

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1235

DEC 04 2009

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Blue Mouse Theatre

Other names/site number Blue Mouse Junior, Proctor Street Theatre, Proctor Theatre, Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theatre, The Proctor, The Bijou

2. Location

street & number 2611 North Proctor Street not for publication

city or town Tacoma vicinity

State Washington code WA county Pierce code 053 zip code 98407

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title

11-24-09
Date

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

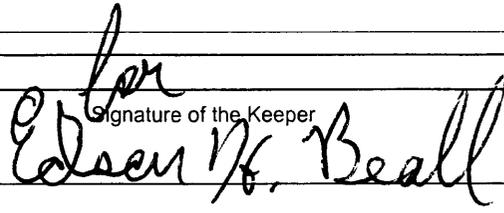
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action
1-14-10

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not incl. previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

MOVIE
HISTORIC THEATERS OF WASHINGTON STATE (1879-1958)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE -theater

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE -theater

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Stucco

Brick

roof Asphalt

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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)

Entertainment/Recreation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1923-1935

Significant Dates

1923 (date of construction)

1935 (first documented change of ownership)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation**Architect/Builder**

Leather, Fitzherbert (architect)

Miller, Albert (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

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 Engineering
- Record# _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Tacoma Public Library Northwest Room

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property >1 (less than one acre)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>10</u> Zone	<u>5 38 690</u> Easting	<u>52 35 257</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.) **SEE CONTINUATION SHEET**

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brooke Manning, Associate & Michael Sullivan, Principal
 organization Artifacts Consulting, Inc date August 7, 2009
 street & number 201 North Yakima Avenue telephone 253-572-4599
 city or town Tacoma state WA zip code 98403

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
 Pierce County Assessor's Map

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.
 Historic photographs

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Blue Mouse Associates, Cherlyn Pijanowski, Associate
 street & number 2611 North Proctor Street telephone 253-752-9500
 city or town Tacoma state WA zip code 98407

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 1 of 9

Narrative Description:

Built in 1923, the single-screen, arts-and-crafts style, Blue Mouse Theatre features a 43 x 100 foot rectangular footprint oriented to the west. The brick masonry theater rises up from a concrete foundation and is topped with a hipped and flat roof over the auditorium and a bracketed hipped roof over the two story front lobby section of the building. The low pitch of the roof on the front section of the building features wide, over-hanging eaves, and decorative timber brackets that are typical of the arts-and-crafts style. A non-original sheet metal marquee adorns the west facade crowned by chasing neon blue mice. The exterior walls are finished in red brick with stucco and mock half timbering used as accent. The interior of the building features "garden-style influences" (a term used by the designer), including trellice work and decorative wood moldings. The theater is in the Proctor neighborhood of Tacoma, a former streetcar suburb that is now an area of neighborhood shops and schools surrounded by upper-class homes. The Blue Mouse Theatre retains its exterior character-defining features, massing, and scale. Interior spaces have received the most modifications over the years, yet still retain historic fabric and original decorative elements. Overall, the theater is in good condition and continues to stand as a local landmark in the Proctor neighborhood.

Exterior

The Blue Mouse Theatre is bounded by North Proctor Street on the front-facing west facade and an alley along the south facade. An L-shaped concrete masonry unit, home to a dry cleaning business, engulfs the theater on its north and east facades, abutting the entire length of both walls and leaving only a small portion of the upper cladding exposed. The theater is 4,300 square feet and appears as a two story structure from the front facade. This is deceiving, however, as only two separate restroom areas and a projection room compose the partial second floor. This second floor covers the shallow front, recessed lobby area directly below. An attic, housing newer heating and ventilation elements, runs the entire length of the building and is used as a crawl space.

The original, poured-in-place concrete foundation supports the building. Reinforced board-formed concrete foundation walls make up the lower portions of each facade. These walls are roughly three feet at the front of the building and continually decrease in height from the front of the building towards the rear. The board-formed concrete on the front (west) facade, as well as the first thirty feet extending back along the south facade, has been

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 2 of 9

smoothed over in order to eliminate the presence of lines. The remaining feet of board-formed concrete walls along the south facade retain the lines from the forms. Small settlement cracks are evident in two places along the south facade foundation walls; and, in a small section, a reinforcing bar is projecting from the concrete wall. Common brick continues up this south facade from the top of the concrete foundation wall to the exterior crown molding. The same common brick adorns the visible upper portion of the rear east facade. The rear area of the north facade is not visible from street level. However, from the east end of the structure, a common brick chimney that is no longer in use can be seen rising up from the northeast corner of the north facade.

Near the rear of the south facade, two window-like recessed indentations are filled in with common brick and feature a brick sill and header. These brick recessions are original to the structure; they most likely have always been filled in with brick and used as an alley display case. To the left of these brick recesses, an original exit door was reconfigured in the 1990s in order for the structure to adhere to current fire exiting codes. New brick and mortar was added in small sections around the new doors to complete the opening.

The western most thirty feet of the south facade features more structural detailing than that of the eastern rear footage, most likely due to the theater's location along North Proctor Street. When the theater was built in 1923, the first thirty feet of each side wall was visible to passer-bys along the busy former streetcar line.

Raked bricks clad the majority of the wall above the smoothed over concrete foundation walls along this portion of the south facade. Directly above the raked bricks, stucco, and arts-and-crafts style exposed timber framing complete the remaining three feet of the exterior south facade cladding. A window-like recessed area is located within the raked bricks near the front of the south facade and features a raked-brick sill. The recessed area is original to the structure and was used as a display case. The recessed brick has since been filled in with painted plywood and is no longer used as a display case. On the north facade, just over a foot of the upper area of the facade is visible. The same stucco and exposed timber framing found on the western portion of the south facade clad the few visible feet of this northern side wall.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 3 of 9

The front-facing west facade is the most detailed elevation of the theater. The same raked bricks, stucco, and exposed timber framing extends up the front facade from the lower smoothed-over concrete foundation walls to the roof eaves. This front facade features a terrazzo floored recessed entry. A single, rectangular display case penetrates each of the north and south recessed entry sidewalls. The original attached ticket booth is located in the center of the recessed entry. The entry walkway, extending out to the sidewalk, as well as the half-walls and counter of the ticket booth, are terrazzo. Fluorescent tube lighting has been added to the ceiling of the recessed entry. On each side of the recessed entry, a rectangular display case is placed within a recessed section of the raked bricks cladding the western facade. Each area of recessed brick resembles the shape of an arched window and features a raked-brick sill and two arching rows of raked bricks above the set display area. The recessed display case located within the recessed brick today is not original to the structure, yet the recessed window-like brick display area is original and was designed for this intended use. An original, projecting, globe sconce light fixture is located within the recessed brick area above each display case.

The upper facade above the recessed entry is supported by a steel I beam lintel. Two free-standing brick columns support the steel beam. The steel lintel and brick columns are original to the structure. A line of mirrored black glass tiles added in the 1940's can be found above the steel lintel, as well as in a vertical strip between the recessed entry sidewalls and front entry doors.

A painted-blue sheet metal marquee extends out from the front facade just above the recessed entry. This is not the original marquee. The marquee is supported by original chains attached to hammered iron eyes on the upper facade. Fluorescent tube lighting has been added to the underside of the marquee in order to better illuminate the entry area. Chasing blue neon mice were added to the top of the marquee in 1994 when the theater's name was changed back to the original from "the Bijou" Two clocks, which also feature neon lighting, adorn the north and south sides of the marquee.

Windows

A combination of original wood sash windows complete the upper section of the front west facade. There are five casement windows total, all of which open outwards towards North Proctor Street. The central window is a side-

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 4 of 9

hung, multi-lite, double-casement window. Two separate sash are hung on original hardware on opposing sides; they open out to create a large, unobstructed opening when the window is in its open position. This window is located in the projection room. Because of this, painted wood boards fill the spaces where glass panes would normally be found in the window; these pieces of wood block sunlight from entering the projection room while a film is playing. In order to block any further natural light, interior heavy black blinds have been installed above this window. A slightly larger, multi-lite, double-casement window flanks either side of the projection room window; allowing light into the women's and men's restroom areas.

The final two windows are located on either side of these larger casement windows. Each is a small, leaded glass, casement window that features diamond-shaped privacy glass panes, which offer muted light into the women's and men's restrooms. Each window is side-hung on its original hardware. The men's restroom window opens left-handed while the women's restroom window opens right-handed.

Doors

The theater consists of front entry doors on the west facade and a fire exit door in each rear corner of the building. Four sets of double-entry, mahogany doors remain intact as the original (western) recessed entrance. Two sets of these original doors retain their original closing hardware. All four doors open out toward North Proctor Street. The doors are symmetrically divided by the attached ticket booth which retains its original interior door, counter, ticket machine and glass and terrazzo exterior.

Looking from the interior, the first fire exit door is located to the left of the projection screen along the north wall. The original stairs and fire door are intact, yet they are inoperable today as the adjacent dry cleaning building covers the doorway from the exterior. The second fire exit door is located to the right of the projection screen along the south wall. The original staircase and metal door have mostly been removed, yet a section of the original staircase remains intact. The removal of the original features was required when the theater was brought up to fire code in the 1990s. A new staircase and exit door were built for the south wall fire exit. The new metal fire doors open out into the adjacent alley.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 5 of 9

Roof

A flat roof which falls into hips at the edges shelters the theater's interior spaces. Architectural sketches from the original 1923 design depict modern Spanish ceramic tiles cladding the structure. Today, the hipped portions of the roof are sheathed with asphalt shingles. The flat-topped portions of the roof are bituminous built-up roofing. Attesting to the arts and- crafts style influence, the roof extends out about three feet beyond the exterior front facade and the first thirty feet of the north and south facades, forming wide eave overhangs supported by decorative timber brackets. Enclosed soffits box in the eaves and feature painted one-by-four tongue-and-groove boards on the underside. A continuous painted wood fascia board wraps around the entire building just below the roofs edge. Aluminum gutters and downspouts provide drainage. Most of the original mechanical equipment was removed over the years, replaced with newer equipment now located on the flat area of the roof.

Interior

The interior volume is divided into two separate spaces: a front lobby and concession area topped with a partial second story, followed by the single-story theater auditorium and seating area in the rear. A shallow back stage area runs behind the proscenium screen.

Front Lobby

The relatively shallow front lobby is accessed through the west facade entrance doors. A stained glass exit sign can be found on the western interior wall above each of the four sets of mahogany doors. Three of the exit signs are original. A smaller personal mahogany door grants access into the ticket booth and is located symmetrically between the larger entry doors. Original venting for air flow is featured on the ticket booth door. Within the ticket booth, the original Automatic ticket dispensing machine and "no draft" ticket booth talker remain intact. A second door is located in the southwest corner of the lobby area; this door permits access into a small office space below the southern stairwell. In the northwest corner of the lobby, another small door along the west interior wall opens out to reveal a janitorial storage and electrical room below the northern stairwell.

The concession stand, which faces west, is located along the eastern interior wall of the first floor in the lobby area. The concession stand was enlarged in the 1990s and now extends a few feet back into the auditorium area. Doorways

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 6 of 9

leading into the theater's seating area are located on either side of the concession stand and feature heavy, green drapery in lieu of doors. Over the years, the lobby flooring has been replaced with newer carpeting, which extends up two side stairwells. The two separate stairwells permit access to the second story. Each staircase rises in a U-shape and features original stair railing. All of the newel posts are also original except at the top landing of each staircase, where the posts were heightened during the 1990s for added safety precautions.

Partial Second Story

The southern stairs lead up to the men's restroom area and projection room. A men's smoking area, original to the structure, is no longer intact. At the top of the staircase, there is an open area where concession supplies are stored. In the southwest corner a five-panel door opens into the men's single-occupancy restroom. Directly across from the men's restroom, another five-panel door opens into the centrally located projection room.

The projection room remains intact and is lined with original metal sheathing to prevent fire. Along the southern wall of the projection room, a doorless closet area contains original, wall-hung mechanical operating equipment, which is no longer in use. A ceiling opening in this closet-like area, accessed via a ladder, permits access into the attic crawl space.

The northern stairs lead up to the women's restroom area. A crying room, original to the structure, where women could bring distraught children, is no longer intact. At the top of the staircase, an open lounge area that features a large, non-original mirror along the south wall grants a place for female patrons to freshen up. In the northwest corner, a personal-sized, five-panel door opens into the women's single-occupancy restroom.

First Floor Theater Auditorium and Seating Area

On the lower level, the auditorium that once seated an audience of 420 now seats 221 with larger seats more generously spaced, an expanded stage area and a new accessible restroom framed into a rear corner. The original concrete floor remains intact. A slight sloping of the floor towards the stage is noticeable; it is a result of the original pour of the concrete. The original theater seats have been removed and replaced as the necessity arose, changing maximum occupancy numbers throughout the years. In 2002, the blue cushioned seats seen today were installed,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 7 of 9

donated from Tacoma's defunct South Cinema. The extension of the concession stand into the auditorium in the 1990s called for enclosing the newly extended space with sheetrock walls. In 2003, a handicapped restroom was added in the northwest corner along the auditorium's west wall, again requiring the addition of sheetrocked walls. At the time of the handicapped restroom construction, additional seating again had to be removed in order to accommodate the restroom.

Portions of the original interior west wall, which divides the lobby from the auditorium area, can be seen in the handicapped restroom and on the other side of the concession area extending into the auditorium. The remainder of the auditorium's interior west wall, as well as both of the north and south walls, is covered in a combination of materials. The lower sections are clad with painted wainscoting composed of either thin plywood or masonite. Above this wainscoting are 18 x 30 inch homasote panels featuring beveled edges that attempt to mimic dressed stone. The homasote panels are laid in a horizontal pattern for the first few feet above the wainscoting and then change to a vertical pattern for the remainder of the wall up to the ceiling. The wainscot and homasote panels feature a battleship gray-colored paint.

The flat plain of the auditorium's north and south walls is broken by equally spaced interior projecting pilasters; the pilasters are spaced about fifteen feet apart and each topped with a decorative capital. The capitals are painted in a cream-colored base with gold paint accentuating the decorative detailing. Either trusses or large beams span between each of these structural pilasters. Four art deco sconces (two on each of the north and south interior walls) can be found placed between pilasters. These sconces are not original to the building.

A projection screen, concealed behind heavy, green curtains, is centrally located on the interior east wall of the auditorium. A decorative wood molding, painted both cream and tan and consistent with the garden-style influence, frames the proscenium arch. The original, shallow hardwood stage extends out into a small, cream-painted apron, which features the original imbedded lighting fixtures. A larger stage, painted in the battleship gray color, is set just below the apron stage. This larger stage is about one foot above the auditorium's concrete floor; it was extended out into the seating area during the 1990s in order to create a theater that could accommodate diverse gatherings, such as school choir recitals.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 8 of 9

On each side of the projection screen, original garden trellises and beamed arbors frame the fire exit stairwells, showcasing yet another feature designating the theater as garden-style. The trellises and beams above the northern, inoperable stairwell remain intact, while the same trellises and beams found above the reconfigured southern stairwell have been slightly altered in order to accommodate the new fire exit stairs.

The original plaster ceiling of the auditorium has been covered with gypsum board painted the same battleship gray as that of the auditorium walls. The new ceiling was installed in the 1990s in order to deal with areas of the original plaster ruined from water damage. Upon installation, the gypsum board was cut out around the pilaster capitals, resulting in the upper one inch or so of the capitals now covered up by the new ceiling. Centered in the auditorium's ceiling is a shallow oculist surrounded with decorative wood molding; this molding matches the garden-style molding surrounding the proscenium arch and is painted in the same shades. The center of the oculist is decorated with original cream-painted lattice, also attesting to the garden-style influence. In the center of the trellis work, a small, green glass chandelier was built for the theater by a local artist in the 1990s.

The area behind the projection screen is accessible via a small doorway along the right side of the screen. The backstage area is narrow and small and is used only as a storage space. There are two small storage rooms closed off by doors along the southern side wall of the backstage area. The first room is used for general storage, while the second room contains what appears to be the original wood letters used to make up the marquee sign. A partial second floor, reached via a ladder, is located above these two small storage rooms. The remainder of the backstage area is open. The interior back wall is exposed brick resting on a concrete foundation wall. Two small settlement cracks are detectable, rising from the concrete wall into the brick. A wood sash window pierces the back wall. This window has been internally covered with metal piping, as it is no longer of use since the adjacent building covers the opening from the exterior.

Alterations

Modifications made to the original design of the theater have been minimal over the years. The theater retains a significant amount of original historic fabric due mostly to restoration efforts made from 1993 to 1994. Early exterior

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 7 Page 9 of 9

modifications to the structure, including the installation of wood veneer siding and smoked glass tiling, did not affect the original craftsmanship found beneath. The exterior retains historically significant casement windows, mahogany doors, globe sconce lighting, and terrazzo entry, as well as the structure, form, and plan. Interior spaces have been updated over the years and have lost some of the original designs, such as the crying room and smoking lounge, yet original garden-style details remain. Interior spaces retain historically significant trellis work, staircases, woodwork, pilasters, and capitals, as well as an intact projection room.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 1 of 12

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Blue Mouse Theatre, located in the heart of the Proctor neighborhood of Tacoma, is eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C. The period of significance begins in 1923 with the construction of the movie theater and ends in 1935 when the building was first documented as officially changing hands from the original owner. The Blue Mouse Theatre is significant for its entertainment/recreational value as a standing relic of the nationwide theater building boom of the 1920s; it remains one of the few movie houses in Tacoma built during this era to survive. The building is also eligible under Criterion C (area of significance: architecture) as a good example of its type as defined by the Historic Theaters MPD.

On November 13, 1923, the single-screen Blue Mouse Theatre opened at 2611 North Proctor Street in the heart of Tacoma's Proctor neighborhood. This was the fourth Blue Mouse Theatre to be opened in the northwest by independent theater mogul John Hamrick and the second such theater in Tacoma to be called by the Blue Mouse name. During the mid-1920s, a major theater building boom was taking place all across the United States as movie houses were becoming *the* most popular place in which to spend a social evening out on the town. Prior to World War I, the movie house had been a common place for entertainment; yet, after the First World War ended, the movie house industry exploded as much more lavishly detailed theaters were built across the nation.

Hamrick's first Tacoma Blue Mouse Theatre was built downtown at 1131 Broadway (1922, demolished) and was received with great success. Hamrick's attention to detail and ability to offer an unsurpassable film experience to the citizens of Tacoma resulted in high attendance, which inspired Hamrick to open his second Blue Mouse Theatre in Tacoma a year later. The second theater was to be built in the "small but prosperous business district" of the streetcar suburb created by Allen C. Mason in the North End of Tacoma, known as the Proctor District.

Development of the Proctor District into a Streetcar Suburb

Allen C. Mason came to Tacoma in 1883 when the North End was no more than a forest of trees. With a vision of building his fortune by developing a neighborhood away from the already established downtown area, Mason began

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 2 of 12

plattling land from the Proctor neighborhood to Point Defiance Park. In order to bring people into his proposed development, Mason built bridges over two gulches and started a streetcar known as the Point Defiance streetcar line. The introduction of the streetcar to the previously undeveloped North End made Mason's dreams a reality. By the early 1900s, stops along the Point Defiance streetcar line were bustling with businesses and homes, and the Proctor District was born.

The Blue Mouse Theatre

Hamrick's second Tacoma Blue Mouse Theatre was financed in 1923 by Henry Sanstrom, a local Proctor neighborhood business owner, in the heart of the Proctor District along the Point Defiance streetcar line. With Sanstrom as landlord and Hamrick as operator, the partnership retained the talents of Seattle architect Fitzherbert Leather to design the theater.

As imagined, the new theater was set to cost \$40,000 when complete—\$20,000 to be spent on the design and construction of the arts-and-crafts styled building and \$20,000 allotted for equipment expenses. By April 1923, Leather's design for the garden-style, arts-and-crafts building had been accepted and work had begun under the watchful eye of local Tacoma contractor Albert Miller. According to the *Tacoma News Tribune*, Leather was "one of the best theater designers in the United States." His design for the Proctor District's Blue Mouse Theatre called for one of the finest equipped movie houses in the city.

The \$20,000 equipment contract was lent to B. F. Shearer of Seattle and called for the inclusion of a Robert Morton organ, a Simplex projection machine, a Gardiner screen, and Wakefield air-cushion spring seating. Special accommodations were also in the design for both the ladies and gentlemen attending shows. The ladies' restroom was to be constructed in such a way that it allowed for a mother to take a fretful child into the room and still be able to comfortably view the show without agitating the other patrons; this was known as a crying room. For the men, a restroom was designed to allow for cigar smokers to enjoy a stogie during the presentation. The heating and ventilating installation was to be completed by Jaeger Sheet Metal Works of Tacoma.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8

Page 3 of 12

"Garden-Style Arts-and-Crafts"

Leather's design for the exterior of the building was dubbed by the architect as "Garden Style". It featured a combination of raked and common bricks, stucco, and exposed arts-and-crafts style timber framing topped with a low pitched hip roof. The roof was built with wide, over-hanging eaves and decorative timber brackets, attesting to the arts-and-crafts style of the building.

The interior of the building was decorated with garden-style influences, including trellice work and decorative wood moldings. The large, single projection screen was framed with decorative wood molding while garden trellises featuring beamed arbors framed each of the stairwells on either side of the projection screen. The same decorative wood molding found around the projection screen surrounded a shallow oculist in the center of the auditorium's ceiling, which was infilled with lattice.

Architect of the Blue Mouse Theatre - Fitzherbert Leather

Fitzherbert Leather was as theatrical as his name. He was born in London where his father was a builder and he apprenticed as a mason and blacksmith. After immigrating to Aberdeen, Washington he moved to Seattle where he worked on the Romanesque Revival Bailey Block in Pioneer Square as a masonry designer for the architects Saunders and Houghton. He remained associated with the architects and in particular Edwin Houghton who was also British. Houghton became known for his theater designs including Seattle's Grand Opera House (1900), Spokane Theater (1901), Beck's Theater in Bellingham (1901-2) and many of the 37 houses in the Northwest Theatrical Associated chain known as the Cort circuit. In 1905 he designed the Moore Theater followed in 1907 by the Majestic in Seattle. Over the remainder of his career he designed more than 70 theaters in North America. Houghton's towering influence apparently spun off on young Fitzherbert whose career in the building trades also crossed paths with wealthy building contractor Matthew Dow. In 1913 Fitzherbert Leather left Saunders & Houghton and began practicing architecture in Seattle. He married Dow's daughter just before the First World War and soon he was

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 4 of 12

working on his father in law's projects and taking on some design work all his own. It was during this period that he designed the Blue Mouse Jr., his only Tacoma commission, and drew the plans for the reconstruction of the burned out Everett Theater (1924). Soon after, Leather drifted into advertising and finance and eventually away from architecture entirely.

Blue Mouse Theatre Opening and Building History

On Tuesday November 13, 1923, John Hamrick's Proctor District Blue Mouse Theatre opened its doors at 7:45 p.m. to a sold-out crowd. The feature silent film on opening night featured the film *Green Goddess* starring George Arliss and Alice Joyce. J. W. Houck, who had been serving as manager of Hamrick's downtown Tacoma Blue Mouse Theatre, was appointed manager of the new Proctor Street Blue Mouse. George C. Greenland, who had also been employed at the downtown theater as an assistant manager, became assistant manager of the new Proctor Street Theater. Both Houck and Greenland spoke at the grand opening. Also on the program for the night was a song by Miss Dorothy Darnell; organist, Henry F. Parks and Arthur D. Pease, each contributing a piece from the Robert Morton organ; and, Tacoma Mayor Angelo Fawcett, who gave a short speech. As was custom during the era of silent films, live piano or organ music accompanied the films in order to set the tone for the audience and complement what was happening on the screen. Organist Everett Wohlfarth secured the role as house organist on opening night at the Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theatre.

Proctor District business owners welcomed the addition of Hamrick's theater to the neighborhood by offering a full-page advertisement in the local paper on opening day. Hamrick planned to show films at his smaller Proctor Street Blue Mouse only after they had been shown at his downtown Blue Mouse Theatre. There would be three changes per week—on Tuesday, Friday, and Sunday—with doors opening at 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and at 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Due to the fact that the theater was a smaller size, it showed films only after they had been shown downtown, and that it was the second John Hamrick Blue Mouse Theatre to be built in Tacoma, the new theater on Proctor Street almost instantly took on the name of the "Blue Mouse Junior."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 5 of 12

Proctor neighborhood residents enjoyed viewing silent films at the Blue Mouse Junior over the next several years. In 1926, the “Junior” was dropped from the theater’s name, and the venue became known as the “Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theatre.” The seats were continuously kept reasonably full at both Tacoma Blue Mouse locations; and, in 1927, Hamrick brought the first “talkie” to the downtown Tacoma Blue Mouse.

“Talkies”

Motion pictures featuring sound were referred to as “talkies” due to the invention of a sound-on-disc process achieved through vitaphone equipment. Hamrick had founded his theater operations on the principle of offering the most grandeur experience possible, and the transition into “talkies” was naturally the next step for the theater mogul. The sound for a silent picture was placed on a phonograph record, which would then be played in unison with the motion picture, thus giving the feature sound. Vitaphone equipment was the latest development in the motion picture industry, and Hamrick’s introduction of the equipment to his downtown Tacoma Blue Mouse Theater preceded the introduction of sound to many of the other large eastern and southern cities in the United States. The 1927 showing of the “talkie” *The Jazz Singer* at the downtown Blue Mouse aided in Hamrick’s rise to eventually becoming one of America’s leading independent theater operators.

Ownership Officially Changes Hands

In 1928, the Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theatre encountered its second name change; this time the “Blue Mouse” was dropped, and the theater became known as the “Proctor Street Theatre.” That same year, H. T. Girtanner began as manager of the Proctor Street Theatre. In December 1928, Hamrick made his semi-annual trip to both New York and Hollywood in search of the latest new-and-improved theater equipment. Determined to offer the best possible theater experience, Hamrick purchased updated vitaphone equipment to be installed at his downtown Tacoma Blue Mouse Theatre. Although Hamrick had already introduced “talkies” to Tacoma, he ascertained that the purchase of the new equipment would “give Tacoma the very latest in sound presentation, as well as other equipment that will serve to make Blue Mouse patrons as comfortable as those in any other theater in the country.”

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 6 of 12

Hamrick continued striving to make both of his Tacoma Blue Mouse venues the most welcoming theaters in the city and his efforts were met with continued success. In the early 1930s, he continued to venture further into the local Tacoma theater community with the purchase of the Temple Theatre (1931) and the Music Box (1932). In 1930, Fred T. Girtanner took over operations at the Proctor Street Theater. It is unclear whether F. T. Girtanner purchased the Proctor Street Theatre at this time, but by 1935 it is documented that Hamrick was no longer the owner of the neighborhood Blue Mouse Theater located on Proctor Street.

John Hamrick

John Hamrick was born in Humboldt, Kansas on September 1, 1876 to John D. and Sarah Hamrick. When John Jr. was a small child, the family moved to Kansas City, Missouri. Hamrick's father started a building contractor company. He found success as a contractor and contributed significantly to the growth and improvement of Kansas City; receiving contracts for a large amount of the excavating, grading, and building operations that shaped the city. John Jr. received his schooling in Kansas City, where he graduated from high school. Rather than going on to college, he followed in his father's footsteps in the building construction field.

Like his father, Hamrick was also very successful as a builder, erecting many fine homes in several different neighborhoods throughout Kansas City. In the early 1900s, Hamrick married a woman named Fannie, with whom he had a daughter, Beatrice, in 1908. Although Hamrick was thriving in the construction field, the growing popularity of silent films did not escape his notice, and he soon realized the potential for expansive opportunity in the movie industry. Hamrick decided to leave the construction field to pursue a career in the movie business, not as an actor, but as a theater operator. Circa 1910, he established the first moving picture house in Kansas City.

Hamrick operated his theater in Missouri for three years before deciding to move his family in order to try his luck in the theater business in Seattle. Upon arrival, he opened a neighborhood theater located on Seattle's Queen Anne Hill, which he aptly named The Queen Anne. The Queen Anne was only the second neighborhood theater to open west of Boston and the first of several in the northwest for Hamrick. He operated The Queen Anne for a short while before selling it in order to open a different theater—the Colonial Theatre—in a more prominent downtown Seattle location.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 7 of 12

The site for the Colonial Theatre, for which he secured a lease on the property from Mrs. A. B. Collins, was chosen by Hamrick himself and grew into a successful movie house. Although the Colonial Theatre was a lucrative endeavor, Hamrick ran the movie house for only a short while before letting it go and acquiring the old Melbourne Theater located in downtown Seattle on Second Avenue. Hamrick purchased the defunct Melbourne, remodeling the building and reopening the venue as the Rex Theatre. The Rex was operated under Hamrick's for the next four years, until 1920, when Hamrick sold the Rex Theatre in order to open yet another movie house in downtown Seattle—the Blue Mouse Theatre.

By then, Hamrick had been in the theater business for ten years, yet the Seattle Blue Mouse Theater was of a different caliber than those Hamrick had previously operated; it was to be a larger, more prominent theater house and Hamrick was determined to create an atmosphere of great hospitality and friendship. After its 1920 grand opening, The Blue Mouse, said to have been named after a lounge in Paris that Hamrick had visited as a young man, was referred to as “one of the finest of its kind in Seattle.” The theater, located at 1421 Fifth Avenue (now demolished), was a success within its first year.

With the success of the Seattle Blue Mouse, Hamrick was now ready to bring his welcoming style of grand movie picture houses to two other major cities in the Pacific Northwest: Portland and Tacoma.

The Portland Blue Mouse Theatre (1032 Southwest Washington Street, demolished) opened in November 1921; and, in April 1922, Hamrick opened his first Blue Mouse Theatre in downtown Tacoma. In November 1923, with the success of the downtown Tacoma theater, Hamrick opened his second Blue Mouse Theatre in the city in Tacoma's Proctor District.

In 1935, the same year that the Proctor Street Theater officially changed hands, Hamrick added the downtown Roxy Theater to his holdings, designating him as the “most active independent theater operator in Tacoma's history.”

He continued in the theater business until his death on November 30, 1956. At the time of death, Hamrick was president of Hamrick Theaters and had at least fifteen theaters in the Northwest operating under the John Hamrick

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 8 of 12

name. Four years after his death, the downtown Blue Mouse Theatre was destroyed to make way for Tacoma's experimental moving sidewalk.

Blue Mouse Theatre Name and Owner Change

In 1945, The Proctor Street Theatre underwent yet another name change, albeit a slight one, and became the "Proctor Theatre." Since 1928, when the Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theatre became the Proctor Street Theatre, the venue had been continually referred to by three different yet similar names: Proctor Street Theatre, Proctor Theatre, and Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theatre. Even after officially adopting the name "Proctor Theatre" in 1945, area residents often cut the name down even further by referring to it simply as the "Proctor."

The Proctor Theater not only took on a new name in 1945, but Glendon O. Spencer also became the new owner. Spencer operated the Proctor Theatre for nearly three decades. He sold the movie house in 1973 to the president of Conner Theaters Corporation: Will Conner.

Will Conner had served as manager of Hamrick's Music Box and Roxy theaters during the 1930s. Throughout the years, Conner followed in his former employer's footsteps and began acquiring theaters throughout Tacoma, several of which were former John Hamrick Theaters. The purchase of the Proctor Theater in 1973 was the fifth addition to the Conner Theater Corporation; other holdings included the Rialto, Roxy, Temple, and Narrows theaters

Conner purchased the Proctor Theater with the intent of operating the venue as a first-run theater for the first time in the theater's history. On March 9, 1973, The Proctor Theatre reopened with the showing of *Sounder*, a film nominated for Best Picture at the 1972 Academy Awards. Although Conner's intentions for the Proctor were good, the showing of pornographic films in theaters during the 1970s was at an all time high in many areas; and, by 1978, the Proctor had fallen to the same fate.

As 1978 neared its end, so did Conner Theater Corporation's ownership of the Proctor Theatre. Conner put the ailing theater on the market for \$80,000, and a group of young Seattleites purchased the theater with high ambitions of turning the venue around. After a thorough cleaning of the interior, the group of six friends (all between the ages of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 9 of 12

23 and 27) cleaned up the film selection also. Gone were the R- and X-rated films of previous months, and in came the showing of classic films. As part of the new image, the name was changed to The Bijou.

The new owners of The Bijou, headed by brothers Jeff and Greg Radiske and Jeff's wife Paula, leapt into the theater business after Greg took a film history course at Pacific Lutheran University and talked his brother into buying into business. With little knowledge of how to run a successful theater, the group planned on showing a newsreel and two classic movies each week, Thursdays through Sundays, for \$2.25 for adults and \$1.50 for seniors and children.

On December 5, 1978, The Bijou opened with the films *Mutiny on the Bounty* and *Treasure Island*. For the next two years, the group continued running the venue as a classic movie theater, taking turns running the concession stands while holding down second jobs in order to make ends meet. Attendance was continually minimal; so, near the end of their second year in business, the owners transitioned to showing children's movies in an attempt to boost turnout. Still \$30,000 in debt and unable to run a successful theater, in February 1981, the owners turned their theater over to a new operator, Steve McCoy.

McCoy was the head of Cascade Cinemas, which ran the Lakewood Theater, the south Tacoma Village Cinema, and two drive-in theaters in Bremerton. The group of owners at The Bijou offered McCoy a six-month lease with the option to buy after the terms of the lease. On February 20, 1981, Cascade Cinemas took over as operator of The Bijou and began featuring "quality commercial films" with an emphasis on foreign and art films. At the end of the six-month lease, however, McCoy's company was losing money and chose to discontinue their operations. As a result, the Bijou went dark for the next two months.

In November 1981, the Radiske's sold the theater to Galaxy Theaters under the management of President Wayne Kullander. Prior to its reopening, Galaxy Theaters remodeled The Bijou, recarpeting the space and building a new concessions stand. The revamped venue began offering second-run movies at half-price and hoped to make money at the new concessions stand.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 10 of 12

During the 1980s, theater attendance continued to weaken nationwide, and independent theater chains faced major competition from expanding national theater chains. Additionally, an eruption of new national chain theaters occurred in Tacoma during December 1983, flooding the Tacoma theater market and making it difficult for many smaller independent movie houses. In September 1984, new Galaxy Theater head Bob McRae faced bankruptcy and the threat of closing The Bijou's doors. McRae had already had to shut down his Galaxy Lakewood Theatre due to the increase in screens citywide, yet he hoped to continue operations at The Bijou, one of his remaining four theaters. McRae had a soft spot for the Proctor District Theater; and, although in a position where he would have to raise prices from \$2 to \$3 in order to survive, he planned to offer \$1 movie nights on Thursdays to make up for the rate increase.

The Bijou survived the continued decline of movie attendance over the next few years, yet the Galaxy Theater chain decided to sell the neighborhood theater in the late 1980s. By 1988, The Bijou was under the new ownership of Shirley Mayo and operated as one of a few movie houses in Tacoma not owned by a large theater chain.

Mayo successfully ran The Bijou for the next five years until she decided to get out of the movie business altogether. A group of investors expressed interest in purchasing the building and adapting the space into offices, yet long-time Proctor resident Mayo was reluctant to see the neighborhood theater disappear. Rather than selling right away, Mayo approached Bill Evans (another long-time Proctor resident) to ask if he would be interested in purchasing The Bijou. Evans was not interested, Mayo decided to sell to the investors.

Blue Mouse Associates

Not able to purchase The Bijou alone, Evans quickly began approaching friends and colleagues about the theater, finally collecting a total of seventeen \$10,000 shares. A newly formed partnership of local professionals bought the property from Mayo in September 1993 for \$140,000.

The new owners called themselves the Blue Mouse Associates and began restoration efforts on the theater. All of the partners were interested in keeping the theater running as a working movie house and restoring the building to its

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 11 of 12

original 1923 charm, including reclaiming the original “Blue Mouse Theatre” name. The group spent the next five months and an additional \$90,000 on restoring what was at that time the only independently owned, non-X-rated movie theater in Tacoma.

On February 4, 1994, the newly restored Blue Mouse Theatre opened its doors once again, with admission set at \$3. In August of the same year, Blue Mouse Associate partner Dale Chihuly’s design for an electric sign wrapping around the theater’s facade was completed by neon artist Kevin Russell. Twenty-five blue neon mice were installed to scamper around the Proctor District Theater’s marquee day and night. Russell also integrated neon into two antique clocks set into the short ends of the Blue Mouse Theater’s marquee.

During the opening months of operations at the Blue Mouse, two movies were shown nightly—the first at 7 p.m. and the second at 9 p.m. The first movie was a second-run film geared toward the general movie going audience while the second movie was an art film aimed at the film buff crowd. Attendance for the 9 p.m. showing suffered; and, by the end of the first six months, the Blue Mouse scaled back to offer one movie seven nights per week with weekly changes.

Over the years, the Blue Mouse offered unique events to boost attendance at the neighborhood theater in an attempt to stay afloat in the face of major movie chain theaters. In 1997, the Blue Mouse put on a special showing of the original 1925 black-and-white silent film *Phantom of the Opera*, with local University of Puget Sound professor Duane Hulbert supplying the atmospheric piano music. In 1998, the theater hosted a pre-St. Patrick’s Day Celebration, which included live Irish music and dance and the showing of the 1952 Academy Award winner *The Quiet Man*. By 1999, the theater was hosting Tacoma Community College’s International Film Festival and also putting on all-age rock concerts. On Halloween night 2000, the Blue Mouse held its first midnight showing of *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. The theater continued to show the picture on a weekly basis for several years; it drew avid fans that came dressed in costume for the line-by-line recitation of the film’s dialogue in unison as the film played on the big screen. The *Rocky Horror Picture Show* continues to be shown today at midnight every second and fourth Saturday of the month, with a group called the “Blue Mouseketeers” performing live on stage as the film plays

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 8 Page 12 of 12

behind them. In 2002, the University of Washington–Tacoma hosted independent film-maker Lloyd Kaufman and his *Toxic Avenger IV* cult movie at the Blue Mouse. Chinese lion dancers from Pacific Lutheran University's Chinese Studies Club performed in front of the theater in 2003 as a celebration of the Sister City program. Later that same year, the 1925 *Phantom of the Opera* was shown again as a fundraiser to help finance the installation of handicap-accessible restrooms. In 2004, the interior of the Blue Mouse Theatre was used to shoot scenes for the fictional Dixie Theater in the independent film *Tootie Pie*. Today, the Blue Mouse continues to host the yearly International Film and Food Festival, which is a part of the Sister City program.

The Blue Mouse is known in the theater business as a “subrun” house, meaning that the venue can only show a new film if it is not running in a first-run theater within a 50-mile radius or only after the first-run theaters have stopped showing the film. Due to its “subrun” status, the Blue Mouse is able to keep admission prices low. After the initial 1994 \$3 admission price, the theater raised their prices to just \$4 (\$3 for children under 16 and seniors) in the late 1990s; it continued to offer “the cheapest concessions in town.” In 1999, movie goers could buy one large, bottomless popcorn and two medium sodas (the “Mighty Mouse Combo”) for \$6, or one small, bottomless, popcorn and small soda for \$2.50. Today, admission remains low at \$5, and the Mighty Mouse Combo is still on the menu, albeit the price now \$10.

Summary

In 1923, the Proctor District's Blue Mouse Theatre was the twentieth movie theater to be opened in Tacoma. The arts-and-crafts building is a good example of a stylistically detailed movie theater built during the nationwide theater boom of the 1920s; it remains one of the few movie houses in Tacoma built during this era to survive. The placement of the Blue Mouse Theatre along the former Point Defiance streetcar line contributes increased significance to the structure and its role in the early history of Allen C. Mason's streetcar suburb known as the Proctor District. The Blue Mouse Theatre is also noteworthy at the local level for its first operator, John Hamrick, who, in 1935, was deemed Tacoma's most active independent theater operator in the city's history. Today, as the Blue Mouse Theatre nears its eighty-sixth birthday, the theater has become a staple in the Proctor neighborhood, where it continues its run as one of the “oldest continuously run theater in Washington State.”

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 9 Page 1 of 3

Bibliography

- Ainscough, Margaret. "Bijou's life as vintage-movie theater ends; new operator to try art films." *Tacoma News Tribune*, February 19, 1981, A5.
- Andersen, Soren. "Blue Mouse still serving neighborhood." *Tacoma News Tribune*, March 6, 2001, Soundlife section, SL1, SL4.
- . "Down on the bayou in Puyallup." *Tacoma News Tribune*, May 5, 2004, E1, E4.
- . "Have a seat, Blue Mouse." *Tacoma News Tribune*, October 12, 2002, B1-B2.
- . "New owners underwrote sequel for nondescript theater." *Tacoma News Tribune*, February 4, 1994, sec. F, 1,3,4.
- . "Reliving the 'Rocky Horror.'" *Tacoma News Tribune*, October 27, 2000, tgif section, TG1, TG3, TG4.
- . "Theater seeks less-'Rocky' solution." *Tacoma News Tribune*, April 16, 2004, E1, E3.
- . "They Saved the Mouse House." *Tacoma News Tribune*, May 28, 1998, Soundlife section, SL1,SL3,SL6.
- "Bijou Booking Only Classics." *Tacoma News Tribune*, December 8, 1978, sec. C, 15.
- Birthday Gala & Fundraiser (for a handicapped restroom)*. Tacoma: 2003.
- "Blue Mouse Hosting Early St. Pat's Celebration March 12 Event Includes The Quiet Man and Irish Dance Music." *Tacoma Weekly*, March 6, 1998, 15.
- Clayton, Alec. "Mouse caught in trap." *Tacoma City Paper*, December 23, 1999, 5.
- "Conner Buys Proctor Theater." *Tacoma News Tribune*, February 16, 1973, A12.
- De La Paz, Diane. "Blue Mouse glows in its true love story." *Tacoma News Tribune*, November 11, 2003, E1, E5.
- Erickson, Jim. "New owner reopens ailing Bijou Theater." *Tacoma News Tribune*, November 15, 1981, E7.
- Eskenazi, Stuart. "Disabled moviegoer to picket theater." *Tacoma News Tribune*, May 24, 1988, B1-B2.
- Gallacci, Caroline and Bill Evans. *Images of America: Tacoma's Proctor District*. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 9 Page 2 of 3

“Hamrick And Edris Take Over Theater.” *Tacoma Times*, December 12, 1935,1.

“Hamrick Buys Roxy!” *Tacoma News Tribune*, December 12, 1935,1, 7.

“Hamrick Gets Big Films.” *Tacoma News Tribune*, December 4, 1928, 8.

“Historic Homes of Tacoma 2003.” *Tacoma Weekly*, April 25, 2003, A5.

“How New Proctor Street Movie Theater Will Look.” *Tacoma Sunday Ledger*, April 8, 1923, B8.

“Independent League Champs.” *Tacoma Times*, March 19, 1938, 10.

International Film & Food Festival. Tacoma: ChiTo Graphic & Design, 2003.

James, Andy. “Local movie house’s future discovered in past glories.” *The Peninsula Gateway*, September 7, 1994, 2.

Jensen, Clare. “Sister City leader pays visit to Tacoma.” *Tacoma Weekly*, April 24, 2008, A1, A8.

“John Hamrick, 80, Dies In New York.” *The Seattle Times*, November 30, 1956, 48.

Larson, John. “Proctor theater celebrates 80 years.” *Tacoma Weekly*, November 13, 2003,1A, 3A.

“Lights, Camera, Action.” *Tacoma Weekly*, May 27, 2004, A1.

“Lion dancers roar at the Mouse.” *Tacoma News Tribune*, March 14, 2003, A10.

McLennan, Douglas. “Blue Mouse Theater to be adorned with neon mice.” *Tacoma News Tribune*, August 18, 1994, Soundlife section, SL5.

“Mrs. Hamrick Taken by Death At Palm Springs.” *Tacoma News Tribune*, December 20, 1965.

“New Blue Mouse Proctor Street Theater Opened.” *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, November 14, 1923, 4.

“New Community Theater Will Open on Tuesday Night.” *Tacoma Sunday Ledger*, November 11, 1923, A5.

“New Theater Very Modern.” *Tacoma Times*, November 12, 1923, 2.

Popham, Art. “Historic Blue Mouse may live again.” *Tacoma News Tribune*, September 4, 1993, p B5.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 9 Page 3 of 3

- . "Original Beauty is Better." *Tacoma News Tribune*, November 13, 1993, C7.
- "Proctor Street Blue Mouse Theater Under Construction." *Tacoma News Tribune*, April 7, 1923, 3.
- Ricarte, Monica. "Facelift reveals Proctor Mouse." *Pacific Lutheran University Mast*, April 8, 1994, 7, 10.
- Ripp, Bart. "Aglow in Nostalgia." *Tacoma News Tribune*, February 4, 1994, sec. F, 1,3,4.
- Roberts, Jim. "Toxic Avenger takes on Tacoma." *Tacoma Weekly*, March 8, 2002, A5.
- Seattle and Environs 1852-1924*. Chicago: Pioneer Historical Publishing Co., 1924.
- Smith, Dorian. "Discount-theater chain 'on verge of bankruptcy.'" *Tacoma News Tribune*, September 2, 1984, D8.
- Smith, Meg. "Phantom of the Opera." *Tacoma Weekly*, May 29, 1997, 8.
- "Theater to Open Tonight." *Tacoma News Tribune*, November 13, 1923.
- Tucker, Cheryl. "A 'family' serves up classics at the Bijou Theater." *Tacoma News Tribune*, April 29, 1979, F7.
- "Unaware of Movie Fire." *Tacoma News Tribune*, November 6, 1948, 1.
- "Your Puget Sound." *Tacoma News Tribune*, April 19, 1981, Sunday Northwest section, 6.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 10 Page 1 of 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located in Section 36 in Township 21, Range 02, Quarter 11 in Tacoma, Washington, and is legally described as: 2nd SCHOOL LD ADD: 2ND SCHOOL LD ADD B 27 S 43 Ft. of N 122 FT of W 100 Ft. NE 36 21 2 . It is otherwise known as Parcel Number: 7475012200

Boundary Justification

The nominated property encompasses the entire urban tax lot historically associated with the Blue Mouse Theatre.

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
 PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 11 Page 1 of 3

Contemporary Photographs Captions

<p>1 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: West and south facades, looking northeast</p>	<p>6 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Proctor Street recessed main entrance featuring original attached ticket booth</p>
<p>2 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: South and east facades, looking northwest</p>	<p>7 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Rear (south facade) alley fire exit and recessed brick display windows</p>
<p>3 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Northwest corner, looking east</p>	<p>8 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Interior view of rear (north facade) former fire exit and stairwell featuring original garden-style details. Exterior of door now blocked by abutting building.</p>
<p>4 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Proctor Street, looking south</p>	<p>9 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Original windows on west facade</p>
<p>5 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Proctor Street, looking north</p>	<p>10 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Exterior view of men's restroom original windows</p>

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
 PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Section number 11

Page 2 of 3

Contemporary Photographs Captions

<p>11 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Interior view of men's restroom original leaded glass window</p>	<p>16 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Interior view original ticket booth door (on left) and set of original west (main) entrance doors featuring original exit sign above</p>
<p>12 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Interior view original projection room window</p>	<p>17 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Original Automatic ticket machine inside ticket booth</p>
<p>13 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: West facade non-original marquee, looking north</p>	<p>18 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Original 'no draft' speaker inside ticket booth</p>
<p>14 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: West facade original recessed brick display case and timber bracket detail below overhanging eaves</p>	<p>19 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Front lobby area, looking north, featuring original staircase leading up to women's restroom area</p>
<p>15 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Original terrazzo tile in entry way and on ticket booth</p>	<p>20 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Women's restroom lobby area</p>

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet -

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

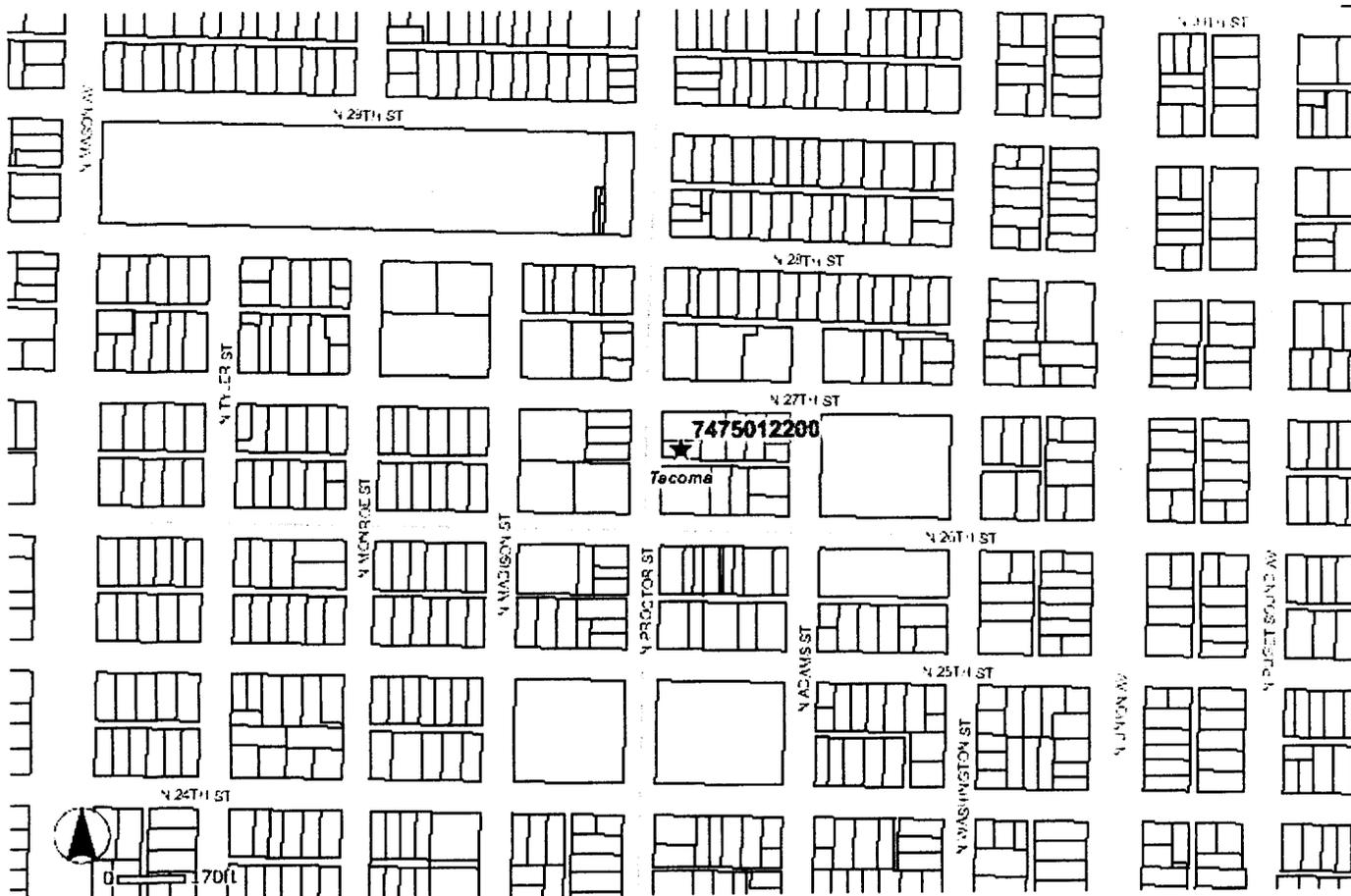
Section number 11

Page 3 of 3

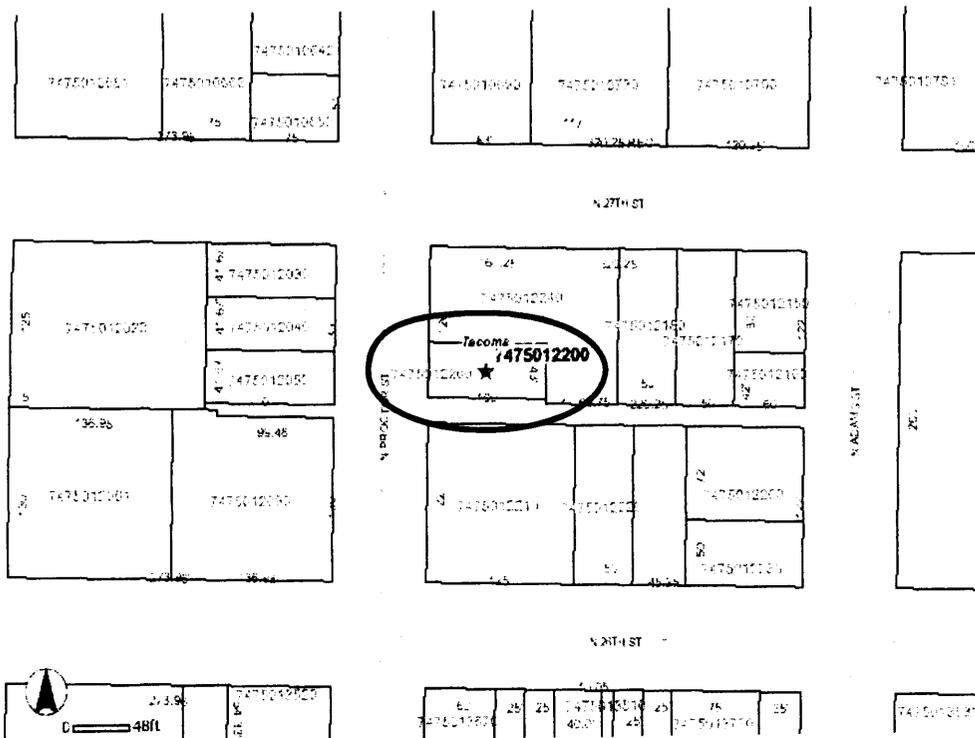
Contemporary Photographs Captions

<p>21 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Front lobby area, looking south, featuring original staircase leading up to men's restroom area</p>	<p>26 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Theater seating area, looking northeast, featuring garden-style influenced moldings and trellises</p>
<p>22 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Men's restroom area, looking south</p>	<p>27 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Theater seating area as seen from stage, looking west</p>
<p>23 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Door to projection room as seen from men's restroom area, looking north</p>	<p>28 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Capital detail</p>
<p>24 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Projection Room</p>	<p>29 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Oculist detail</p>
<p>25 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Front lobby concession stand, looking southwest</p>	<p>30 of 30 Blue Mouse Theatre 2611 North Proctor Street Tacoma, Pierce County, WA Photographer: Brooke Manning Date: September 2008 View: Backstage area, looking south</p>

**NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
 BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA (PIERCE COUNTY) WA
 MAPS**

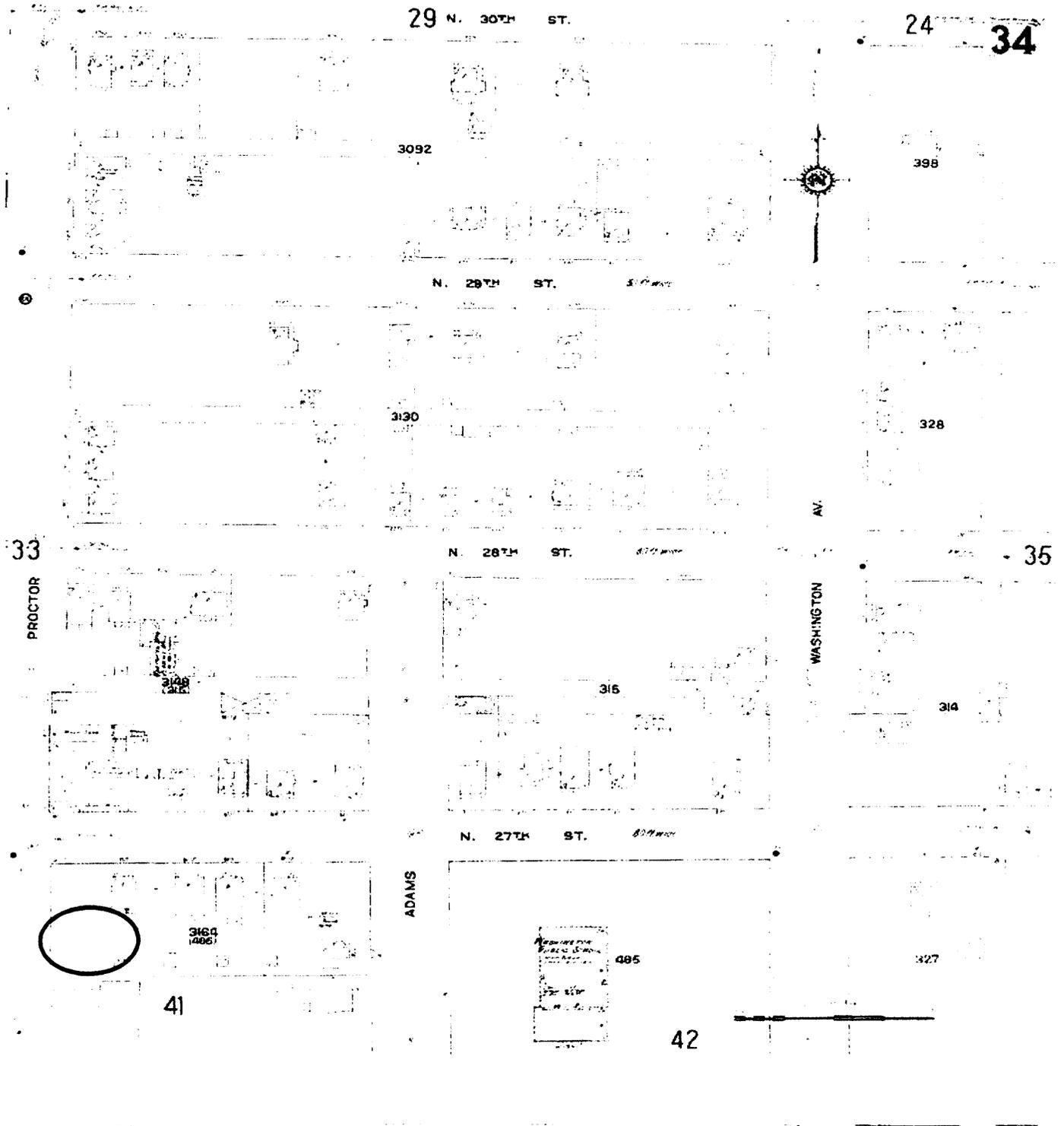


Assessor's Parcel Map for the Blue Mouse Theatre (Parcel # 7475012200).



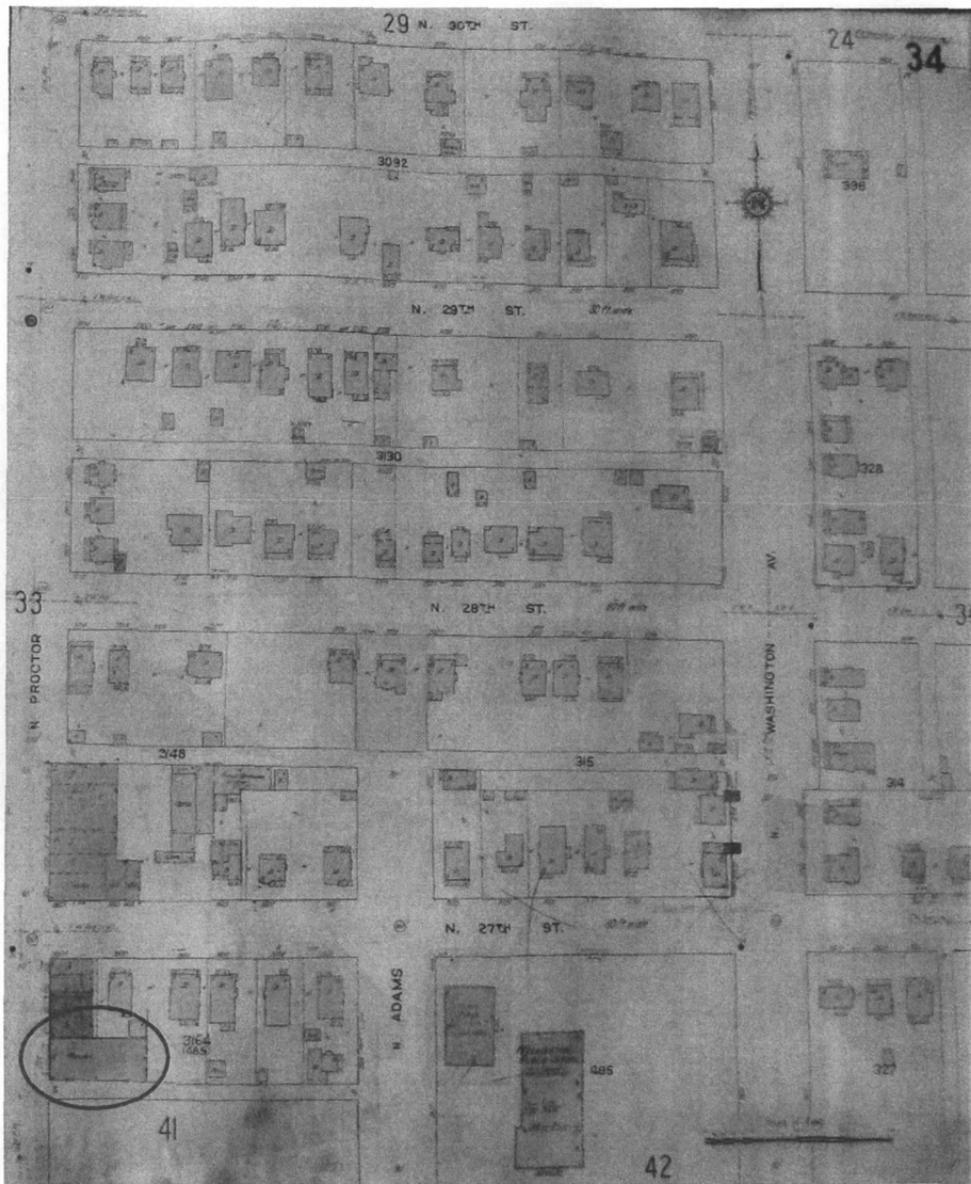
Assessor's Parcel Map detail showing the Blue Mouse Theatre.

**NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA (PIERCE COUNTY) WA
MAPS**



1912 Digital Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the future site of the Blue Mouse Theatre.

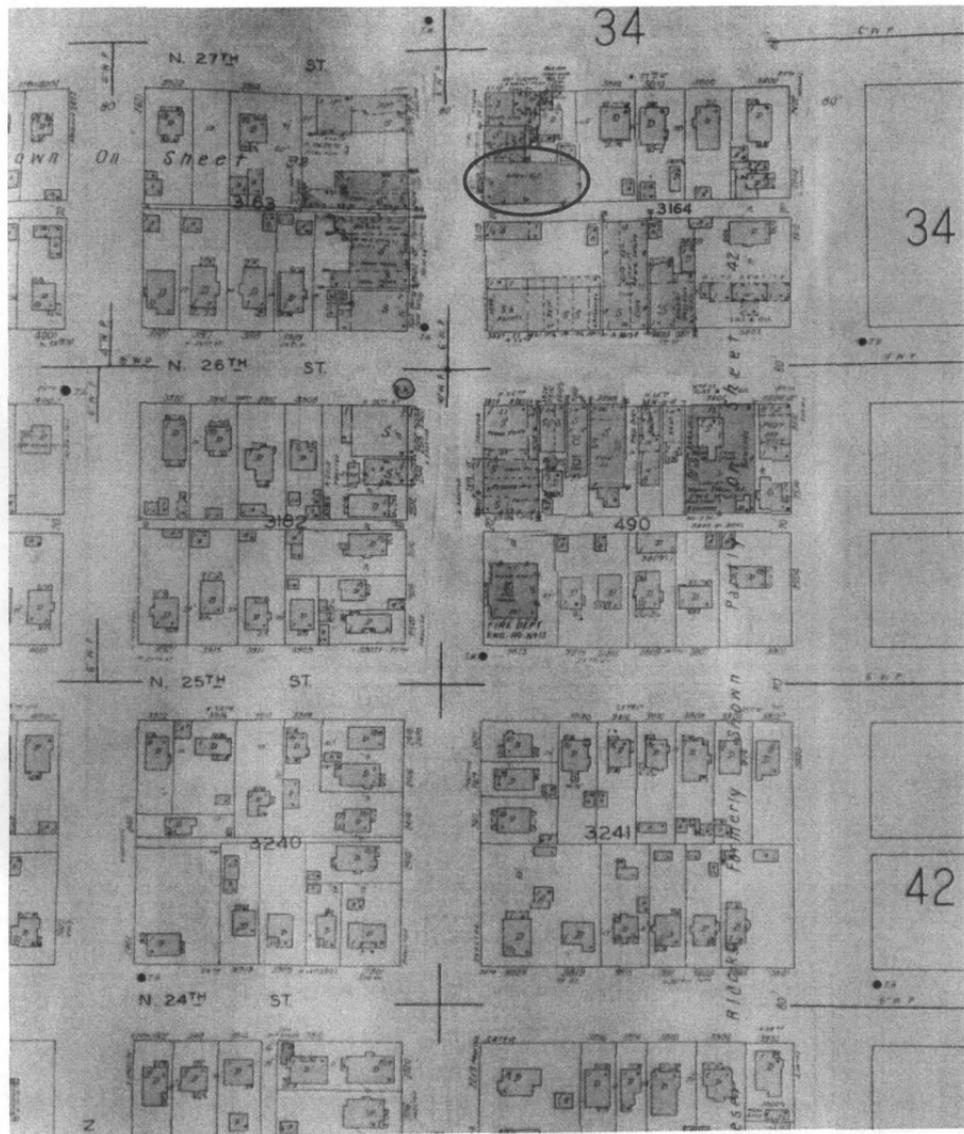
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA (PIERCE COUNTY) WA
MAPS



1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the Blue Mouse Theatre.

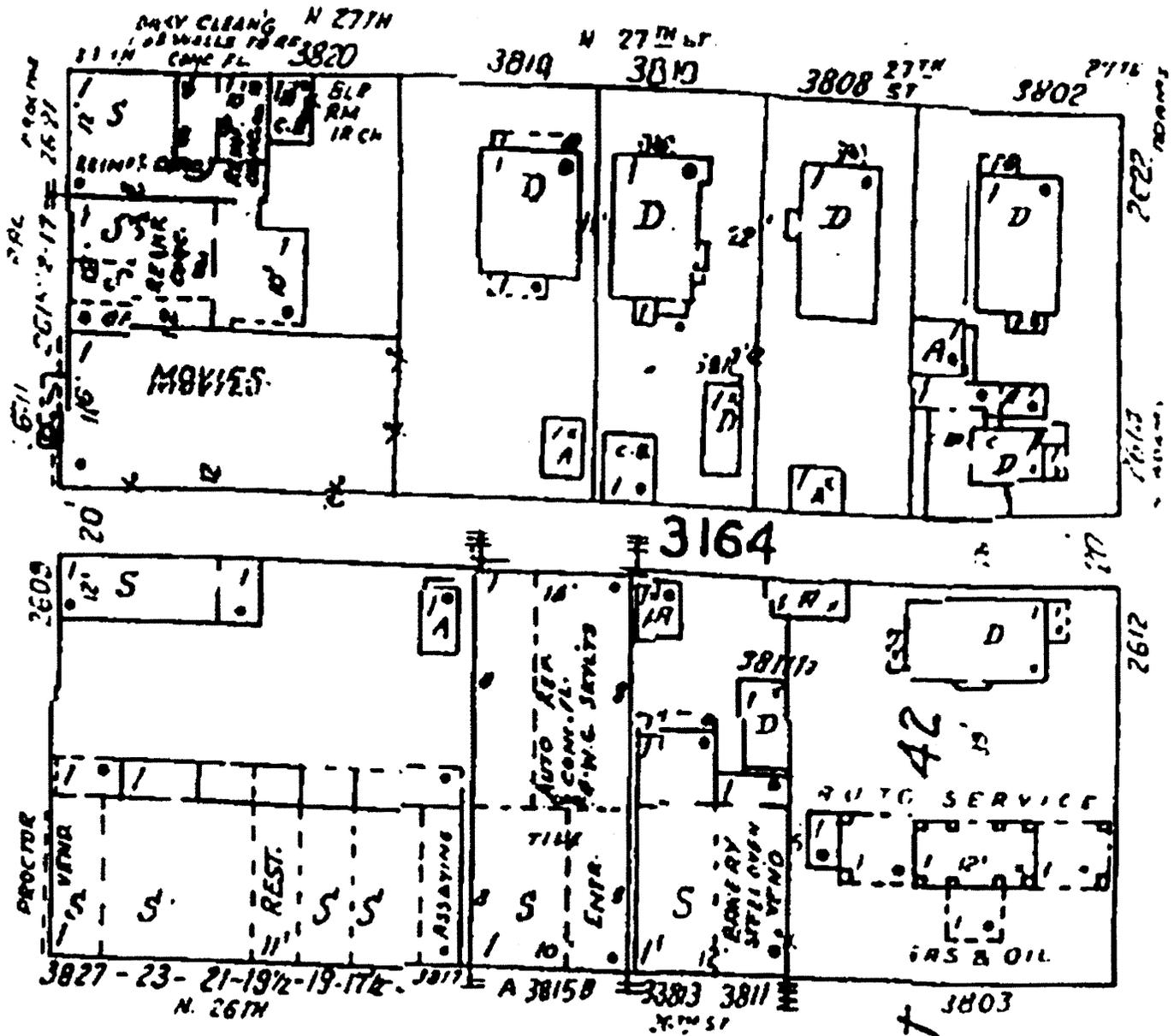
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA (PIERCE COUNTY) WA
MAPS



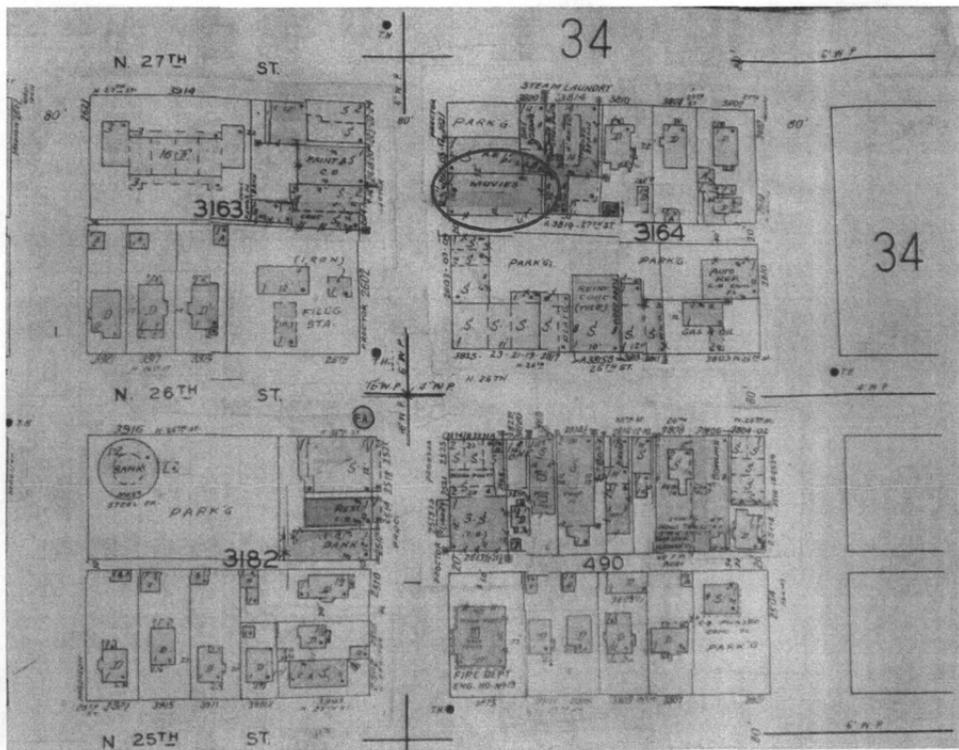
1945 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the Blue Mouse Theatre.

TACOMA REGISTER NOMINATION
 BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA, WA
 DRAWINGS



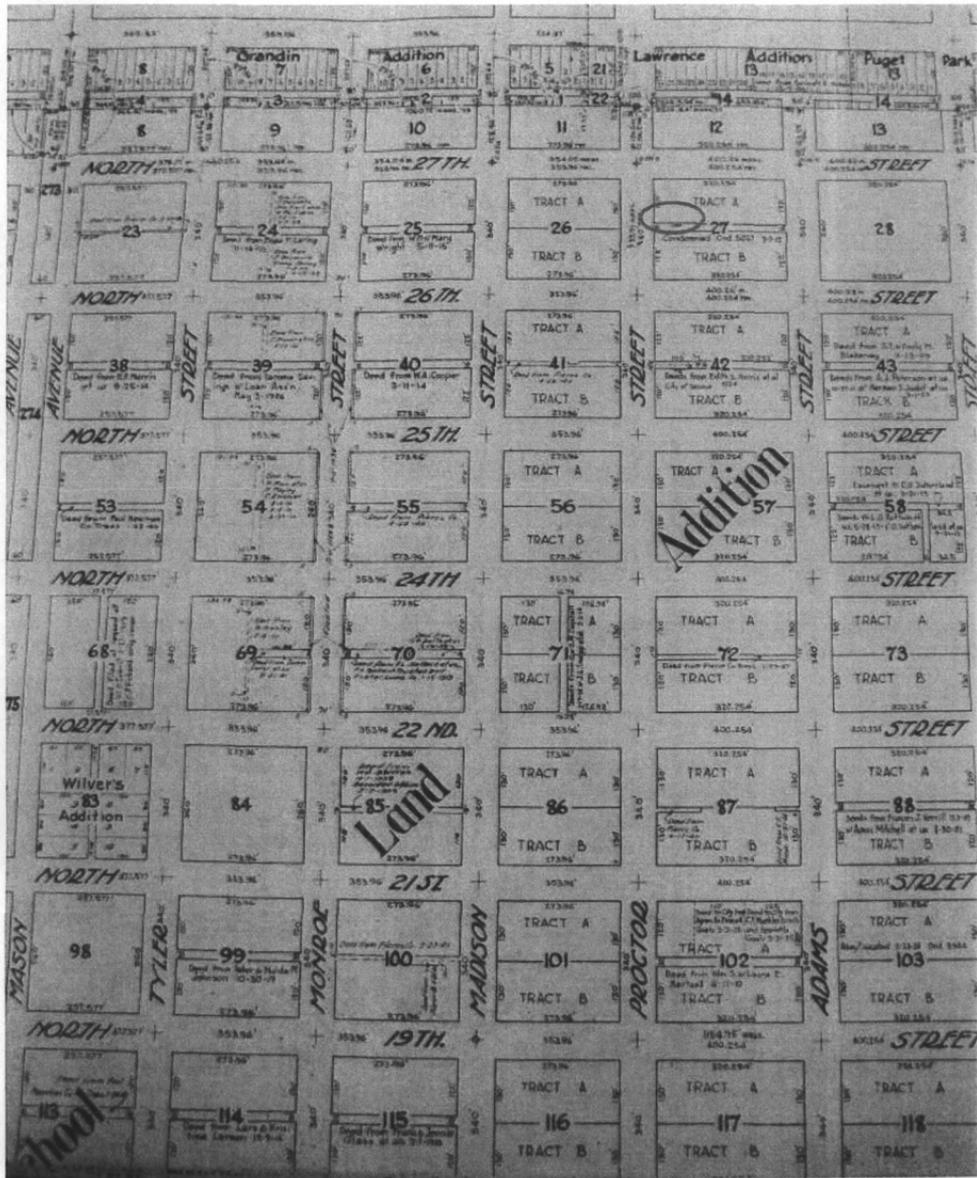
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1912-1950, Blue Mouse Theatre, Tacoma, Washington. Source: Seattle Public Library

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA (PIERCE COUNTY) WA
MAPS

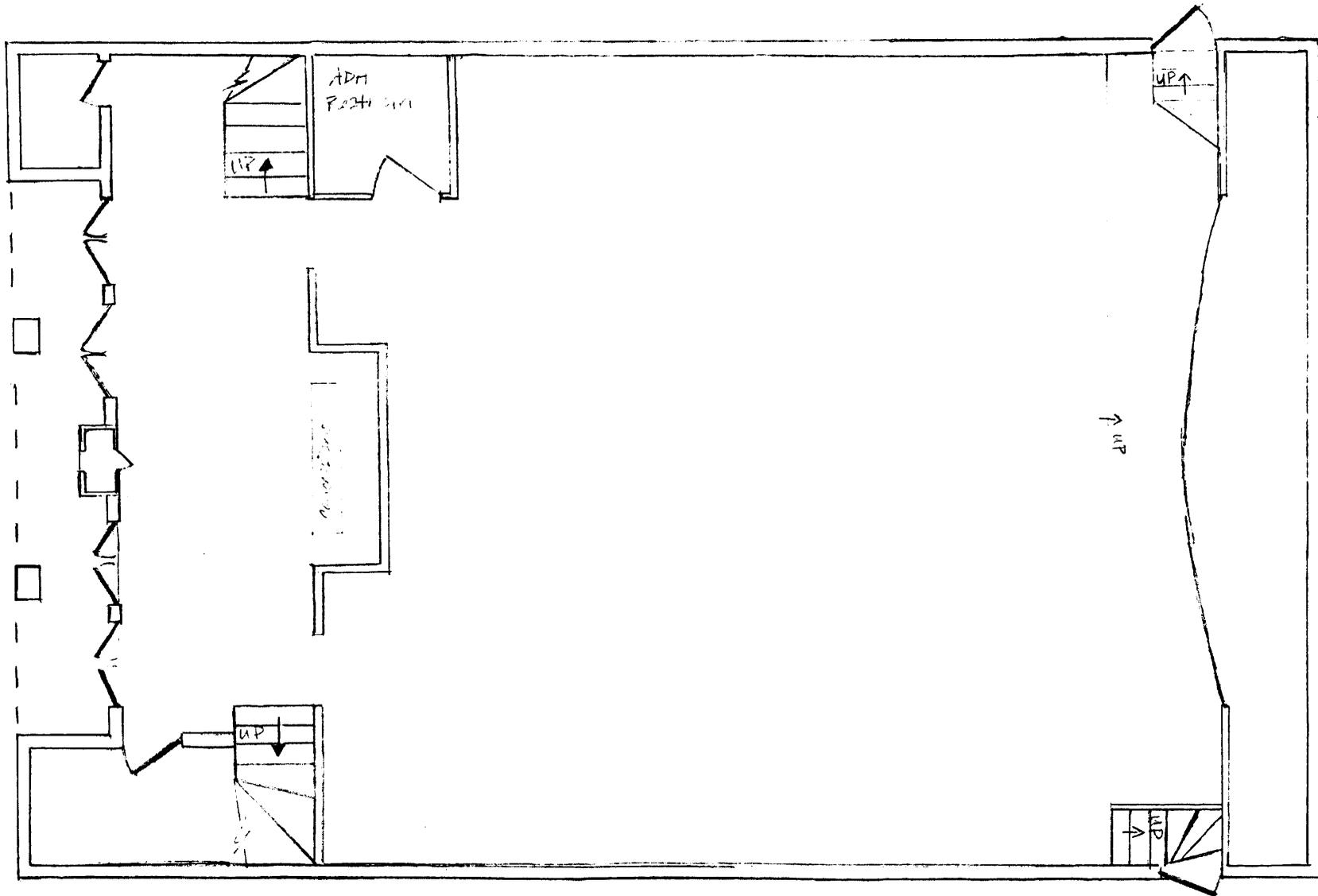


1969 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the Blue Mouse Theatre.

**NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION
 BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA (PIERCE COUNTY) WA
 MAPS**



1951 Metsker's Reference Map of Tacoma showing location of Blue Mouse Theatre.



N ↑

BLUE NOBLE THEATRE
FIRST FLOOR PLAN - SKETCH (not to scale)

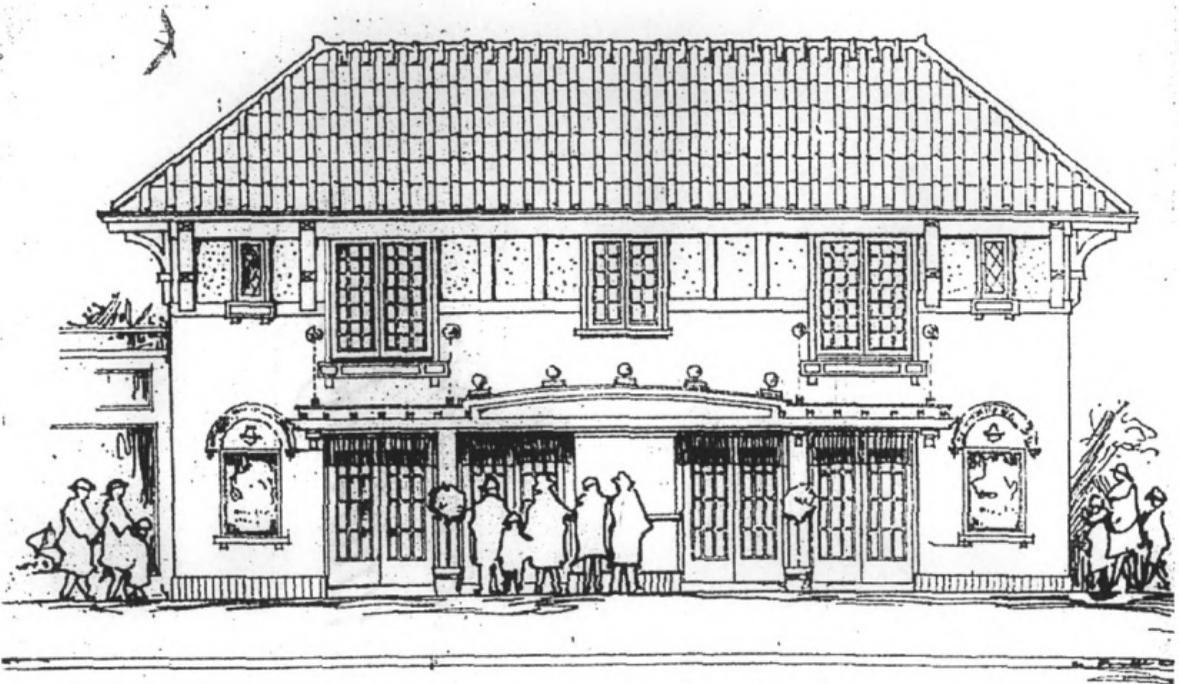
9-9-09 S. JOHNSON

TACOMA REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA, WA
PHOTOGRAPHS



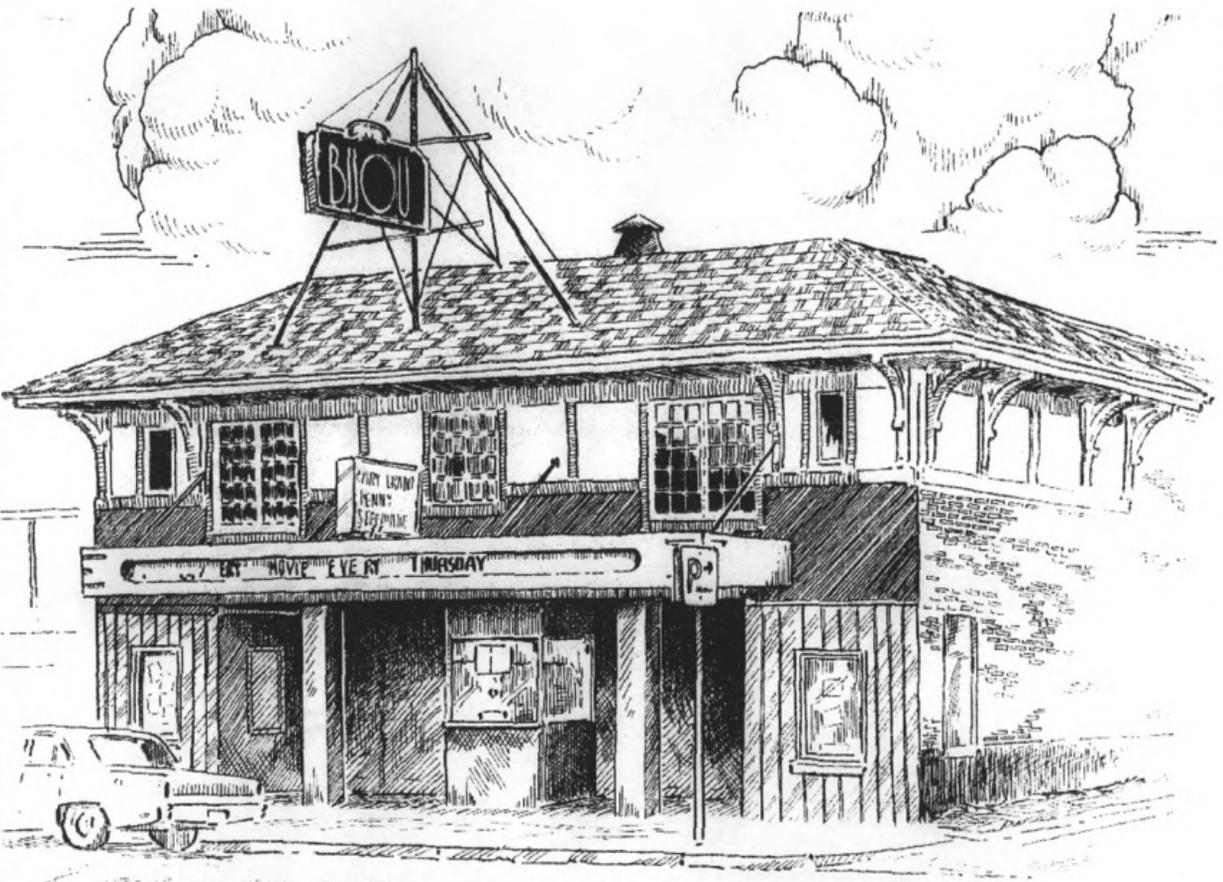
Circa 1925. Blue Mouse Theatre. North (side) and west (main) facades. View: looking southeast. Source: Blue Mouse Associates

TACOMA REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA, WA
DRAWINGS



April 1923. Architect Fritzherbert Leather's sketch of the Blue Mouse Theatre prior to its completion in November 1923. Source: Tacoma News Tribune.

TACOMA REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA, WA
DRAWINGS



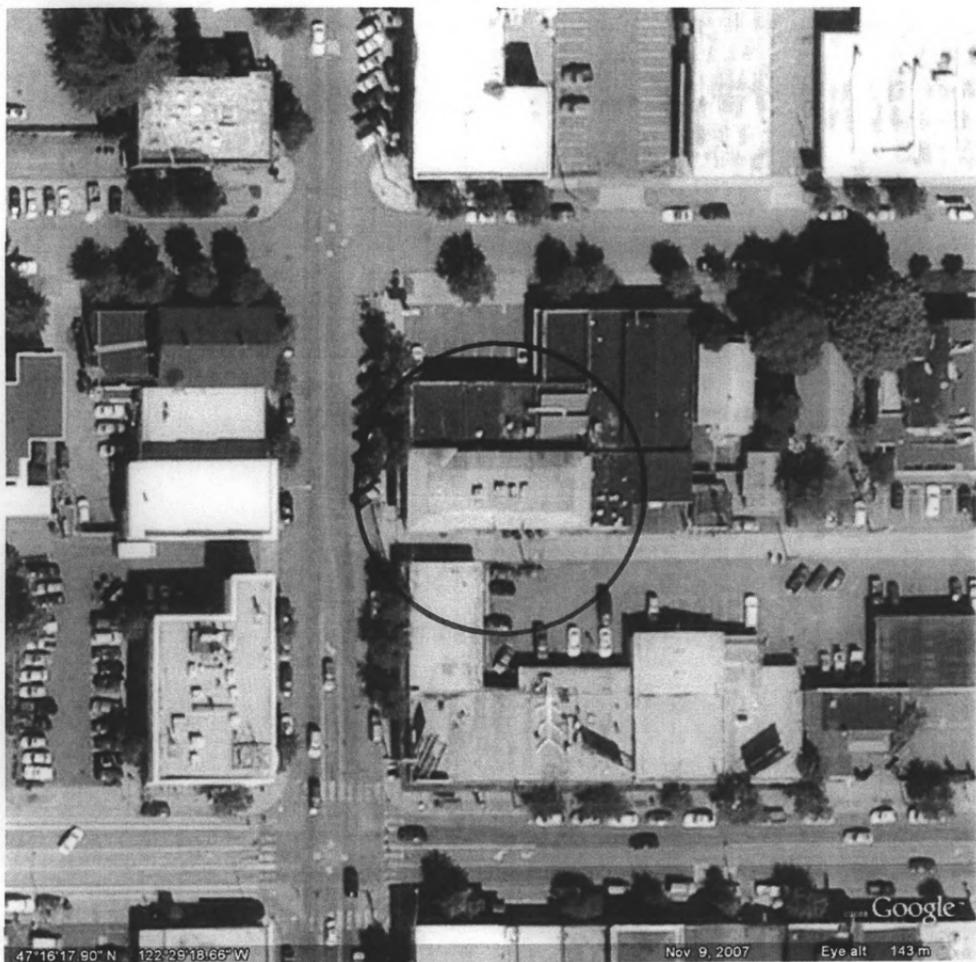
April 19, 1981. Artist's sketch of the Blue Mouse Theatre when it was known as the Bijou. Source: Tacoma News-Tribune

TACOMA REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA, WA
PHOTOGRAPHS



1977. Blue Mouse Theatre when it was known as the Bijou. Source: Tacoma Public Library.

TACOMA REGISTER NOMINATION
BLUE MOUSE THEATRE, 2611 NORTH PROCTOR STREET, TACOMA, WA
DRAWINGS



2007, site map of Blue Mouse Theatre. Source: Google Earth.