

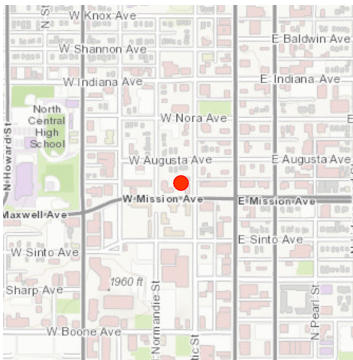


Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Nelson Insurance

Property ID: 708965

Location



Address: 106-108 W Mission Ave, Spokane, Washington, USA

Location Comments: Corner of N Atlantic St & W Mission Ave

GeographicAreas: Spokane, Spokane County, T25R43E07, SPOKANE NW Quadrangle

Information

Construction Dates:

Construction Type	Year	Circa
Built Date	1960	<input type="checkbox"/>

Number of stories: N/A

Historic Use:

Category	Subcategory
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Historic Context: Architecture

Architect/Engineer:

Category	Name or Company
Architect	Funk, Murray & Johnson

Project History

Project Number, Organization, Project Name	Resource Inventory	SHPO Determination	SHPO Determined By, Determined Date
2016-12-08751, , Spokane Mid-20th Century Modern Survey 2016	2/22/2017		

Photos



Overview, west & south facades



Overview, east & north facades



Metal framing detail, typical



East facade, south wing



Detail of curtain wall on left, metal mesh screen on right



View of bridge entry



South facade, north wing



Entry, south facade, north wing



East facade, north wing



North facade, north wing



South facade, south wing



West facade, south wing



South facade, south wing



West facade, south wing



West facade



Ground level parking & offices



Ground level parking



Detail showing juxtaposition of materials



Mosaic detail



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Inventory Details - 2/22/2017

Common name: Taylor Building
Date recorded: 2/22/2017
Field Recorder: Diana Painter
Field Site number:
SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Characteristics:

Category	Item
Foundation	Concrete - Poured
Form Type	Commercial - Professional Building
Roof Type	Butterfly
Roof Material	Asphalt/Composition - Built Up
Cladding	Concrete - Precast
Structural System	Masonry - Poured Concrete
Plan	Irregular

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: Yes

Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local): No

Property potentially contributes to a historic district (National and/or local): No

Significance narrative: History. Prior to the development of the Nelson Insurance building, the subject block was occupied by residences (1953 Sanborn Fire Insurance map). Directly across the street to the east was the Crestline Lumber Company, and directly across the street to the south were the Municipal Garage, the Municipal Water Department's Meter Building, and the Fire Department. Today, these buildings and site to the south are largely vacant, with buildings left over from Municipal Garage days, and the site to the immediate east is occupied by a contemporary strip mall. Unigard Insurance was located in the subject building in 1979, and Taylor Engineering occupied it in 1996.

The building was developed in 1960 by Leonard J. Nelson. It was called the Nelson Building, and businesses housed there were variously known as Nelson Agencies Insurance Company, Nelson Investment Company, and Nelson Agencies, Inc. Nelson was

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listed as Branch Manager for Northwestern Mutual Fire Association in 1939 and referred to himself as a manager for an insurance company in the 1940 census. In 1945 he served in the Army. Corporate registration was filed for Nelson Agencies, Inc. in 1951 with the Washington Secretary of State. Leonard was married to Crystel and had two children, Leonard Jr. - who later joined him in business - and Gerald.

The Nelson Insurance building is occupied today by Parametrix, an engineering, planning and environmental services firm, on the front portion of the south wing, DiBiasi Salon in the bottom portion of the south wing, The Human Potential Project in the south portion of the north wing, and Taylor Engineering, Inc., in the north portion of the north wing. The building is called the Taylor Building.

Architectural context. The Nelson Insurance building embodies the statements made in the introduction to the 2016 Washington State Commercial Architecture Context Statement, which is that form, not style, identifies post-World War II commercial buildings, and that understanding the forms, materials, and features of these buildings is critical to gain an understanding of them (Washington State Commercial Architecture, 1940-1975, 2016). The Nelson Insurance building is a Modern structure whose form, materials and workmanship convey its architectural meaning. Modern features that affiliate the building with post-war commercial architectural trends include the butterfly roof and overall horizontal emphasis of the building form, reinforced by the extended eaves, recessed area under the eaves, the floating brise de soliel (screen wall) formed by the metal mesh panels, the extended wing walls of the concrete facades, and recessed and/or open ground level. Modern materials include the composite panels seen on the north wing; precast concrete panels on the end walls; and aluminum framing for windows and doors. The minimalist detailing on the north wing, including the T-shaped channels in which the panels and windows are set, and relatively narrow aluminum window frames here reveal a slightly later but nonetheless modern treatment. Lastly, the texture and color of the building's materials and the way they are combined becomes the building's 'decoration,' another modern characteristic of the building's aesthetic.

Architects Funk, Murray & Johnson. Albert Harvey Funk, Edwin William Molander, and Carl Herbert Johnson formed Funk, Molander & Johnson in Spokane in 1944. Molander left the firm in 1956 to establish an independent practice; when Donald Howard Murray became a partner in 1957, the practice was renamed Funk, Murray & Johnson. Over its 40-year existence, the firm created some of the Inland Northwest's most iconic – and visually arresting – buildings, including everything from single-family residences to educational facilities to churches.

Funk was born in Spokane in 1903 and graduated from Washington State College in 1925. He worked as a draftsman for Whitehouse & Price from 1926 to 1929, when he moved to Washington, D.C. to serve as an assistant architect for the U.S. Treasury Department. Funk was a designer at Morrell Smith in New York City in 1930; he returned to Spokane in 1931. After working as a draftsman for the State Highway Department, he joined Monroe Street Lumber Co. as an in-house architect, and eventually opened his own firm in 1937. Albert Funk died in Spokane in 1986.

Murray was born in Walla Walla, Washington in 1920. Following graduation with a BS in architectural engineering from Washington State College in 1942, he served as a frogman in one of the Navy's Underwater Demolition Teams – forerunners to today's SEAL units. Murray's UDT 13 was one of four teams assigned to prepare the beaches of Iwo Jima for

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a USMC landing; he himself led the first wave of Marines onto Green Beach near Mount Suribachi, and was awarded the Silver Star for his action. Murray's unique design aesthetic and visionary work with fellow partner Johnson led to a number of notable projects, in particular Spokane's St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church (1961), Holy Family Parish Catholic Church in Clarkston (1962), and Richland Lutheran Church (1967), all three of which continue to make a visual impact decades after their construction. Don Murray died in Spokane in 2004.

Born in Sheridan, Wyoming 1913, Johnson earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Minnesota, St. Paul in 1935. He worked as a draftsman for a variety of firms, including J. van Teylingen (1935–40) and Angus Vaughn McIver (1940–41), both of Great Falls, Montana. Like Funk, he also worked for Whitehouse & Price. A licensed engineer, Johnson was integral to the partnership, with expertise that enabled the firm to explore innovative forms, materials, and construction methods. Carl Johnson died in 2002 in La Conner, Washington.

The firm is also known for the design of the 1945 Garland Theater in Spokane, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2013, and their collaboration with Spokane architects Culler, Gale, Martell & Davis on the design of the Federal Building in Richland, Washington (1965).

Physical description:

Location and Setting. The Nelson Insurance building at 106-108 W Mission Avenue is sited near the center of its .61-acre parcel in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of W Mission Avenue and N Atlantic Street and faces east, overlooking N Atlantic Street. A surface parking area is located in the southwest corner of the parcel and at the rear of the parcel. Parking is also located at the ground level on the west side of the lot, underneath the building. Virtually the only landscaping on the site are some informal plantings at the entry and street trees along N Atlantic Street.

Mission Avenue, which the Nelson Insurance building also faces, is a busy east-west arterial in Spokane, north of the Spokane River and downtown. The building is located east of N Washington Street, which extends south through Riverfront Park into downtown Spokane, and west of N Division Street, another important north-south route into downtown that becomes Highway 2 north of the city, eventually extending into Idaho north of Newport. Nearby points of interest include North Central High School to the west, and Gonzaga University to the southeast. Many of the nearby uses are commercial, although this area is essentially a mixed-use area. The block across the street is occupied by an older industrial use, noted as "Fleet Services," while a block of new housing is located to the industrial property's west. The neighborhood is in transition. The block within which Nelson Insurance is located is occupied by a newer building in the southwest corner that houses "Unify Community Health." Nelson Insurance occupies the southeast corner. A surface parking lot is located on the northwest corner. The northeast corner holds three single family homes, one of which may be converted to a multiple family residence. Directly across the street to the east is a newer strip mall. The parcel on which the building sits is owned by TEI Building, LLC.

Materials. The Nelson Insurance building is concrete construction with painted concrete finishes, synthetic panels in metal frames, metal mesh screens mounted in front of curtain walls with metal framing, a concrete roof, and concrete foundation. Panels of small mosaic tiles provide accents on the building.

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Massing and design. The Nelson Insurance building is a one-story building with an irregular footprint on a raised basement. It has a nearly flat roof; the north, south and west wings have a slight butterfly-shaped roof with extended eaves. The building is essentially organized in three sections, which share architectural detailing and design motifs. The south wing is T-shaped, with a butterfly roofline running north-south on the easterly portion and east-west on the west portion. The rectangular north wing has a butterfly roofline running east west. The middle portion bridges the two wings. It is inset on the east side, but forms a continuous façade on the west property line. The 1960 structure is a modern office building, on a raised basement, with a metal screen wall shading a curtain wall on the street-facing façades.

South wing, front (east) façade. The Nelson Insurance building (Taylor Building today) faces both N Atlantic Street and W Mission Avenue. The main entry is on the east façade of the south wing. Here there are two entries on the north side of a broad concrete entry stair with six steps divided by a metal balustrade. Both entry doors have aluminum frames and full-height glass, separated by a mosaic tile detail. The porch ceiling has a zig-zag profile. The entry doors are flanked by composite, synthetic panels. Extending to either side of the entry is a curtain wall covered with metal mesh screens that are suspended in front of the windows on a metal framework. The screens do not extend to the deep eave overhangs. As a result, the screens appear to float both in front of the windows and below the roofline. The wing walls on this façade are concrete. They extend to meet the plane of the metal mesh panels and also float above the foundation beyond the main body of the building. The windows at the level of the raised basement are protected by concrete window wells.

Linking the south wing to the north wing is a bridge portion that has the same height floor plate as the two wings. It is accessed at mid-point by an open concrete stair with a metal balustrade with ten steps up to an interior north-south hallway, and seven steps down to the open parking area under the building. Above the steps is an open skylight within a narrow, flat-roofed porch roof that is lower than the surrounding eaves and parapet. The south portion of this bridge is finished in a window wall of eight tall, narrow, fixed windows of full-height glass in a dark anodized aluminum frame. The north portion is finished in composite panels in a T-shaped channel, which is typical detail of this north wing. Below this expanse are horizontally oriented, aluminum-frame windows at the ground level, which light the interior of the lower level of the building.

North wing, south facade. The north wing of the building is described here in its entirety. A ground-level entry is located on the south façade, directly perpendicular to the bridge between the two wings. This central door and panel above is solid; to each side are two-light sidelights separated by a mosaic tile panel set in aluminum frames. To the right of the door is a concrete panel that finishes this south wall. This panel extends to the east, beyond the face of the building, and is suspended above the ground here, a design motif that is seen throughout. Below this panel is the solid concrete wall of the lower level. A paired, two-light, sliding window is located here, directly under the concrete panel. Above the concrete panel is a slight recess, contributing to the 'floating' appearance of the deep eaves that is typical of the building. The slight butterfly shape of the roof, with its canted fascia, and extended wing walls are character-defining features of this wing.

North wing, east façade. The west façade is clad in the composite panels set into metal framing seen throughout this wing. This detail divides this façade into nine bays, with three fixed lights symmetrically placed on this façade. Below the windows are concrete

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light wells that protect the lower level windows. This wing is set back from the sidewalk, accommodating one parking space.

North wing, north façade. The north façade of this wing is composed of an extended concrete wing wall on the east end. The façade as a whole is clad in uniform composition panels joined by a metal, T-shaped channel. These alternate with narrow fixed windows. The “T” shaped channels hold both the cladding panels and the windows along this façade, and add additional texture to the otherwise simple expanse. An entry that is raised about 2’ above grade is located on the west side of this facade, and is accessed via a wood-frame ramp. The entry has a flush metal door with a transom window above. As seen in both buildings, the exterior cladding rises to about the 8’ mark, surmounted by a slight recess, which allows the deep eaves to appear to be floating above the building.

North wing, west façade. This façade abuts a residential property and is not visible. The central portion of this façade, bridging the north and south wings at the first floor level, is clad in the same panels and features the same fixed-light windows as seen on the north façade. The roofline here falls below flanking rooflines and is a flat roof with a parapet. The main floor is supported by simple posts, which allows for passage to the ground floor parking level.

South wing, south façade. The south façade that abuts Mission Avenue is finished in precast concrete panels with no openings. The panels extend to the ground level of the main floor, revealing the poured concrete foundation. They extend past the east and west sides of this façade and float above the ground, a design feature of this building. They also fall short of the eave line. The wall above is slightly recessed and painted dark brown, in contrast to the white panels, giving the butterfly roofline a more dramatic appearance. The address of 106 W Mission is spelled out in raised letters on this façade.

South wing, west and south façades. The south and west facades of the south wing that face into the parking area on the southwest corner of the site exhibit the same treatment. They are finished at the first floor level with a curtain wall that is screened by the same metal mesh screening as seen on the front entry (east) façade, held in place by a metal frame that is in the same plane as the extended wing walls at each end. The east side of the ground level floor is fully glazed, with banks of full-height glass. On the west side, on the other side of the wide driveway to the ground level parking, is another small office, with windows facing east and the interior of the parking area.

Changes over time. Renovations to the building occurred in 1969, to add additional space at the lower level, and in 1972. A minor interior renovation was undertaken in 1978. The building was again remodeled in 1986. Research did not reveal the exact nature of these renovations. The same design motifs are carried out throughout the building, with the exception that a new cladding material was used on the north wing and the curtain wall and metal screen wall was not repeated here. The roof and eave design and concrete wing wall motif is seen on the south and north wings.



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