

BUILDING #3: Farmers Bank of Carson Valley
(Sierra Saving and Loan Association Building)

Acreage: Less than one acre
 Location: 1597 Esmeralda Avenue
 City: Minden State: Nevada County: Douglas County

Current Owner: Abbot Building Corporation
 Address: P.O. Box 98, Minden, Nevada 89423

Data Prepared by: Douglas County Planning Department Date: 1981
 Address: Minden, Nevada

Property Information

Original Use Farmers Bank of Carson Valley
 Present Use: Sierra Saving and Loan
 Condition: Good
 Architect: Frederick J. DeLongchamps
 Builder: unknown
 Construction/Modification Dates: 1916-18
 Building Type: Commercial
 Style: Neo-Classical

Physical Description

The Farmers Bank of Carson Valley is a two story, Neo-Classical style building constructed between 1916-18 to house the Farmers Bank of Carson Valley. The building was designed by Nevada architect, Frederick J. DeLongchamps and is one of four structures in Minden commissioned by the locally prominent Dangberg family. The structure retains its architectural integrity and retains its original use as a bank.

The building is located at the corner of Esmeralda Avenue and Fourth Streets and provides a strong visual anchor for the Minden commercial district. The building is oriented towards the east facing Esmeralda Avenue and is set back 6'-7' from the curb. Benches are located on the sidewalk adjoining the Fourth Street elevation.

The symmetrical, five by eleven bay, masonry building is supported by a brick foundation and terminates in a flat roof defined by a low parapet. South and East elevation exterior wall planes are faced in locally fired beige brick laid in running bond. North and West elevation are faced in red brick laid in five course common bank. A cornice incorporating a soldier course, terra cotta Greek Fret tiles and stylized terra cotta garlands bands the building below the parapet. Windows incorporate both single-light, fixed sash units and one-light-over-one-light, double hung sash units. First story windows include transoms with multi-pane, diamond-shaped lights. The first story, principal(s) elevations incorporates a monumental, engaged portico supported by engaged piers and Ionic columns. The slightly recessed principal entrance to the building is located in the central bay of the south elevation and includes a plate glass door unit enframed by a simple terra cotta surround and simple cornice.

The Farmers Bank of Carson Valley is an architecturally and historically significant building associated with early development of the town of Minden. The building was designed by noted Nevada architect, Frederick J. DeLongchamps for the locally prominent Dangberg family. During the first decades of the twentieth century DeLongchamps was responsible for establishing the restrained Neo-Classical architectural character of the town under the Dangberg patronage.

Please see the nomination cover form for a detailed discussion of the architect's work.

The Dangbergs were among the first settlers in the Carson Valley. H. F. Dangberg, senior arrived in the area in 1856 and founded the region's largest cattle ranch. By the early twentieth century, the Dangberg Land and Livestock Company encompassed 48,000 acres and included related meat packing and food processing ventures. In 1905, H. F. Dangberg, junior donated a site to the Virginia & Truckee Railroad for the construction of a rail terminal for the Carson Valley. Dangberg established the town of Minden adjoining the railhead and two miles northwest of the town of Gardnerville. The services of noted Nevada architect, Frederick J. DeLongchamps were retained to design four buildings to house the Dangberg business interests.

The Farmers Bank of Carson Valley was the second financial institution established in the area. Prior to 1902 banking was conducted informally by merchants and businessmen. The first formal bank, The Douglas County Farmers Bank, was organized by Arendt Jensen in Gardnerville.

On May 28, 1909, the Farmers Bank of Carson Valley was organized by H. F. Dangberg, W. F. Dressler, Fritz Heise, C. M. Henningsen and D. W. Park in the rival town of Minden. The two story Esmeralda Avenue bank building was completed between 1916-18 to house the Minden bank.

The Minden building continues to be used a commercial bank.

Bibliography

Dangberg, Grace, Carson Valley Historical Sketches of Nevada's First Settlement, (Reno, Nevada: The Carson Valley Historical Society, 1972).

Miluck, Nancy, ed, Genoa-Carson Valley Book: Where Nevada Began, (Genoa: Dragon Enterprises, 1981)

Boundary Description

Site known as 1597 Esmeralda Avenue, Minden. Parcel is located at southeast corner of Esmeralda Avenue and Fourth Street, Township 13N, Range 20 E, Section 29. See accompanying map of Minden. Douglas County Assessor's Book 25-200-37 (Parcel)

Location of Legal Description: Douglas County Courthouse, 1616 Eighth Street, Minden, Nevada

Representation in Existing Surveys: The Architectural Heritage of Carson Valley, 1981, Local survey deposited with the Division of Historic Preservation & Archeology, Carson City, NV

UTM References: ZOne 11, E260600, N 4315060