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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: WHK Studio One

Other names/site number: <u>Metropolitan Theatre, 4900 Euclid Building, Central United</u> National Bank Building, Cleveland Trust Company buildings

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 4900-5002 Euclid

Avenue

 City or town: Cleveland
 State: Ohio
 County: Cuyahoga

 Not For Publication:
 NA
 Vicinity:
 NA

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this \underline{X} 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 _X__ 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 __X_local Applicable National Register Criteria:

XA B C D

Barlaux tower 2010 **DSHPO** for Inventory & Registration Signature of certifying official/Title: Date State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

WHK Studio One	Cuyahoga County, Ohi County and State	
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:)

A

Signature of the Keeper

11/1

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.) Private:

Public - Local

Public - State

Public - Federal

WHK Studio One

Name of Property

Category of Property

(Check only one box	.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)		
Contributing	Noncontributing	
5		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
5	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register ____0

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6. Function or Use Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.) INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: communications facility: radio station COMMERCE/TRADE: business: office building COMMERCE/TRADE: professional: recording studio RECREATION AND CULTURE: music facility: concert hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.) <u>COMMERCE/TRADE: business: office building</u> <u>RECREATION AND CULTURE: music facility: concert hall</u> <u>COMMERCE/TRADE: professional: architecture studio</u> <u>INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: communications facility: radio station</u> <u>COMMERCE/TRADE: professional: recording studio</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.) <u>COMMERCIAL STYLE</u> <u>LATE 19th and EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS</u>

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.) Principal exterior materials of the property: <u>Brick, Stone, Terra Cotta, Metal_</u>

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 Paragraph

The WHK Studio One complex is a cluster of brick buildings that front Euclid Avenue near the corner of E. 55th Street, on the near east side of downtown Cleveland. The complex is comprised of the following buildings: (1) 4900 Euclid Building, (2), the Central United National Bank

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Building, (3) the Metropolitan Theater, (4 & 5) the Cleveland Trust Company – West & East buildings. Altogether, there are five buildings that contributed to the historic integrity of the complex. Individually, the buildings were constructed between 1912 and 1932. In 1949, WHK Radio purchased the collection of buildings and joined them to create a complete radio and broadcasting center called WHK Studio One. The buildings were built separately for unrelated uses, but historically function together during the Period of Significance.

The WHK Studio One complex is located within one block of several other properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Cleveland Packard Building (NR84000222) at 5100-5206 Prospect Avenue; the Ohio Bell Henderson-Endicott Exchange Building (NR84000232) at 5400-5420 Prospect Avenue, and the Cook Building (NR84000224) at 4600-4800 Prospect Avenue. Also nearby are the Kies, Lewis, House (NR04000833), St. Paul's Episcopal Church (NR80002979), the Stager-Beckwith House (NR78002042), and the United Motor Service Building (NR84000240).

Narrative Description

WHK purchased the buildings on the south side of the 5000 block of Euclid Avenue in 1949 to create a unique radio and television broadcasting complex, complete with studios, offices, and an auditorium. To create one unified complex, it needed to merge the Central United Bank Building, the Metropolitan Theatre, and the 4900 Euclid Building. To do this, the north (Euclid Avenue) facades of the 4900 Euclid Building and the Central United Bank building were altered. A polished granite veneer was added spanning the entirety of the adjacent storefronts at street level. Separating the upper levels of the building. The metal veneer sits just below the window sills of the second floor then folds outward at the top of the storefronts to create an awning. The same metal paneling is then used to create a three and a half story wall in front of the western most bay of the Central United Bank Building and a modern pylon display sign or marquee projecting above the rooflines extends up from the awning in front of the paneled wall creating the junction of 4900 Euclid and the Central United Bank Building. These changes created a unified façade across the two distinct buildings, the marque indicated the entrance to the now combine complex. Construction began in 1949 and was completed in 1951 when WHK moved in. (Photo 1)

1. 4900 Euclid Building, 1920 – Contributing (Photo 2)

The 4900 Euclid Building is a four-story commercial structure with a polychrome terra cotta ceramic tile façade constructed in 1920 and designed by Cleveland architects Lehman & Schmitt. It is a rectangular four-story building with ground story retail space and office space above. Vertical clustered piers divide the seven bays. The roof line of the building has a cornice, which wraps around the piers. Spandrels have vertical niches, giving the building a Gothic feeling, but not a Gothic style. The northeast end of the building was altered with the modern pylon display sign during the 1949 WHK renovation. A non-original polished granite storefront continues across the adjacent building to the east, connecting it visually to the structure, previously known as the Central United Bank Building. Together, these two buildings now comprise one office

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County and State complex. There is an enameled metal façade and metal awning that physically and visually connects the two buildings. The original storefronts were altered c. 1980 and converted to offices and restaurant space. The entry doors were likely altered at the same time with a set of aluminum doors with a large glass panel in the center set into the non-original aluminum storefront system. The vestibule doors inside are original wood doors with ornate details in a three door configuration. All other storefront doors have been removed and non-original storefront glazing system has been installed in its place. A set of double doors are located at the rear of the lobby these doors are also non-original aluminum doors with a center glass panel. Similar to the doors, all windows throughout the building have been replaced with one-over-one aluminum clad double hung windows likely at the same time as the storefront. The building has a flat roof.

Originally the 4900 Euclid Building was not connected to the Central United Bank Building. Other than sharing the same party wall, the two buildings functioned as separate buildings. The first floor had an ornate lobby with terrazzo floors, marble walls, and vaulted ceilings in the center bay that led to the elevators and stairwell (photo 8). The Cleveland Trust Company leased its branch office in the three bays to the west of the lobby while the three bays to the east of the lobby originally consisted of three retail storefront spaces (photos 11-14). The second, third and fourth floors consisted of a double loaded corridor down the center of the building connected to the elevator lobby in the middle bay (photo 29 & 30). Various professional and service industry companies occupied small offices connected to the corridor along the front and back of the building (photo 31 & 32).

During the 1949 renovation for the WHK Complex, the building was altered in a number of ways. In addition to the modifications on the exterior of the building, the lobby was expanded with a bump out to the south creating a rear, second entrance (photo 7). The expanded lobby connected to a new east-west oriented hallway addition that also connected to the Metropolitan Theatre and the eastern Cleveland Trust Company Building. On the second and third floors, the central corridor was extended through the party wall on the east side of the building to connect with the corresponding floors of the Central United Bank Building. It is also assumed that the upper story windows throughout the building were replaced during WHK's residency with metal sash one over one windows. The current aluminum one over one windows were installed at an unknown date.

Aside from typical tenant buildouts within the spaces, few alterations have occurred in the building since the WHK occupancy. The three storefront spaces located in the easternmost bays have been consolidated into one large storefront now occupied by restaurant space (photo 9 & 10). It is unclear when this modification occurred, however, the three original spaces are visible in the 1951 and 1953 Sanborn maps (figures 16 & 17), indicating the modification occurred after the renovation. The bank storefronts, entry canopy, and front doors were likely modified at the same time. Additionally, a single man door was installed in the party wall between the restaurant space and the entry lobby of the Metropolitan Theatre.

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2. Central United Bank Building, 1912 – Contributing (photo 3)

Designed by Cleveland Architects Fulton & Taylor, the Central United Bank Building was designed and constructed concurrently with the Metropolitan Theatre. The north façade on Euclid Ave. exhibits simple decorative brickwork and stone elements on its north façade. It is a three-story rectangular building with brick bearing construction. Window openings have 1/1 double hung wood sash windows. An aluminum marquee sign is attached to the northwest corner of the main façade.

A non-original polished granite storefront continues across the adjacent building to the west connecting it visually to the building previously known as the 4900 Euclid Building. Together, these two buildings now comprise one office complex. There is an enameled metal façade and metal awning that connects the two buildings. The original storefronts have been altered and converted to a box office and display cases for upcoming shows and events. It has a flat roof.

This three story building was occupied on the first floor by the theatre's entry lobby and ticket booth on the west and three storefronts to the east. The upper two floors were office spaces similar to the 4900 Euclid Building. Of the five structures in this complex, this structure has been altered the most since its construction in 1914. The main stairwell located east of the entry lobby allowed egress from the upper floors through to the basement. This was removed prior to the 1951 Sanborn map and was likely part of the WHK renovation. The section between the first floor and the basement is still intact.

On the second and third floors, an opening was created during the 1949 renovation through the party wall on the west side of the building to connect with the corresponding floors of the 4900 Euclid Building. These floors were significantly altered with the majority of the interior walls removed. It is unclear when this alteration occurred as the plans of upper floors are not included on the Sanborn maps, however, these alterations were completed prior to the current owners purchasing of the building in December of 2012. The space is now largely an open office floor plan.

In the 1980s the three storefront spaces of the Central United Bank Building were consolidated into one space and the corresponding roof skylights of each storefront were covered. Alterations were made to connect the now consolidated space to the entry lobby and main lobby of the Metropolitan Theatre. This new space is now called "the Ballroom" and is used for smaller venues for the current Agora Theatre tenant (photo 19).

3. Metropolitan Theatre, 1912 – Contributing (Photo 4)

The Metropolitan Theatre (currently known as the Agora Theatre & Ballroom) was designed and constructed concurrently with the Central United Bank Building. Designed by Cleveland architects Fulton & Taylor, the theatre lies south of the Central United Bank Building, and east of the Cleveland Trust Company East Building. The entrance lobby fronts Euclid Avenue in the westernmost bay of the Central United Bank Building. The main lobby is located at the rear of the Central United Bank Building and the theatre and stage are located to the south of the main lobby. Rectangular in shape, the brick building features regularly spaced projecting brick piers

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supporting a gabled roof over the theatre seating and a taller flat roof over the stage and fly space (photo 4). The building contains two metal fire escapes on the east façade; there is also a single metal fire escape on the west façade.

The structure opened as the Metropolitan Theatre in 1913. The theatre, which was designed as an opera theatre, originally featured an ornately tiled covered exterior promenade with a ticket booth under the marquee and an ornamental lobby with marble trim, ornate plaster crown and ceiling details, and statuary located in carved out niches in the walls (photo 16, 17 & 18). The Metropolitan Theatre contained a 1,400 seat theatre among a main floor and mezzanine as well as a large orchestra pit in front of the stage (figure 9). The interior of the theatre featured faux marble columns at the proscenium and two levels of box seating on either side (figure 1 and photo 20-23). Faux marble details also wrap the front of the balcony rail. Under the balcony and in the ceiling, large detailed metal registers allowed for fresh air movement throughout the theatre.

The renovation of the complex in 1949 brought the most change to the exterior promenade. The 1913 marquee, canopy, and ticket booth were removed (figure 3), and an entry vestibule was created in the same plane as the storefronts on either side of the entry (figure 4). A new terrazzo floor was poured within the vestibule with the call letters WHK in the design (photo 15). As stated previously, a new hallway addition was constructed behind the 4900 Euclid Building. To connect to the theatre, a set of double doors were placed in the western wall of the main lobby. In addition to the call letters placed in the terrazzo floor, large white WHK call letters were installed on the rear, south facing elevation of the theatre, which were later removed in the 1980s (figure 5 & 10).

The raked seating of the main floor was removed along with the orchestra pit in the 1980s to create terraced platforms for standing and/or dinner theater style events (figure 9 & photo 22). Around this time the three storefront spaces of the Central United Bank Building were consolidated into one space and the corresponding roof skylights of each storefront were covered. Alterations were made to connect the now consolidated space to the entry lobby and main lobby of the theatre. This new space is now called "The Ballroom" and is used for smaller venues at the theatre (photo 19).

Between the 1980s to the present, the entry lobby was converted into a bar area. The ornately tiled raked floor was covered with a wooden platform to create a level surface, and stairs were constructed to allow egress. The bar top and taps with bar stools and booths were constructed atop the new platform. The entry doors were covered with curtains and the main entry/exit into the theatre became the 1949 hallway addition through the 4900 Euclid Building.

4. Cleveland Trust Company Building - West, C. Late 1920s – Contributing (Photo 5)

Located to the south of the 4900 Euclid building and west of the eastern Cleveland Trust Company Building, the rectangular brick building was originally constructed as a warehouse or garage style structure with 17' high ceilings, 50' wide clear spanning structure and a flat roof. Multi-pane industrial steel windows spanned column to column with an unadorned interior and

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County and State unfinished concrete floor. An enclosed bridge spans a courtyard between the east and west buildings on the south end of the structures and a garage door was located in the center of the north and south elevations. Aside from the bridge, this building is disconnected from the remainder of the WHK Studio One complex.

It is unclear what these buildings were used for while in the Cleveland Trust Company's possession and the specific date of construction is also unknown. While not present in the 1920 Plat book of Cuyahoga County (figure 14), these twin buildings first appear in the 1932 Plat book of Cuyahoga County (figure 15). The 1951 and 1953 Sanborn maps (figure 16 & 17) indicate that this space was used as "auto parking and storage" shortly after WHK occupied the building. It is unlikely that there were many modifications to the building for this use.

In 2012, the building was renovated into offices. The single open space was subdivided, and an entry vestibule was created in the center bay of the east elevation. New kitchens, bathrooms, and loft spaces were added. New simulated divided lite windows were installed in the original openings on the west elevation and infilled on the east elevation. A new garage door was installed in the north garage opening, while the south opening was infilled with windows similar to the other window openings (photo 26-28). During this renovation, the building received new paint on the east and south elevation as well as new signage on the bridge (photo 5 - 7).

5. Cleveland Trust Company Building - East, C. Late 1920s – Contributing (Photo 5)

As previously stated, it is unclear what these buildings were used for while in the Cleveland Trust Company's possession and the date of construction is unknown. While not present in the 1920 Plat book of Cuyahoga County (figure 14), these twin buildings first appear in the 1932 Plat book of Cuyahoga County (figure 15). Located to the south of the 4900 Euclid building and west of the Theatre, the rectangular brick building was originally constructed as a warehouse or garage style structure with 17' high ceilings, 50' wide clear spanning structure and a flat roof. Multi-pane industrial steel windows spanned column to column with an unadorned interior and unfinished concrete floor. An enclosed bridge spans a courtyard between the east and west buildings on the south end of the structure and continues east to the back of house rooms behind the stage of the theatre. A garage door was located in the center of the north and south elevations.

The eastern Cleveland Trust Company Building abutted the previously mentioned hallway addition of 1949 on the north elevation. The existing garage door opening was used to connect to the addition. As part of the radio station renovations, the structure was divided into multiple recording studios with small sound booths flanking the studios. A second floor was installed on the northern third of the building but kept within the original volume of the building. It is assumed that the windows were removed and the openings infilled at this period to limit the amount of sound transmission to the recording studios. Two man doors were located on the western wall. It's unclear if these doors are an original feature of the building or if they were installed as part of the renovation. An additional double door was installed on the south elevation in place of the garage door opening.

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Few modifications have occurred since the WHK Studio One renovations. The recording studios, sound booths, and circulation have been retained, however equipment and finishes have been updated over time (photo 24 & 25). In 2012, the opening below the connection bridge to the theatre was infilled and a single man door installed in the new wall. The building received new paint on the west and south elevation as well as signage on the bridge (photo 5 & 7).

Historic Integrity

The former WHK Studio One complex retains historic integrity that conveys the period of significance (1949-1977) when WHK occupied the complex. Prior to WHK's purchase and renovation of the site, five buildings were constructed between 1912 and 1932: 4900 Euclid, Central United Bank, the Metropolitan Theatre, and the east and west wings of the Cleveland Trust Company. When WHK purchased the five buildings, they were renovated and connected via doorways and corridors and modified to fit WHK Studio One's needs during a 1949 renovation. The feeling and association with WHK is identifiable on the exterior and interior of the complex. On the exterior, the five separate buildings have retained their interconnectedness, which highlights the complex's association with WHK. The north elevation and main façade on Euclid Avenue has retained elements of WHK's storefront renovation that unified the 4900 Euclid and Central United Bank buildings. Retained elements include portions of brown and black granite veneer, enameled metal awnings, and a three and a half story mental paneled wall on the western most bay of the Central United Bank Building. These renovations removed the 1913 marquee, canopy, and ticket booth for the Metropolitan Theatre. On the south elevation, the expanded lobby and extended central corridor on the second and third floors constructed during the WHK 1949 renovations have been maintained. On the interior, it is evident where renovations were completed by WHK in the corridors and doorways that connect all five buildings. In the lobby of the former Metropolitan Theatre, a terrazzo floor was poured with the call letters WHK in the design. This historic feature remains and clearly identifies the complex's association to WHK. The east wing of the former Cleveland Trust Company building has retained the WHK-era recording studio and sound booth arrangements. Multiple renovations of the complex occurred post-WHK era; however, the connectivity of the complex clearly relates back to WHK Studio One. The former WHK Studio One complex has retained its historic integrity and distinctly conveys the complex's period of significance and association to WHK.

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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.



X

- 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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.) SOCIAL HISTORY COMMUNICATIONS ENTERTAINMENT

Period of Significance

<u>1949-1977____</u>

Significant Dates

<u>1949-1977_____</u>

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.) n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a_____

Architect/Builder <u>Fulton & Taylor</u> <u>Lehman & Schmitt</u>

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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.)

WHK Studio One is significant under Criterion A for its contributions to social history and communications through radio and entertainment. The Studio One complex housed the WHK AM and FM (WMMS) radio stations which influenced broad national trends in the radio industry as well as played an important role in the cultivation and development of Rock and Roll in Cleveland and across the country. WHK AM/FM Radio was a pioneer in bringing Rock and Roll to the masses and aided in jumpstarting the careers of many of the great rock and roll musicians. WHK played a significant role in Cleveland becoming known as the Rock & Roll capital, and contributed to its development as a national break-out music market for promoting Rock & Roll. The WHK Studio One was home to some of the influential radio stations that gave birth to the rise and popularity of rock music in American culture. The period of significance begins in 1949 when the radio station purchases the building complex and ends in 1977 when the company moved out.

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

Cleveland had been a pioneer in both radio and television broadcasting, and in 1926, was exceeded only by New York City and Chicago in the number of radio stations. Cleveland's WHK Radio was the first radio station in Cleveland and only the fourth in the United States.

In 1921, Warren R. Cox, began broadcasting on an amateur radio station 8ACS out of his business at 3138 Payne Ave. In 1922, Cox received Ohio's second, and the country's 52nd, Commercial Broadcasting License for his AM radio station and soon relocated the station to the back room of a Radiovox store at the Stuyvesant Building 5005 Euclid Avenue, across the street from what would eventually become WHK Studio One complex. The call letters WHK were randomly assigned to the new radio station, officially broadcasting at 1100kc (White, 2019).

In 1925, Cox sold WHK to the Radio Air Service, the location of the station was moved and subsequently sold and moved multiple times in the following years. It was ultimately purchased by the Mutual Broadcasting Company in 1946, who had a nationwide presence but was primarily based out of New York City and Chicago. In the same year, WHK received one of the first experimental FM licenses in the country (Olszewski, 2002). *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* listed the new station as WHK's FM Station, W8XUB, but was known over the radio waves as WHK-FM broadcasting at 100.7FM. Both the AM and FM stations broadcasted the same programs including news, Public Safety Announcements, storytelling segments, religious sermons, and the Cleveland Orchestra. This expansion in the company created a need for a larger studio location. A collection of existing buildings on the 5000 block of Euclid Ave were ultimately chosen for the new location.

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Prior to becoming WHK Studio One, the collection of five buildings on the south side of the 5000 block of Euclid Ave were separate buildings operating as a bank, offices, various storefronts, a theatre, and auto garages constructed between 1912 and 1932. (Sanborn maps Figures 13 - 17) Renovations began in 1949 to combine the buildings into one large complex called WHK Studio One. The single complex was designed to house the WHK AM and FM radio stations as well as a new TV station WHK-TV on channel 19; however, the TV station never made it to fruition due to financial challenges. WHK corporate offices were located in the upper floors of the new office complex with the bank and store fronts retaining their locations on the first floor as evident from the 1953 Sanborn map. One of the garages at the rear of the complex was converted into studios while the other was retained as a parking garage and storage space. The theatre was retained for live orchestra and big band performances broadcast on air.

The WHK Company moved in to the newly renovated buildings in 1951 just as the now famous deejay, Alan Freed, was entering the Cleveland airwaves on Cleveland's WJW radio station. Freed is credited with coining the term Rock & Roll and promoting the rhythm and blues genre to the youth of Cleveland and ultimately the country, through his radio show and live concerts. In 1952, Freed, known on the radio as "Moon Dog," hosted the natural extension of his radio show, the Moondog Coronation Ball. This would eventually be considered the first Rock & Roll concert. The Ball took place on March 21, 1952, at the Cleveland Arena (demolished in 1977). Freed eventually left Cleveland for the larger New York City radio market in 1954, leaving a young audience demanding to hear the new genre of music on Cleveland's radio waves. WHK AM and FM began to shift to meet this demand, allowing for larger slots devoted to the new Rock & Roll genre. Other stations in Cleveland, including KYW and WJW, began to make the shift as well. By the mid-1950s, Cleveland was well established as a "break-out" or test market for new Rock & Roll songs and artists, the new form of popular music which began to take hold of the public imagination in the early 1950s.

By 1960, WHK, now owned by Metropolitan Broadcasting Corporation, had completely transitioned to become a Rock and Roll, and newly created, Top 40 powerhouse in Cleveland, playing music by acts such as Elvis Presley, the Everly Brothers, and Buddy Holly. The stations adopted the slogan "Color Radio." This was a term used to describe the style or radio that became the station's calling card throughout the 1960s: "energized deejays, uninterrupted double/triple record plays, and in the words of the 'big chief,' Norman Wain, promotions, promotions, promotions" (Adams, 2002, P. 94). The deejays, now syndicated in other markets around the country, took on the moniker "The Good Guys." In September of 1964, WHK beat rival station KYW AM 1100, to sponsor the Beatles sold out concert at the Cleveland Public Auditorium. Prior to the concert, the Beatles sat for a lengthy press conference hosted by WHK at the Sheraton Hotel downtown (now part of Union Terminal Group/Tower City Center, NR). (Figure 6) The band would later pay tribute to WHK and "the Good Guys" with the inclusion of a sweater on the doll on the cover of their Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album. The sweater reads; "The WHK" on the right sleeve, "Good Guys" on the left sleeve, and "Welcome the Rolling Stones" on the chest. The sweater was created for The Rolling Stones first Cleveland concert held on November 3, 1964, which was also located at the Cleveland Public Auditorium

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In 1967, the company switched the stations over to softer genres aimed at an older audience, changing their slogan to "The Good Life Station." This switch was in part short lived. In 1968, the FCC mandated that all FM sister stations could no longer broadcast duplicate programing from their AM stations. WHK-FM promptly filed for a call letter change and became WMMS in the same year. According to Mike Olszewski, author of *Radio Days, Stories From the Front in Cleveland's FM Radio Wars*, "Starting in 1968 new kinds of stations were popping up on the FM dial, where serious deejays played progressive 'music for the head' and weren't afraid to comment about the stuff that was on everyone's mind: Vietnam, Nixon, the draft, drugs, the social order, but most of all music." (Olszewski, 2003, P. XI) While WHK-AM continued to broadcast easy-listening music and became the flag ship station in the nation for the Cleveland Browns radio network until 1984, the new WMMS became one of the first stations to adopt the new progressive rock format in which each radio deejay was allowed to choose what they played on air. Under this format, the deejay was no longer obligated to play the hit singles off an album but allowed to play lesser known and experimental tracks. They were also encouraged to introduce new and unknown artists. (Olszewski, 2002)

It is under this progressive rock format that WMMS deejays like Billy Bass and Kid Leo began to introduce Cleveland, and America through syndication, to lesser known artists like David Bowie and Bruce Springsteen. Bass began his career in the 1960s "at the Music Grotto, a hippie music store in town." Where he stocked new rock coming out of San Francisco that no one had heard of. "If *Rolling Stone* was writing about it, I would stock it, and sure enough, people would buy it." (Wardlaw, 2018) In 1968, the music director of WHK, Pat McCoy, approached Bass to help create a new station on WHK-FM. Bass accepted a position at WHK-FM becoming one of the first Black deejays on Cleveland radio. While he only stayed about a year at WHK-FM, Bass left a large impact on the station due to his help in launching the progressive rock station and coining the phrase "Cleveland: the Rock & Roll Capital of the World."

In 1972, thanks to significant record sales in the area, WMMS sponsored Bowie's first American concert, kicking off the American leg of his Ziggy Stardust Tour at the Cleveland Music Hall. The concert was such a success that Bowie added two additional shows, promoted by WMMS, to the end of the American leg, selling out the Cleveland Public Auditorium. (Olszewski, 2003, P. 82) (Figure 8.)

This same year, WMMS began to host "Coffee Break Concerts" at WHK Studio One. These were live acoustic performances in the afternoon broadcast on Wednesdays to get listeners over the hump of the work week as well as fit into the artists' busy travel schedules. "Billy Bass, who was program director, came up with the idea when Elektra Records offered him a live performance by singer-songwriter Carol Hall, who had just released her first album, *Beads and Feathers*. Bass accepted, and Hall performed in WMMS's small production studio." (Gorman and Feran, p. 139) Early versions of the Coffee Break Concerts included locals like Michael Stanley, Peter Laughner, and the band Glass Harp. With the success of these live performances,

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WMMS eventually began opening the concerts to live audiences and in the late 1970's, relocated the concert series to a venue called The Agora, located on East 24th Street (demolished in 1984). It was during these afternoon shows that WMMS brought new acts like U2, Cindi Lauper, Kenny Loggins, and John Cougar Mellencamp to their listeners. These concerts became an inspiration for MTV's popular "Unplugged" concerts broadcasted on TV in the 1990s when the idea "…was suggested by an MTV staffer with Cleveland roots." (Gorman and Feran, 2007, P. 142) This pairing of WMMS and the Agora introducing new rock acts inspired Ian Hunter of Mott the Hoople to write the song "Cleveland Rocks," emphasizing what WMMS deejay Billy Bass said about the city being "the Rock & Roll Capital of the World."

Kid Leo (Lawrence James Travagliante) began his career in the broadcasting booth of Cleveland State University radio station WCSU 89.3 as just "Leo." Growing up listening to the Cleveland deejays of the 50s and 60s, his love of music drew him to the microphone. In 1973, WMMS program director, Denny Sanders, was looking for new talent and heard Leo on the college station. Leo joined WMMS on Valentine's Day of 1973 with the new moniker "Kid Leo" and almost immediately became a favorite of the listeners. "He increased the station's record library in the mid-1970s to an estimated 15,000 titles, the largest in the country at the time. He was instrumental in Cleveland becoming the 'breaking' point where unknown artists won national recognition." (Adams, 2002, P. 330)

While WHK AM transitioned to a country music format in the mid-1970s, WMMS, through Kid Leo, heavily promoted an advanced copy of the "Born to Run" single from Bruce Springsteen leading to Springsteen's sold out show in February of 1975 at the John Carroll Gymnasium as well as his sold out return visit in August at the Allen Theatre.

On February 14, 1977, WHK and WMMS moved their studios from the now dated WHK Studio One location at 5000 Euclid Ave to the Statler Office Tower at East 12th and Euclid Ave, marking the end to the period of significance for WHK Studio One.

After the radio stations left, the building sat vacant until the early 1980s when Cleveland's Hippodrome Theatre, constructed in 1907, was demolished in 1981. The company operating out of the Hippodrome moved into the Auditorium of the old WHK Studio One and hosted a number of events, but the move was ultimately unsuccessful for the company. In 1984, the Agora Theatre, now famous for its contribution to the Rock & Roll scene, was damaged by a fire and closed (now demolished). The owner, Henry "Hank" LoConti, purchased the collection of buildings at WHK's Studio One the same year. After extensive renovations he moved the Agora into the Auditorium. In 2012, LoConti donated the buildings to a local community development organization and a redevelopment project was undertaken, converting the old office buildings into modern, new spaces that cater to entrepreneurial and startup companies. LoConti's business partner, Chris Zitterbart, purchased the theatre from the CDC and continued operation of the Agora. In 2017, an agreement was reached between Zitterbart and AEG Presents, a worldwide concert promoter, to rehabilitate the theater and performance spaces.

WHK Studio One

Name of Property

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More than any other commercial district and entertainment center, Cleveland has been a flagship city of the nation in the popularization, growth, and domination of rock music in America's popular culture. While some of the city's Rock & Roll era locations are still around today, many of the concert venues, radio station offices, and record stores that played a significant role in Cleveland Rock & Roll history have been demolished or no longer retain enough historic fabric to contribute their historic contributions. Figure 18 lists existing and demolished buildings that are significant to Cleveland Rock & Roll history. Well over half of the significant Rock and Roll performance locations have been demolished, including the original Agora Theatre, Cleveland Municipal Stadium, and Cleveland Arena, site of the 1952 Moondog Coronation Ball considered the first major rock and roll concert. Important remaining performance venues include the Allen Theatre (NR78002041), Public Auditorium (NR75001360), and the Variety Theatre (NR82003559) and the Record Rendezvous (NR12001213) served as a significant record shop and location for promoting Rock and Roll records and concerts. Several of the existing locations for early radio stations associated with Rock and Roll history in Cleveland were office and studio space within larger buildings. Those remaining include the Statler Hotel (NR98000317) home to WGAR (1930-1970); the New England Building (NR00001065) housing WJW (1943-1954); and Cleveland Auditorium Building (NR75001360) home to WTAM/KYC (1950-1972). The WHK Studio One stands out as a single complex housing the offices, studios, and performance space for the radio station.

Between 1951 and 1977, while occupying the collection of buildings known as WHK Studio One, WHK AM and FM (WMMS) played a significant role in influencing broad national trends in the radio industry as well as played an important role in the development and promotion of Rock and Roll in Cleveland and across the country. WHK AM/FM Radio was a pioneer in bringing Rock and Roll to the masses and aided in jumpstarting the careers of many of the great Rock & Roll musicians. It is for these reasons that WHK Studio One is significant under Criterion A for its contributions to social history and communications through radio and entertainment.

Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, Ohio County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, Ohio County and State

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White, Thomas H.

2019 United States Pioneer Broadcast Service Stations. https://earlyradiohistory.us/pion622.htm

Wolf, Carlo

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WHK Studio One

Name of Property

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- <u>X</u> 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:

- <u>X</u> State Historic Preservation Office
- ____ Other State agency
- _____ Federal agency
- ____ Local government
- _____ University
- ____ Other
 - Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): <u>CUY-176-6, CUY-6111-6</u>

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ____2.2 acres_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees) Datum if other than WGS84: (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)		
 Latitude: 41.503561 Latitude: 	Longitude: -81.653846 Longitude:	
3. Latitude:	Longitude:	
4. Latitude:	Longitude:	

WHK Studio One

Name of Property

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Or UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

X NAD 1927 or	NAD 1983	
1. Zone: 17	Easting: 445424	Northing: 4594651
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

Located in the city of Cleveland in the County of Cuyahoga and the State of Ohio. Parcel Nos.: 103-10-301, 103-10-302, 103-10-306, 103-10-309,103-10-305, 103-10-303, 103-10-308, 103-10-017

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The lots which contain the buildings on the north side of the site, not including the parking lot to the southern portion of the site. The lots contains the entire parcels historically associated with the buildings.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Michael Sanbury & Matt Orehek		
organization: LDA architects, Inc.		
street & number: 5000 Euclid Avenue, Suite 1	04	
city or town: Cleveland	state: <u>Ohio</u>	zip code:44103
e-mail michael@ldaarchitecture.com		
telephone: 216.932.1890 x11		
date: <u>8/31/2017</u>		

WHK Studio One

Name of Property

Cuyahoga County, Ohio County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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: WHK Studio One

City or Vicinity: Cleveland

County: Cuyahoga

State: Ohio

Photographer: Michael Sanbury

Date Photographed: Fall 2017

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

0001. Camera facing southeast looking at the north façade of the building.

0002. Camera facing southeast showing north exterior view of the 4900 Euclid Building. 0003. Camera facing southwest showing exterior view of the north and east sides of the building.

Cuyahoga County, Ohio

Name of Property County and State 0004. Camera facing northwest showing exterior view of the eastern and southern sides of the building.

0005. Camera facing north showing exterior view of south side of the building.

0006. Camera facing east showing exterior view of the west side of the building.

0007. Camera facing north showing interior courtyard in former WHK Studio One Complex.

0008. Camera facing south showing interior of the lobby of the former 4900 Euclid Building.

0009. Camera facing southeast showing the interior of the first floor former 4900 Euclid Building storefront space.

0010. Former 4900 Euclid Building first floor storefront space, camera facing west in kitchen.

0011. Former 4900 Euclid Building first floor office. Camera facing east.

0012. Former 4900 Euclid Building first floor office. Camera facing east into the main lobby.

0013. Former 4900 Euclid Building first floor office. Camera facing south looking at remaining bank vault door.

0014. Former 4900 Euclid Building second floor office overlooking lower office space. Camera facing northwest.

0015. Detail of existing terrazzo floor in building entry with WHK call letters.

0016. View of original plaster ceiling in bar and entry lobby area.

0017. Camera facing east showing main lobby with existing ceiling ornamentation and molding.

0018. Close-up detail of ornamentation at entry to balcony stairs from main lobby.

0019. Camera facing north showing existing stage in ballroom.

0020. West side of the stage showing the existing lighting truss to remain.

0021. Camera facing northeast from main floor looking up to mezzanine and balcony seating.

0022. Camera facing north from stage toward theater space.

0023. Camera facing southwest from top of mezzanine seating looking to stage area.

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0024. Former Cleveland Trust Co. Building / WHK Studios. Camera facing northwest.

0025. Former Cleveland Trust Co. Building / WHK Studios. Camera facing north.

0026. Former Cleveland Trust Co. Auto Garage building offices. Camera facing north.

0027. Former Cleveland Trust Co. Auto Garage building offices. Camera facing south.

0028. Camera looking south in the former Cleveland Trust Co. Auto Garage.

0029. Camera facing east. Interior condition of 3rd floor of the former Central United Bank Building and former 4900 Euclid Building have been connected to form WHK Studio One Offices.

0030. Former 4900 Euclid Building second floor elevator lobby. Camera facing north.

0031. Former 4900 Euclid Building third floor office. Camera facing north.

0032. Former 4900 Euclid Building fourth floor office. Camera facing southwest.

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.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number <u>PHOTO</u> Page <u>1</u>



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number <u>PHOTO</u> Page <u>2</u>



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 1: Artist sketch of the interior of the Metropolitan Theatre Auditorium. Featured on the program from opening week at the Metropolitan Theatre. March 31, 1913

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Figure 2: Program from the Metropolitan Theatre. June 9, 1913

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Figure 3: Main elevation of the Metropolitan Theatre (Pre WHK Office Complex). c. 1927

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Figure 4: Main entrance of the WHK Studio One complex. c.1949

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Figure 5: Main elevation of the WHK Studio One complex. c. 1950s

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Figure 6: The Beatles at a WHK sponsored press conference at the Downtown Sheraton Hotel before their first Cleveland concert. September 15, 1964

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Figure 7: The Beatles Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band album cover (Left). Detail of the Shirley Temple doll wearing a WHK Good Guys sweater (Right). March 30, 1967

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Figure 8: WMMS promotion for David Bowie Cleveland Public Hall Concert. 1972

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Figure 9: Interior of WHK Studio One theatre (Metropolitan Theatre). Date Unknown
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Figure 9: Photo of Hank LoConti at the rear of WHK Studio One theatre (Metropolitan Theatre). c. 1986

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Figure 10: Photo of Hank LoConti in the interior of WHK Studio One theatre (Metropolitan Theatre).

c. 1986

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Figure 12: Rear of WHK Studio One complex. c. 1988

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Figure 13: Sanborn Insurance Maps of Cleveland. 1912

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Figure 14: Plat Book of Cuyahoga County. 1920

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Figure 15: Plat Book of the City of Cleveland. 1932

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County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 16: Sanborn Insurance Maps of Cleveland. 1951

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Figure 17: Sanborn Insurance Maps of Cleveland. 1953

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Section number FIGURE Page 18

Popular Cleveland Rock & Roll Music Venues of the 50's- 70's

(Includes but not limited to..)

Allen Theatre, 1407 Euclid Ave, Cleveland NR # 78002041

Cleveland Agora, 1730 East 24th Street, Cleveland (demolished 1984) Cleveland Arena, 3717 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland (demolished 1977) Cleveland Municipal Stadium, 1085 West Third Street, Cleveland (demolished 1996) **Euclid Tavern, 11625 Euclid Ave., Cleveland (closed 2018)** Gleason's Musical Bar, 5219 Woodland Avenue, Cleveland (demolished - date unknown) Hippodrome Theater, 720 Euclid Ave, Cleveland (demolished 1981) La Cave, 10615 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland (demolished - date unknown) Leo's Casino, 7500 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland (demolished - date unknown) Majestic Hotel located at Central Avenue and East 55th Street, Cleveland (demolished C. 1960) Musicarnival on Warrensville Road in Warrensville Heights (demolished 1975) **Phantasy Nightclub, 11802 Detroit Ave, Lakewood** Pirate's Cove, 1059 Old River Road, Cleveland (demolished 2007) **Public Auditorium, 500 Lakeside Ave, Cleveland NR # 75001360** Swingos, East 18th Street and Euclid Avenue, Cleveland (demolished - date unknown) **Variety Theatre, 11817 Lorain Ave, Cleveland (vacant) NR # 82003559**

Cleveland Rock & Roll Radio Stations Locations of the 50's- 70's

(Includes but not limited to..)

WGAR 1930 - 1970 Statler – Hilton Hotel NR # 98000317

WJW 1943 – 1954 Guardian Building NR # 00001065

WJW 1954 – 1976 1630 Euclid Ave (demolished - date unknown) WTAM 1930 – 1950 Cleveland Auditorium Building NR # 75001360 WTAM / KYC 1950 – 1972 NBC Building (demolished - date unknown)

Popular Cleveland Record Stores of the 50's- 70's (Includes but not limited to..)

Bandstand Records, Maple Heights (closed) Fantasy Records, Coventry Rd, Cleveland Heights (closed) John Wade Records, Shaker Square, (closed) Melody Lane, 15100 Detroit Ave, Lakewood (now *The Exchange* – music store) Music Grotto, 2430 Euclid Ave., Cleveland (demolished - date unknown) Record Rendezvous, 300 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland (vacant) NR # 12001213





1

2

3

4900 Euclid Building



Metropolitan Theatre



4

6

Cleveland Trust Company Building - West

Cleveland Trust Company Building - East

WHK Studio One Hallway Addition



WHK Offices & Studio 1 Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, OH lat 41.503370 lon -81.654165



WHK Offices & Studio 1 Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, OH lat 41.503370 lon -81.654165


































































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination				
Property Name:	WHK Studio One				
Multiple Name:					
State & County:	OHIO, Cuyahoga				
Date Recei 9/24/201				45th Day: Date of Weekly List: /2019	
Reference number:	SG100004561				
Nominator:	SHPO				
Reason For Review:					
Appeal	Appeal			Text/Data Issue	
SHPO Request		Landscape		Photo	
Waiver		National		Map/Boundary	
Resubmission		Mobile Resource		Period	
Other		TCP		X Less than 50 years	
		CLG			
XAccept	Return	Reject	11/ 1/2019	_ Date	
Abstract/Summary Comments:	NR Criterion: A				
Recommendation/ Criteria	Studio One influenced bi	road national tren I development of	ds in the radio indu Rock and Roll. End	1949 - 1977; LOS: local. WHK stry and played an important ding period of 1977 is justified	
Reviewer Lisa De	eline	_	Discipline Histo	rian	
Telephone (202)3	54-2239		Date /	1/1/19	
DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No					

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NPS TRANSMITTAL CHECK LIST

OHIO HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE 800 E. 17th Avenue Columbus, OH 43211 (614)-298-2000

The following materials are submitted on _______ For nomination of the <u>WHk Studio One</u> to the National Register of Historic Places: Cuyahoga County, OH

	Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form Paper PDF			
	Multiple Property Nomination Cover Document			
	Paper PDF			
	Multiple Property Nomination form			
	Paper PDF			
~	Photographs			
	Prints TIFFs			
~	CD with electronic images			
	Original USGS map(s) - NPS -accepted locational PaperDigital Sketch map(s)/Photograph view map(s)/Floor plan(s) PaperPDF Piece(s) of correspondence PaperPDF Other			
COMMENTS:				
_	Please provide a substantive review of this nomination			
~	This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67			
	The enclosed owner objection(s) do do not			
	Constitute a majority of property owners			

Other:





September 17, 2019

Julie Ernstein, Acting Chief, National Register of Historic Places National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228 Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Ernstein:

Enclosed please find two new National Register nominations for Ohio. All appropriate notification procedures have been followed for the new nomination submissions.

NEW NOMINATIONS Powell-Decker Farm WHK Studio One <u>COUNTY</u> Butler Cuyahoga

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the information to the National Register of Historic Places nominations for <u>Powell-Decker Farm</u> and <u>WHK Studio One.</u>

If you have questions or comments about these documents, please contact the National Register staff in the Ohio Historic Preservation Office at (614) 298-2000.

Sincerely,

ma a Pone

Lox A. Logan, Jr. Executive Director and CEO State Historic Preservation Officer Ohio History Connection

Enclosures