many companies in urban areas began their operations in existing buildings—often commercial buildings, stables, or vacant industrial lofts—that were not purpose built for household good storage. However, warehousemen quickly realized that the danger of fire, water, and theft necessitated a new type of commercial structure that was designed specifically to meet the industry's unique needs.¹⁴ During the first decades of the twentieth century, architects, engineers, and storage companies established the basic components for the modern fireproof storage warehouse, which not only addressed security and safety concerns but also aimed to increase efficiency in loading, packing, and storing to maximize profits.

Modern fireproof storage warehouses were constructed only of fire-resistant materials, both inside and out. For most companies, concrete construction was the most cost-effective solution, with exterior walls of brick or clay tile. By the 1920s, flat slab concrete construction was preferred over beam and girder systems since it was not

¹⁰ Emily Clark, “Moving Days,” Encyclopedia of Chicago website, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/852.html>

¹¹ John Hess, *The Mobile Society: A History of the Moving and Storage Industry* (New York: McGraw-Hill 1973), 32.

¹² *Lakeside Annual Directory of the City of Chicago, 1905* (Chicago: The Chicago Directory Company, 1905), 2883.

¹³ Harder's had purchased the entire interest in Becklenberg the previous year, and continued to operate the company under its original name. *The Reform Advocate*, December 9, 1905, 16.

¹⁴ “Storage Warehouse,” *National Builder*, Vol. 24, January 1921, 53.

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only fireproof and cost-effective but also allowed for greater flexibility in placing interior partitions.¹⁵ Window openings were typically small and limited to front and rear elevations only, both for fire safety and for security, and fitted with steel frame windows. Interior space planning—the number and width of aisles between storage rooms, the thickness of interior partitions, the location and size of elevators and stairways—was carefully considered to provide sufficient and efficient access to storage rooms while maximizing the amount of space that could be utilized for rentable storage.¹⁶ Owners along commercial thoroughfares were also encouraged to incorporate retail spaces on the ground floor of their warehouses for “high class shops,” which would provide additional income and attract customers.¹⁷

The transformation was rapid, and storage companies rushed to retrofit or replace existing warehouses to meet the new standard. A 1907 article in *Fireproof Magazine* profiled the early “reconstruction” of a warehouse for the Hebard Express, Storage, and Van Company in Chicago:

Before the improvement...the Hebard warehouse consisted of the passe mill constructed type, with large windows, which were formerly thought necessary to provide light and air, but which have recently been discarded as too great a hazard from an insurance point of view. The old way of inviting conflagration from contiguous property and feeding it tinder in the form of dried out and rapidly rotting timber construction is rapidly giving way to the modern fireproof building.¹⁸

Modifications to the existing structure included infilling most of the window openings and installing fireproof windows with automatic closers in reduced openings, replacing the existing timber structure with fireproof materials, installing new storage rooms with clay tile walls and steel doors, and new iron stairs enclosed with clay tile partitions. Although architectural embellishments on the exterior were kept to a minimum, the renovation did include construction of an impressive lobby with tile floors and Classical detailing, reflecting the beginnings of a trend in design that would expand to the exterior of warehousing buildings by the early 1920s.

As the industry grew and competition increased, larger storage companies continued to expand the number of specialized spaces within their warehouses. In addition to the standard climate-controlled rooms for piano storage, warehouses began offering safe deposit vaults for storage of silverware and jewelry, which were especially attractive to thieves, as well as cold storage rooms designed to protect furs, carpets, and other costly fabric goods from mildew and pest damage. To attract the types of wealthy and discriminating customers who had jewelry, silver, and furs to store, companies were also encouraged by industry leaders to invest a portion of their construction budget for architectural ornamentation on street-facing facades. In a 1925 publication for the American Warehousemen's Association, Clarence A. Aspinwell noted, “While [architectural design] might seem to have no bearing upon the financial returns of the enterprise, this is probably far from the fact. For more and more there is developing in this country an appreciation of good architecture, and unconsciously perhaps, an estimate is formed by many persons of character of an establishment by its outside appearance.”¹⁹

Although Aspinwell preferred designs with simple, strong lines that projected “security and strength above all else” and did not attempt to hide the building's function, many architects viewed the “great blank spaces of wall that are usually characteristic of storage warehouses” as an opportunity for more elaborate artistic interpretation. In Chicago, where terra-cotta ornament was commonly used to add architectural interest to a wide variety of

¹⁵ *Household Goods Warehousing*, 10.

¹⁶ “Storage Warehouse,” *National Builder*, Vol. 24, January 1921, 53.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸ *Household Goods Warehousing*, 13.

¹⁹ “A Modern Fireproof Storage Warehouse,” *Fireproof Magazine*, Vol. 11 No. 1, July 1907, 7.

²⁰ *Household Goods Warehousing*, 14.

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building types, architects experimented with a variety of styles for modern storage warehouses in the 1910s and 1920s.

Early History of Werner Brothers Fireproof Storage Company (1892-1921)

Brothers Emil Werner (1866-1907) and Eric A. Werner (1870-1922) arrived in Chicago from Sweden in 1887 and began work in the “expressing, storage, and coal business” under the name Werner Bros. in 1892.²⁰ In 1899, the brothers built their first fireproof warehouse (Warehouse No. 1) at 18-20 Evanston Avenue (now 2817 N. Broadway), and in 1902, the business was incorporated under the name Werner Brothers Fireproof Storage Company.²¹ Although a fire in 1904 destroyed Warehouse No. 1, the company quickly rebuilt on the site and added two additional storage warehouses to their operations—Warehouse No. 2 at 2257 N. Lincoln Avenue and Warehouse No. 3 at 4659 N. Broadway. After Emil Werner’s death in 1907, Eric Werner continued as president of the company. By 1908, the firm was touted as one of the largest storage and moving businesses operating on the north side of Chicago, with over 500 fireproof storage rooms, 150 employees, “20 moving vans, a large number of express and heavy truck wagons, and 125 horses.”²² In 1913, Werner Brothers constructed a new four-story warehouse at 4917 N. Broadway (Warehouse No. 4), and in the late 1910s the company converted a brick stable at 3133 N. Halsted Avenue—constructed by Marshall Field & Company in 1902—for use as their fifth warehouse.²³ Eric Werner promoted the company extensively through print advertisements throughout the late 1910s and early 1920s, highlighting Werner Brother’s private storage rooms, its specialized record rooms utilized by large insurance companies and banks, and its expertise in moving and packing for a wide range of household valuables.²⁴

Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6 and Architect George S. Kingsley

Buoyed by the company’s success, in 1921 Eric Werner commissioned architect George S. Kingsley to design the sixth storage warehouse for Werner Brothers. Kingsley was a natural choice for the project, having designed many storage warehouses in an eclectic array of historical styles in Chicago and along the east coast during the late 1910s and early 1920s. Born in Cleveland Ohio in 1869, Kingsley apprenticed with Cleveland architect George F. Hammond from 1888 to 1891, when he moved to Chicago. Kingsley worked in partnership with architect William L. Carroll for three years before establishing a solo practice with offices at the Schiller Building.²⁵

Although Kingsley started his career in Chicago designing primarily residences and apartment buildings, he began specializing in storage warehouses in the 1910s, drawn to the nearly limitless opportunities for ornamentation on what was otherwise a simple and utilitarian building type. He also wholeheartedly embraced the concept of warehouse architecture as an effective and cost-efficient form of advertising that allowed savvy warehouse firms to rise above the pack in a highly competitive industry. As Kingsley told a reporter in 1923:

Good architecture is good advertising. Twenty or twenty-five thousand dollars added to make the building look attractive is an investment cheaper than billboard rental, more lasting, equally effective, and in better taste. People who store furniture generally live in artistic homes. They

²⁰ Ernst W. Olson and Martin J. Engberg, *History of the Swedes of Illinois*, Chicago, Engberg-Holmberg Publishing Co., 1908, 340.

²¹ “Iron Workers in a Riot,” *The Inter-Ocean*, April 10, 1899, 3.

Olson and Engberg, 340.

²² Olson and Engberg, 340-341.

²³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, *Chicago Tribune* Advertisement, September 10, 1922.

²⁴ *Chicago Tribune* advertisements, 1920-1921.

²⁵ “George S. Kingsley, Architect,” *The Construction News*, February 15, 1908, 25.

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*will appreciate their furs and pianos being kept in a beautiful building.*²⁶

Among the dozens of storage warehouses in Kingsley's portfolio, the most ornate and elaborate example in Chicago is the Reebie Brothers Storage Warehouse at 2325-2333 North Clark Street. Designed for W.C. Reebie and Brother Company and completed in 1922, the warehouse features a colorful and flamboyant Egyptian Revival façade that Kingsley painstakingly designed based on Egyptian temples erected in 200 BC by Pharaoh Ramses II. The Reebie Storage Warehouse was unique among Kingsley's commissions because the owners were committed to an authentic Egyptian motif and were prepared to pay for it—the building cost \$600,000, with \$20,000 spent on terra-cotta ornamentation alone, an astronomical amount of money at the time.²⁷ According to the Chicago Landmark Designation report for the Reebie Storage Warehouse, a 1924 newspaper article christened Kingsley as a “pioneer warehouse architect” who transformed the building type from a “nuisance and an eye sore” into a beautiful form of advertising for his moving and storage clients.²⁸

Even with more modest budgets, however, Kingsley could elevate the humble storage warehouse into the architectural high point of a streetscape. His design for the Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6, which cost \$90,000 to construct, utilized stock terra-cotta ornament in shades of cream and dark green to create an imposing and eye-catching façade.²⁹ The ornamented lobby continued the Renaissance Revival theme through the public spaces, ensuring that customers left the building impressed and reassured that their valuables were in good hands. Typical of Kingsley's designs, Warehouse No. 6 included offices and piano storage on the second-floor mezzanine level, with large windows that provided views to and from the lobby.³⁰

Construction began on Warehouse No. 6 in October of 1921 and was completed by summer of the following year, with H. Moreland listed as the contractor of record. In September 1922, Werner Brother's took out a full-page advertisement in the *Chicago Tribune* announcing the opening of “Chicago's Most Beautiful Warehouse” at 7613 N. Paulina Street, with large photos of the building's exterior and lobby.³¹ The building offered climate-controlled rooms for piano storage on the second floor and secured, fireproof storage rooms for household goods on the upper floors.

Later History of Werner Brothers Fireproof Storage Company (1922-1961)

Werner Brother's president and co-founder, Eric A. Werner, died on March 9, 1922, before construction was completed on the company's new warehouse.³² The following year, the Werner Brothers Fireproof Storage Company was sold to a syndicate of storage companies led by Martin H. Kennelly, president of the Fort Dearborn Storage Warehouse Company, and the company was renamed the Werner Brothers-Kennelly Warehouse Company.³³ Kennelly, a Chicago native and World War I veteran, began his career in the storage business as an office boy at a Becklenberg warehouse and was promoted to general manager before enlisting in the army. After returning from the war, he formed the Fort Dearborn Storage Warehouse Company, using his connections from a previous job with Marshall Field & Company to land a lucrative contract with the Field Museum.³⁴ Under his leadership, Werner Brothers-Kennelly continued to expand during the late 1920s,

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid, 9.

²⁸ “Reebie Storage Warehouse” Landmark Designation Report, 26.

²⁹ Chicago Building Permit dated October 3, 1921.

³⁰ *Household Goods Warehousing*, 14.

³¹ *Chicago Tribune* advertisement, September 10, 1922.

³² Newton Bateman, Paul Selby, and Josiah Seymour Currey, *Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois With Commemorative Biographies*, Vol. 2, Munsell Publishing Company, 1923, 742.

³³ “Syndicate Buys Control of Big Storage Co.” *Chicago Tribune*, February 18, 1923.

³⁴ “Hold Rites Saturday for Martin Kennelly,” *Chicago Tribune*, November 30, 1961, 1, 16.

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acquiring the massive ten-story Park Fireproof Storage Warehouse at 1750 North Clark Street in 1929.³⁵ Kennelly also served as the first president of Allied Van Lines Incorporated, a national network of 153 independent storage and moving companies organized by members of the National Furniture Warehousemen's Association in 1928.³⁶

Kennelly's influence in Chicago extended well beyond the industry—during the 1930s and 1940s, he served on the boards of the Chicago Parks Commission, the Chicago Crime Commission, and the Chicago Association of Commerce, was president of the Chicago Athletic Association, and led the city's Red Cross fund drive during World War II. In 1947, Kennelly was elected mayor of Chicago under a reform agenda, a position he held until 1955. During his two terms in office, Kennelly worked to restore the city's civil service commission, began major urban renewal efforts, oversaw plans for Chicago's new network of expressways, and assembled land for the creation of O'Hare International airport. After his tenure as mayor, Kennelly remained active as president of the Werner Brothers-Kennelly Warehouse Company until his death in 1961.³⁷

Comparable Storage Warehouse Buildings in Chicago

Although dozens of storage warehouses were constructed throughout Chicago in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a majority are no longer extant or have been substantially altered, particularly on the city's south side. The Park Fireproof Storage Warehouse at 1750 N. Clark, one of the largest storage warehouses in the city, was substantially altered in the 1970s when it was converted to condominiums. All six warehouses owned by the Harder Fire-proof Storage and Van Company, the largest storage warehouse company operating south of the Loop, have been demolished. Four of the six warehouses owned by W. C. Reebie & Brother Company have been demolished, although the company's impressive Egyptian Revival-style headquarters at 2325 North Clark Street remains intact.³⁸

Among the remaining early-twentieth-century storage warehouses, the most architecturally impressive examples on the north side of the city were designed by George Kingsley and completed between 1914 and 1922. A brief description of each example (excluding 2325 North Clark Street, described above) is below.

In the context of these properties, the Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6 remains as one of the best of Kingsley's storage warehouse designs in Chicago, and is among the most intact, retaining all its original exterior and character-defining interior features.

3833 North Sheffield Avenue (1913-1914)

Designed for the Hebard Storage Company and completed in 1914, the warehouse at 3833 North Sheffield is a large five-story building, clad in red face brick with Prairie-style detailing, and features a rectangular clocktower at the northwest corner that marks the recessed main entrance. Typical of storage warehouses, the first story is visually delineated from the upper floors, framed in simple terra-cotta banding and housing large steel sash windows with decorative security grates. The north elevation of the building, facing Sheridan Road, is arranged in two sections above the first story, each with three window bays flanked by wide brick piers. The

³⁵ Although still extant, the Park Warehouse was substantially altered in the 1970s when it was converted to residential use.

³⁶ "Werner Concern Takes Over the Park Warehouse," *Chicago Tribune*, August 20, 1929, 31.

"Chicagoan Heads New Moving Van Corporation," *Chicago Tribune*, July 16, 1928.

³⁷ Georgina Pell Curtis and Benedict Elder, *The American Catholic Who's Who*, Vol. 18, 1968, B. Herder, 239.

"Hold Rites Saturday for Martin Kennelly," *Chicago Tribune*, November 30, 1961, 1.

³⁸ Based on Google Map searches for addresses included in a list of Chicago storage warehouses printed in the April 2, 1919 edition of the newspaper *Lietuva*.

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west elevation, facing North Sheffield, is six bays wide and regularly fenestrated with small, rectangular window openings. Windows throughout the upper stories are non-historic replacement windows. In contrast to Kingsley's later storage warehouses, the terra-cotta ornamentation is more restrained, with Sullivanesque ornament capping the brick piers between the first story window openings and the along the parapet. Most of the terra cotta ornament appears to have been recently painted.

6325 North Broadway (1919-1920)

Also designed for Heberd, the warehouse at 6325 North Broadway is a six-story building with Neo Classical-style detailing on its primary north façade. The north façade is ten bays wide and arranged in a tripartite configuration, with a one-story monumental base clad in off-white terra cotta to mimic ashlar stone, a four-story mid-section with clad in buff face brick, and a one-story upper section with ornamented parapet. The two southernmost bays form a separate, less ornamented section, with a large loading entrance at the first story. The remaining eight bays form a unified and nearly symmetrical composition, with two three-bay wide sections separated by a recessed center bay. A similar recessed bay is located at the far north end of the façade. Brick banding and terra cotta ornament applied from the second through the fifth stories of these recessed bays gives them the appearance of Classical pilasters. A substantial terra-cotta cornice extends above the sixth story windows, and the brick parapet above features large terra cotta plaques and blind terra-cotta balusters. The ground floor storefronts and entrances appear to be original. The upper story windows house original multi-light steel windows.

6542 North Clark Street (1919-1920)

The five-story Renaissance Revival style warehouse at 6542 North Clark Street was constructed for the Siebold Storage Company. The primary west façade of the building is clad in earth-toned face brick with limestone detailing. Window and door openings along the one-story base are separated by banded brick piers. Limestone banding separates the first story from the upper stories. Above the first story, the west façade is symmetrical, with a wide, regularly fenestrated center section topped by a shallow gabled parapet and flanked by slightly recessed end bays with false mansard tile roofs. The window openings in the center section are rectangular between the second and fourth stories and separated by decorative brick spandrel panels. The fifth story windows are set in round arched openings. Above the fifth story, the top of the center section is ornamented with diaper patterned brickwork and Lombard bands below the roofline. A limestone shield under the center of the gable, carved with the letter "S" and festooned with garlands, holds a flagpole. The flanking end bays are identical, with brick banding and rectangular window openings between the second and third stories and the third and fourth stories. Between the fourth and fifth stories, each bay contains a pair of round-arch window openings separated by a limestone Corinthian column set on limestone sill, with decorative bracketed cornice below.

Windows and doors at the first story appear to be original; upper story windows are non-historic replacements within the original openings.

5951 West Madison Street (1920-1921)

Designed for Jackson's Express and Van Company and completed in 1921, the six-story storage warehouse at 5951 West Madison Street illustrates Kingsley's growing expertise with the storage warehouse type and shares many elements in common with Werner Warehouse No. 6. The two-story terra-cotta base on the primary north facade, with arched windows at the second story, indicates that the building includes a second-floor/mezzanine level similar to Werner's, likely used for offices and piano storage. The main entrance to the building is also

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more prominent than in Kingsley's earlier warehouses, and features a recessed entry decorated with tile and an elaborate terra-cotta door surround. Ornamentation is more elaborate at street-level—the Neo-Classical entablature above the entrance and ground floor windows features original, eye-catching terra-cotta signage. Decorative Sullivanesque terra-cotta ornament anchors the east and west end bays of the two-story base.

Above the second story, the north façade is clad in buff-colored brick. The five-bay center section is flanked by slightly recessed end bays that are highly ornamented, with terra cotta piers punctured by rectangular window openings and terminating in elaborate round arched terra cotta surrounds with balconettes. In the center section, the central and end bays feature larger window openings framed with terra-cotta. The two intermediate window bays house small window openings with brick headers and terra-cotta sills. The north façade terminates with a terra-cotta cornice with egg and dart molding and a shallow stepped parapet above. Windows and doors on the north façade appear to be original. However, the terra-cotta piers at the first story have been painted and insensitively repaired.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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“Syndicate Buys Control of Big Storage Co.” *Chicago Tribune*, February 18, 1923.

United States Department of Commerce and Labor. “The Warehousing Industry in the United States.” October 1903.

“Werner Concern Takes Over the Park Warehouse.” *Chicago Tribune*, August 20, 1929.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>42.020031</u>	<u>-87.672732</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

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

The property is bounded on the west by North Paulina Avenue and on the east by the alley that runs east of the property. The north boundary extends east from the northwest corner of the building to the alley, excluding the surface parking lot directly north of the building. The south boundary extends east from the southwest corner of the building to the alley.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The National Register boundaries encompass the entire property that was historically associated with the Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Emily Ramsey date 1/8/2024
organization Ramsey Historic Consultants, Inc. telephone 312-213-9630
street & number 1105 W. Chicago Avenue, Suite 201 email emily@ramseyhcinc.com
city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60642

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

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Photographs:

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

Photo Log

Name of Property: Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
City or Vicinity: Chicago
County: Cook **State:** IL
Photographer: Emily Ramsey and John Cramer
Date Photographed: November 2, 2023

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

Photo 1 of 14: West and South elevations, looking east

Photo 2 of 14: West and North elevations, looking southeast

Photo 3 of 14: North and East elevations, looking southwest

Photo 4 of 14: West elevation, entrance detail, looking east

Photo 5 of 14: West elevation, north storefront, looking southeast

Photo 6 of 14: West elevation, south storefront, looking southeast

Photo 7 of 14: West elevation, parapet detail, looking east

Photo 8 of 14: First floor lobby, looking southeast

Photo 9 of 14: First floor lobby, looking west

Photo 10 of 14: First floor lobby, entrance detail, looking west

Photo 11 of 14: Interior stair, looking north

Photo 12 of 14: Second floor/mezzanine interior, looking west

Photo 13 of 14: Typical upper floor interior, looking south with center stair/elevator at left

Photo 14 of 14: Typical upper floor interior, looking east to freight elevator

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

Figure 1: GIS Location Map



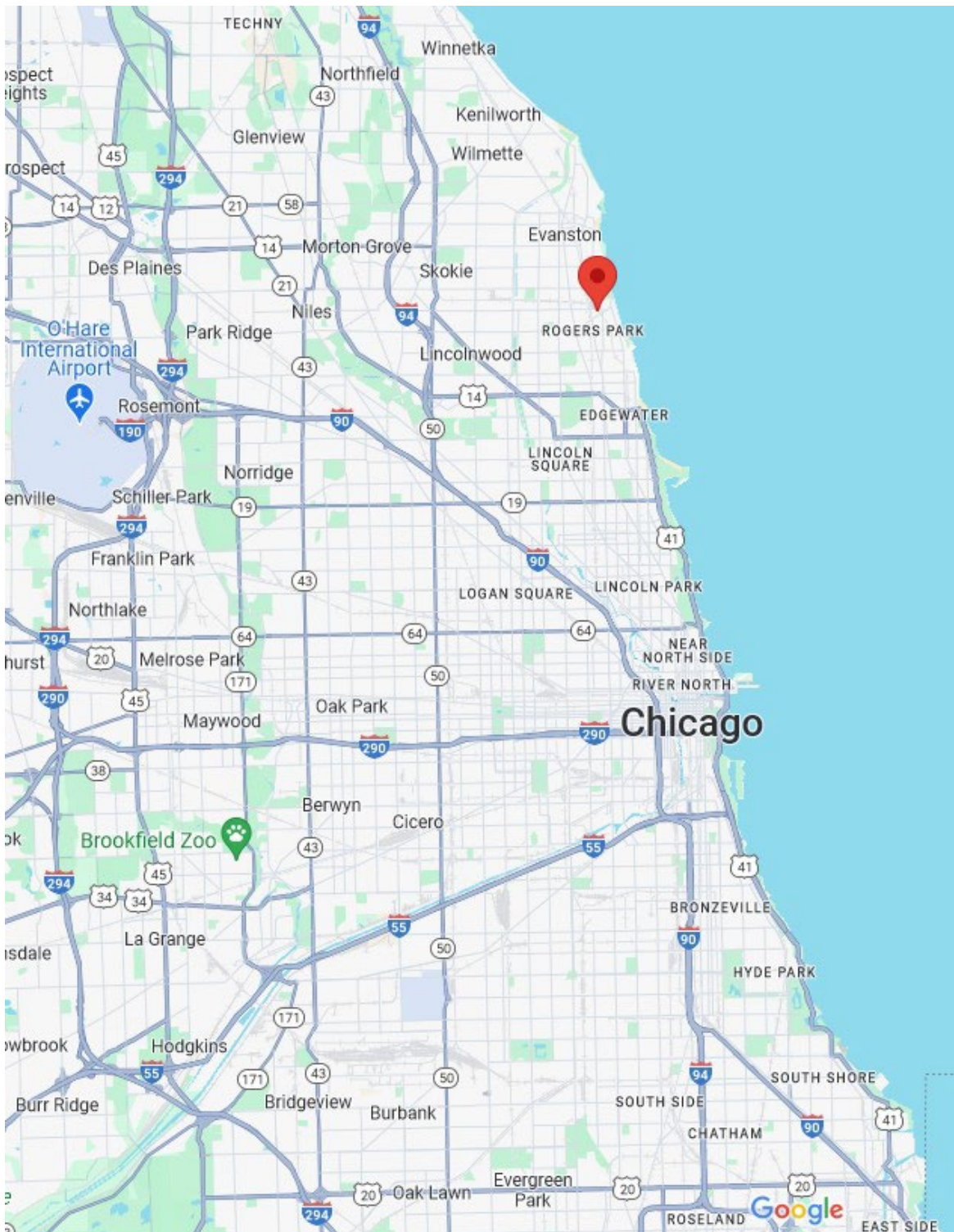
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Figure 2: Local Location Map



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Figure 3: National Register Boundary Map



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Figure 4: 1937 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, showing Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6



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Figure 5: Eric A. Werner, c. 1908 (*History of Swedes in Illinois*)



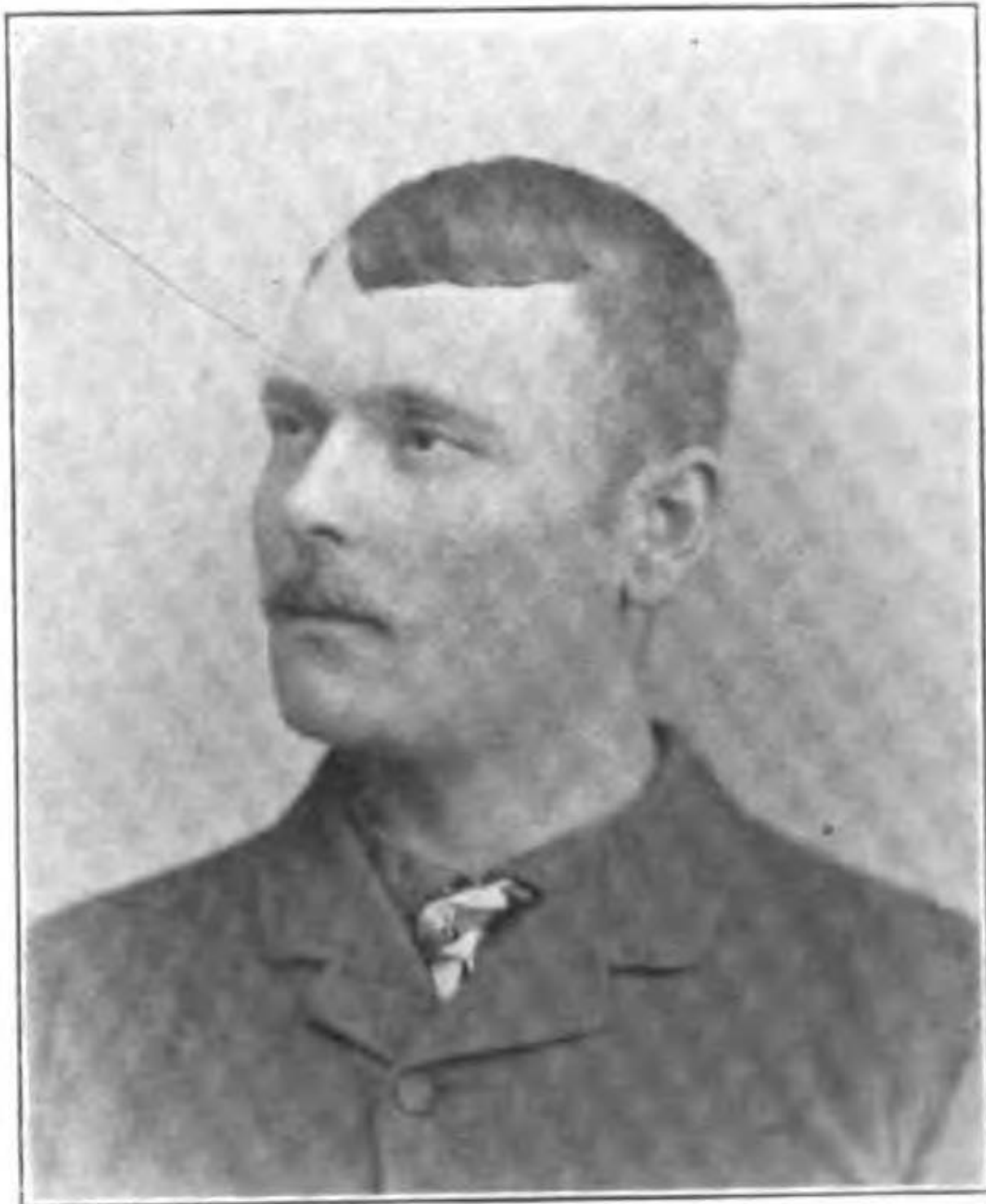
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Figure 6: Emil Werner, c. 1908 (*History of Swedes in Illinois*)



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Figure 7: Advertisement for Werner Brothers from February 25, 1921 edition of *Chicago Tribune*

**Private
Storage
Rooms**

Padlocked steel doors, fire brick walls and every room ventilated, are some of the factors which combine to make our private rooms safe.

For absolute security of household goods and accessibility at a minute's notice, these rooms offer the utmost. "We Know How"

**WERNER BROS.
FIREPROOF STORAGE CO.**
MAIN OFFICE 2815 BROADWAY
Phone Lake View 33

**5 Fireproof Warehouses
Our Service Reaches Everywhere**

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Figure 8: 1922 Chicago Tribune advertisement announcing the opening of Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6

Chicago's Most Beautiful WAREHOUSE

**7613-17 N. Paulina Street
AT HOWARD "L" STATION**



**ALL
PHONES
LAKEVIEW
0033**



7613 N. Paulina St. (at Howard "L" Station) Office at 7613 N. Paulina St.

To meet the demand of a discriminating public who appreciate efficient moving and storage of household goods, we have added Chicago's most beautiful warehouse to our large chain of fireproof warehouses.

WERNER BROS. FIRE-PROOF STORAGE CO.

Main Office
2815 BROADWAY

Warehouse No. 1:
2815-25 BROADWAY

Warehouse No. 2:
2257-61 LINCOLN AVE.

Warehouse No. 3:
4649-51 BROADWAY

ESTABLISHED 1882



INCORPORATED 1902

Warehouse No. 4:
4917-19 BROADWAY

Warehouse No. 5:
3133-35 N. HALSTED ST.

Warehouse No. 6:
7613-17 N. PAULINA ST.

OUR SERVICE REACHES EVERYWHERE

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Figure 9: Architect George S. Kingsley, c. 1908 (*Construction News*)



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Figure 10: Chicago Tribune article dated February 18, 1923, announcing purchase of Werner Brothers after Eric Werner's death in 1922



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Figure 11: Historic postcard of Reebie Storage Warehouse at 2325 N. Clark Street, designed by George S. Kinglsey
(Chicago Landmarks, <https://webapps1.chicago.gov/landmarksweb/web/landmarkdetails.htm?lanId=1410>)



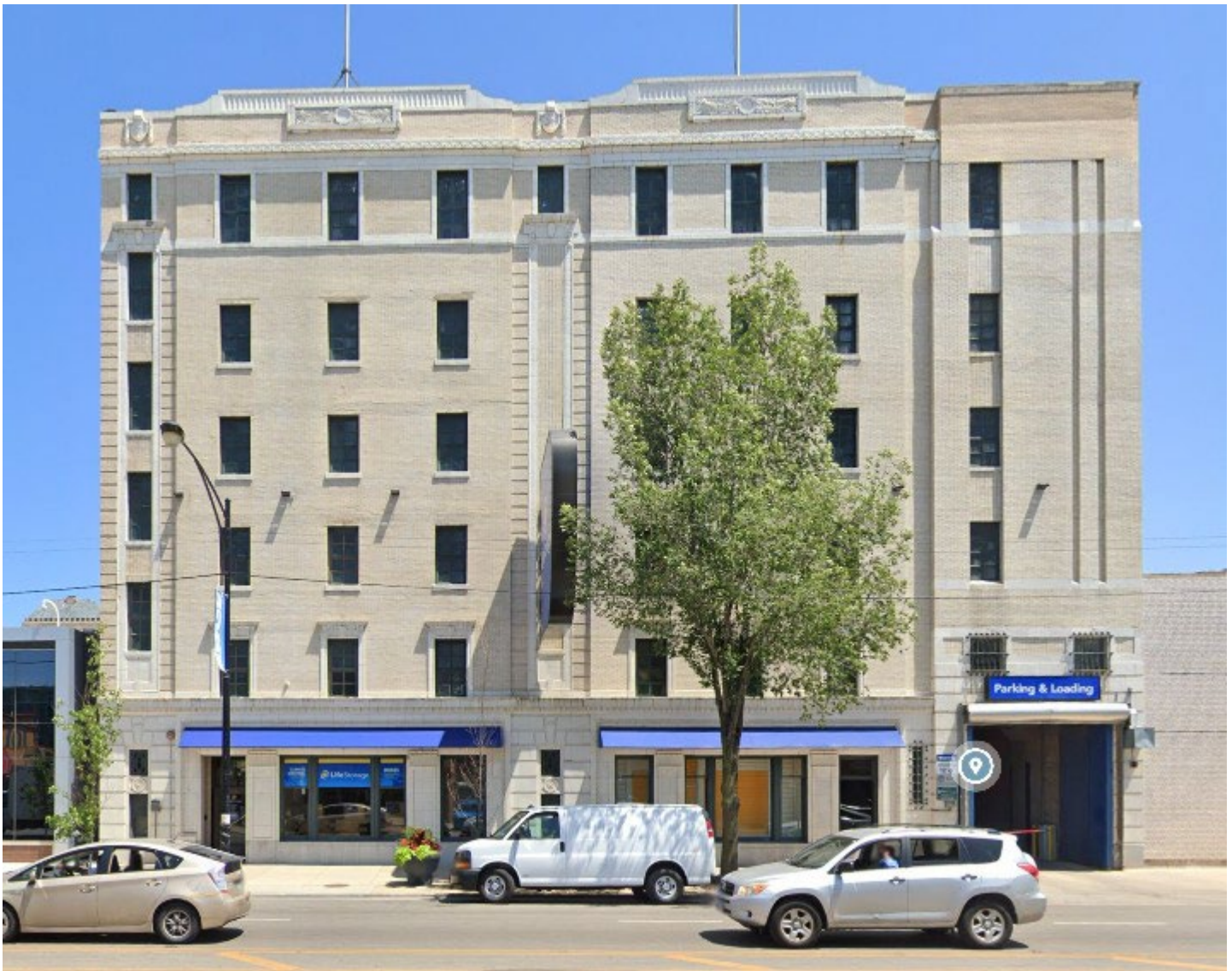
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Figure 12: Hebard Storage Warehouse at 6325 N. Broadway, designed by George S. Kinglsey and completed in 1920 (Google Maps)



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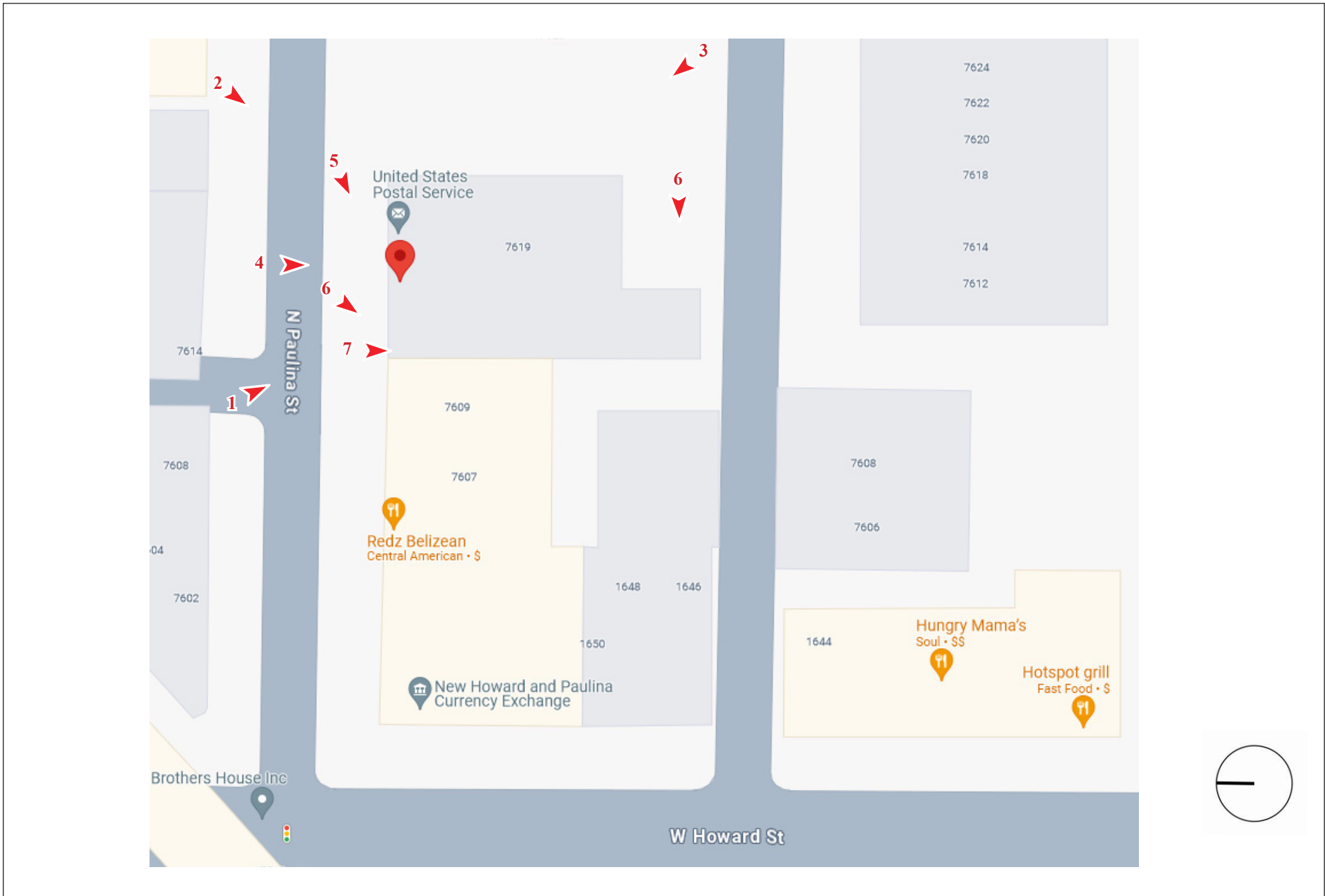
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Figure 13: Siebold Storage Company Warehouse at 6542 N. Clark Street, designed by George S. Kingsley and completed in 1920 (<https://chicagobikeadventures.com/looking-around-14-10-photos/>)

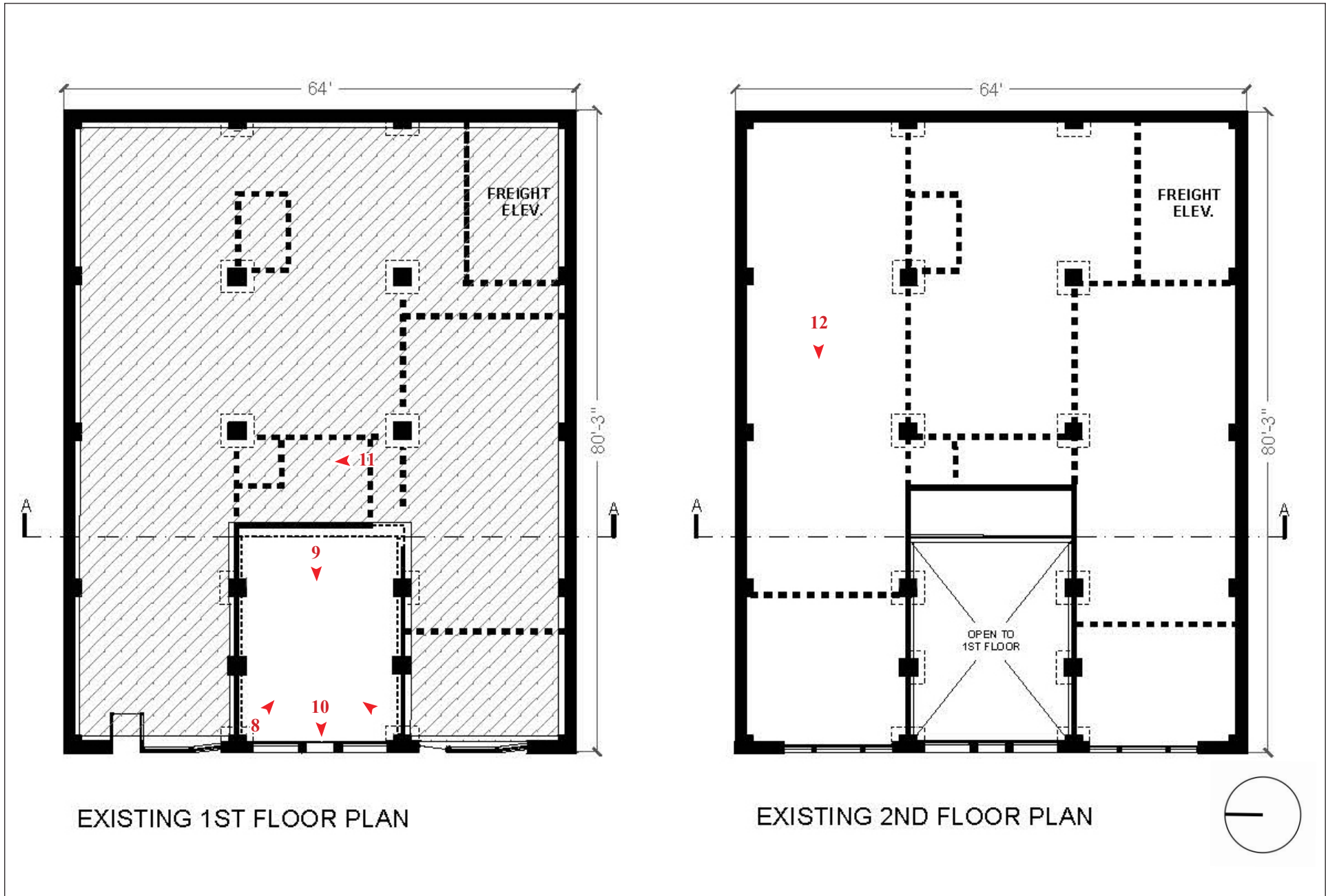




RAMSEY HISTORIC CONSULTANTS, INC.

Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
 7613 N. Paulina Street
 Chicago, Illinois

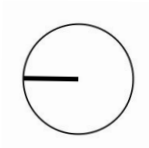
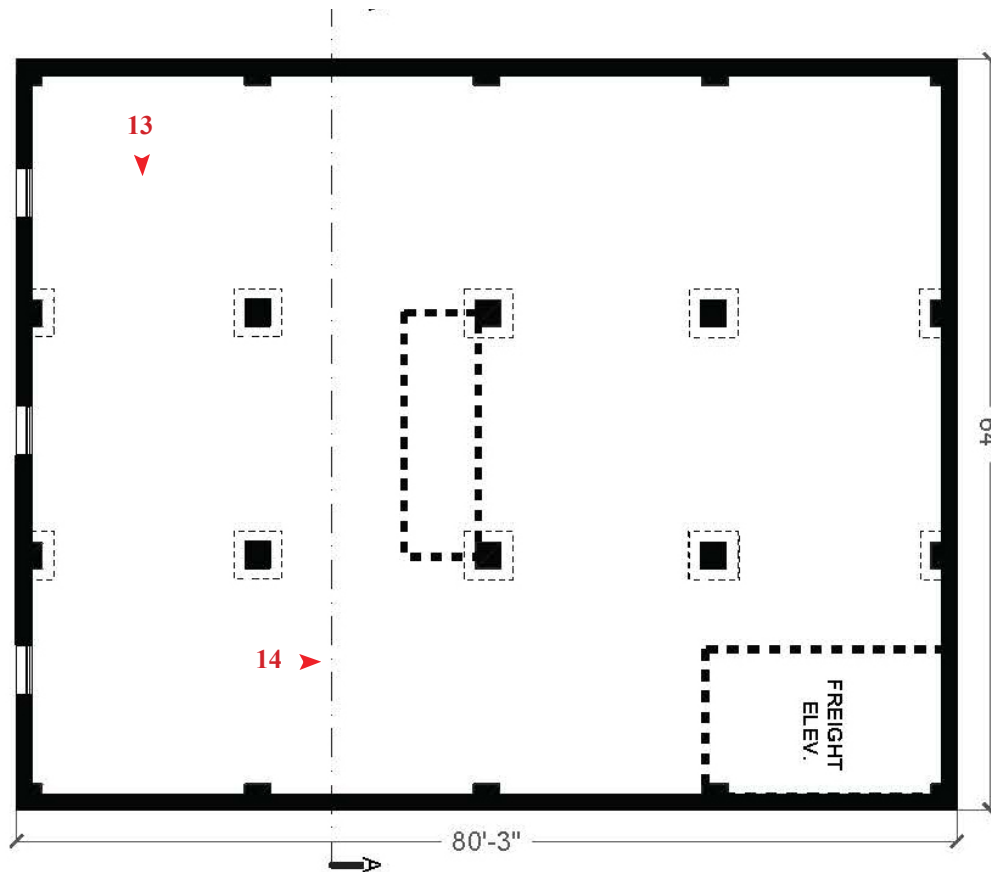
National Register Nomination
 Exterior Photo Key



RAMSEY HISTORIC CONSULTANTS, INC.

Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
 7613 N. Paulina Street
 Chicago, Illinois

National Register Nomination
 First and Second Floor Photo Key



RAMSEY HISTORIC CONSULTANTS, INC.

Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
 7613 N. Paulina Street
 Chicago, Illinois

National Register Nomination
 Typical Upper Floor Photo Key

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



1. West and south elevations, looking east

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



2. West and north elevations, looking southeast



3. North and east elevations, looking southwest

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



4. West elevation, entrance detail, looking east

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



5. West elevation, north storefront, looking southeast

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



6. West elevation, south storefront, looking southeast

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



7. West elevation, parapet detail, looking east



8. First floor lobby, looking southeast

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



9. First floor lobby, looking west



10. First floor lobby, entrance detail, looking west

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



11. Interior stair, looking north

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



12. Second floor/mezzanine interior, looking west



13. Typical upper floor interior, looking south with center stair/elevator at left

National Register Nomination
Werner Brothers Storage Warehouse No. 6
7613 North Paulina Street
Chicago, IL 60626



14. Typical upper floor interior, looking east to freight elevator