

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1465

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 an item does not apply to the property to be 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 Third Street Motor Car Company Building  
other names/site number CP-N-409

2. Location

street & number 216 East Third Street n/a  Not for Publication  
city or town Newport n/a  Vicinity  
state Kentucky code KY County Campbell code 037 zip code 41071

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally (  See the continuation sheet for additional comments).

David L. Morgan 10-21-02  
Signature of certifying official/Title David L. Morgan, SHPO and Executive Director, KHC Date  
Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Edson R. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 12/5/02

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

( Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

( Check only one)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

( Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

n/a

**Number of contributing resource previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

( Enter categories from instructions)

commerce/trade: business

commerce/trade: specialty store

domestic: single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

( Enter categories from instructions)

vacant/not in use

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

( Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & early 20th century

American movements: Craftsman

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

( Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof other

other brick, concrete

**Narrative Description**

(Use Continuation Sheet)

Third Street Motor Car Company Building  
Name of property

Campbell County, Kentucky  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

( Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criterial 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)

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

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Use Continuation Sheet)

**Areas of Significance**

( Enter categories from instructions)

architecture

**Period of Significance**

1916

**Significant Dates**

1916

**Significant Person**

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect / Builder**

unknown

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of Repository:

KY Heritage Council

Third Street Motor Car Company Building  
Name of property

Campbell County, Kentucky  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

#### UTM References

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
16	716720	4330120			

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

#### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margo Warminski, Historic Preservation Consultant date June 27, 2002  
organization \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number 340 East Second Street phone 859-581-2883  
city or town Newport state Kentucky zip 41071

### 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.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

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

#### Additional Items

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

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO

name Newport Investment Co., c/o Nicholas Ellison phone 859-441-4059  
street & number 144 Ridgewood Place  
city or town Fort Thomas state Kentucky zip 41075

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7t27; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Third Street Motor Car Company Building  
Newport, Campbell County, Kentucky

## 7. Statement of Description

The Third Street Motor Car Company (CP-N-409) is located in Newport, Kentucky (2000 population: 17,048), a city located on the south side of the Ohio River opposite Cincinnati. Newport, the largest city in Campbell County, is one of a series of northern Kentucky river towns that together comprise one of the more heavily urbanized areas in the state. Located on the east side of the city, the Third Street Motor Car Company building is a former automobile showroom and garage, of Craftsman-inspired design; it dates from 1916, with a c. 1930 addition.

Much of Newport's 19th-century development is confined to a broad terrace terminated on the east by Interstate 471, on the south by a series of hills and on the west by the Licking River, which divides Campbell and Kenton Counties. Monmouth and York Streets, paired one-way arterials, carry U.S. 27, the county's primary north-south thoroughfare. West of the Monmouth-York corridor is the mixed-use West End neighborhood, developed for the most part in the second half of the 19th century. To the east is the residential neighborhood of East Newport, developed as a series of additions to the city between the Civil War and World War I. To the south is the hilltop neighborhood of Clifton or South Newport, once a separate town; the bulk of its housing dates from c. 1910 to 1930.

The Third Street Motor Car Company Building is located on the south side of East Third Street between Washington Avenue and Saratoga Street; just north of the boundary of the Mansion Hill Historic District (NR, 1980; expanded, 1986). The building fronts on the sidewalk, with no setback; its rear line abuts Parker Alley. On the south side of the alley is a two-story brick edifice built c. 1894 as a school for African-American children. Paved parking lots make up the rest of the block.

The Third Street Motor Car Company Building is rectangular in form, its flat roof hidden by a low pediment with concrete coping. The roof is concrete, sprayed with a synthetic coating at an unknown date. The building's central section rises one-and-a-half stories to a low, triangular pediment, and is flanked by one-story wings. The main block features a balanced facade seven bays wide and four bays deep; the upper story contains four regularly-spaced bays.

The facade of the building is faced with wire-cut brick of subtly varied shades of

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chocolate, russet and golden brown, laid in running bond. Rows of bricks set vertically serve as lintels; extending in an almost-continuous line across the facade, they function as a belt course. Simple corbels further accentuate the horizontal division of the building. The rear and east elevations are covered with smooth-faced, painted brick in seven-course common bond. A concrete bulkhead anchors the building to the ground.

The facade is lighted by a pair of large display windows containing multi-pane, metal-frame fixed sashes (installed c. 1960-70) that are undersized for the openings, with wooden infill panels beneath. The windows of the second story retain their original, double-hung sash with eight-over-one lights. The rear and side elevations contain segmentally arched window openings that have been boarded over; their original appearance is unknown.

At either end of the facade are wide, arched doorways that retain double-leaf, beaded-panel, crossbuck doors with multi-pane fixed sash. Alternating with the display windows are double- and single-leaf doorways. Of Craftsman-inspired design, the doors contain rectangular panes of beveled, clear glass arranged in a geometrical pattern, and are surmounted by large, single-pane transoms. Acrylic panels, applied over the glass, have protected them from breakage.

At the west end of the main block is a one-story addition that is sympathetic in form, scale and detailing to the original structure. Built on a rectangular footprint, it has an arched roof. It utilizes wire-cut brick of similar color and texture and continues the roofline parapet. The facade of the addition is pierced by a large display window (now boarded over); a freight entrance with overhead door; and a door containing a rectangular, glazed panel (also covered over), surmounted by a transom. The brickwork is enlivened by recessed panels containing diamond-shaped plaques of smooth-faced, painted concrete; it is accented by molded corbels similar to, but more ornate than, those of the main block. While the exact date of the addition has not been determined, it appears to have been built c. 1930. A former loading dock at the west elevation, added c. 1960, has recently been removed.

As originally built, the main entrance of the Third Street Motor Car Company building opened into a vestibule that retains its original doorway and millwork, as well as fixed glass panes on three sides. The vestibule in turn leads into an office, 24 feet wide. The vestibule and office have recently been stripped to the bare walls, with partition walls

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removed.

Most of the first floor is devoted to a large, open space, supported by square, concrete columns. As befits the historical uses of the building, it is of sturdy construction and functional appearance. The ceiling is covered with tongue-and-groove wood siding and is carried by two series of chamfered wooden beams, extending lengthwise and sideways. It retains several original, industrial-style pan light fixtures, and fluorescent lights have been added. Above the ceiling are four large skylights that have been covered over. The walls are of painted brick and the floor is concrete. Along the east wall are storage cupboards of painted, tongue-and-groove wood, which appear original to the structure; the larger of the two features rolling doors on tracks. At the northwest corner is a men's restroom, also of beaded wood, that retains its original mirrors and porcelain fixtures. The west wall of the main space--originally an outside wall--contains a series of window openings bricked in when the addition was added. At an undetermined date (c. 1970) the southeast corner of the room was partitioned off and walk-in coolers installed along the east wall. Around the same time a room behind the office was partitioned to create a cash office, with teller's windows. These partitions have recently been removed.

The addition, accessible through a narrow, arched doorway with rolling door, is an open, rectangular space. The arched roof is a clear span supported by laminated wooden trusses containing a lattice-weave design. As in the main block, the ceiling is faced with wood and the walls are painted brick. Six small skylights have been painted over. The concrete floor is slightly sloped from front to back, presumably for truck access. Double-leaf doors opening on the alley have been partly boarded over.

An enclosed, two-run staircase in the northwest corner of the building provides access to the upper story. The second floor, which appears to have originally been used as offices, contains four narrow, interconnected rooms running from front to back, as well as a transverse rear hallway in which a bathroom was installed c. 1940. The walls and ceilings are faced with rough plaster; some dropped ceilings have been installed. The rooms retain a full complement of millwork typical of the early 20th century: classically inspired flat woodwork topped by quarter-round mouldings, and horizontal-panel doors. Picture moldings remain in place on the walls. The floors are covered with linoleum. The east room retains the highest degree of historic finish, featuring pine floors, varnished woodwork, a chain-hung light pendant, and an ornate iron radiator. The room has also experienced considerable water damage, with resulting spalling of the plaster and

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underlying brick; some of the walls are marred with graffiti. The west room was formerly used as a kitchen; its walls are covered with c. 1950 synthetic tiles. The plumbing fixtures have been removed. Both the east and west rooms contain closets with deep shelving.



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### **Section 8. Statement of Significance**

**Summary.** The Third Street Motor Car Company Building (CP-N-409) meets Criterion C and is architecturally significant as a well-preserved and locally uncommon example of the small-scale, utilitarian buildings built to display and service cars in northern Kentucky during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the auto gained widespread availability and acceptance in American life. These early showrooms and garages are generally simple in character, modest in scale and horizontal in orientation, of sturdy masonry construction. They are similar in form and detailing to other commercial and industrial structures of the era; in particular, livery stables and warehouses. They are “transitional” in that they adapted a familiar architectural vocabulary, the vernacular of small-scale industrial and commercial buildings, to a new use. While some have found new uses, few have survived intact to the present day.

The Third Street Motor Car Company Building is one of northern Kentucky’s finest examples of this increasingly rare building type. It is characteristic in form and detailing, retaining many original features. Its tapestry brickwork and geometrical detailing, influenced by the Craftsman style, set it apart from other area examples. It has been evaluated within the context of “Automobile Showrooms of Northern Kentucky, c. 1910-1945.”

#### **Automobile Showrooms of Northern Kentucky, c. 1910-1945**

As automobiles gained popularity in the early 20th century, new businesses sprang up to serve the motoring public. Some of these adapted former blacksmith and wagon shops to the new technology. Others were housed in new structures built expressly for the automobile, such as the Third Street Motor Car Company Building.

While there has been little formal study of c. 1910-1945 auto showrooms in northern Kentucky, primary research using Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory forms, Sanborn maps, city directories and windshield survey of existing structures, reveals some characteristics of form and style common to such buildings. These buildings can be differentiated into two basic types.

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**Utilitarian Buildings (c. 1910-1925)**

The earliest automobile-related structures, built in the 1910s and early 1920s, are simple, utilitarian buildings. They are horizontal in form, typically one to two stories in height; two-story examples, such as the Third Street Motor Car building, housed offices or apartments on the upper floor. Common features include flat roofs, often hidden by low parapets; relatively small display windows, of plate- or mullioned glass; and open interior spaces, often with central offices. They resemble other functional structures of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, such as warehouses, livery stables and small industrial buildings. Some, like the Third Street building, include double-leaf wooden doors, relieving arches and small-paned, double-hung wooden sash: features typical of stables and warehouses. Like commercial buildings of the same period, their facades read as a solid wall containing a series of windows and doors; the proportion of window to wall area is much lower than that of those built in later decades.

A notable local example of an early auto building is the Helms Garage in Petersburg (BE-1122), an Ohio River town in nearby Boone County, Kentucky. Built c. 1910, the garage is a one-story building of simple design, faced with light brown brick; an arcaded brick corbel table draws the eye upward. Large plate glass windows illuminate the interior. The original wooden garage doors were replaced with standard overhead doors c. 2000. The town of Petersburg was identified as potentially eligible for National Register listing during a 1995 comprehensive survey, with the garage building as a contributing element. Another good example is the Beaverlick Garage (BE-260), located in the hamlet of Beaverlick in southern Boone County. Built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the garage is a small, plain, one-story frame edifice with flat roof and rectangular plate-glass windows.

**Stylistic influences.** Some auto showrooms incorporate elements of commercial architectural styles of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, just as their counterparts of an earlier day may have evidenced Romanesque Revival archways or Queen Anne brickwork. Some built in the 1910s and 1920s, like the Third Street Motor Car Company, reflect the influence of the Craftsman style, which was tremendously popular for commercial and residential buildings alike in the interwar period. Their planar facades, clad in dark, wire-cut brick, are embellished with copings, recessed panels, plaques or shields, or brick of contrasting hues. Such ornament takes its inspiration (albeit loosely) from the Arts and Crafts movement, with its simple lines, horizontal forms, emphasis on “honest” or “natural” materials, and geometrical ornament. The Craftsman influence remained

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popular in northern Kentucky for commercial buildings, including auto-related enterprises, into the 1930s.

The Broering Building (CP-N-347) at 511-13 Monmouth Street, built in 1919, is a three-story edifice of large scale and vertical orientation, located on Newport's main commercial street. Utilizing the three-part composition typical of the Commercial Style, it is clad in pale brown brick and crowned with a corbeled cornice. Undersized new windows were installed in the 1990s and the storefront has been altered several times. The Howard Edwards Motors Building (CP-N-343) at 421 Monmouth Street, built in the late 1930s, is a large, three-story building, horizontal in form, featuring a wire-cut brick facade with restrained Art Moderne detailing. Its storefront was somewhat altered when it was later adapted as retail space. Both the Broering and Edwards buildings are located in Newport's Monmouth Street Historic District (National Register, 1996).

Similar in design to the Edwards building, but even larger in scale, is the former Baker Motor Car Company on Beech Street in Newport (1920s). The mixed-use Baker building houses studio apartments on its upper floors.

**Adapted buildings.** Some automobile dealerships, repair shops and parts dealers of the early and mid-20th century adapted and remodeled existing buildings, such as commercial structures, movie theaters and churches, to meet their needs. Often the building was extensively altered in the process: windows were bricked in, facades were reclad in brick, glazed block or stucco, and sometimes glazed storefronts were installed. The C.W. Meyer Garage (BE-634; demolished) in Florence, Kentucky, was a two-story, late Queen Anne-Classical Revival building built as a grocery store in 1910 and adapted as a Ford dealership and garage. In Dayton, Kentucky, the former Liberty Theater (CP-D-22; c. 1910) later housed Kirk's Body and Fender Shop, and the former St. John's Episcopal Church (CP-D-1297; c. 1873) became Sylvester S. Bertram Auto Repair. In Newport, George Rosen Auto Sales (CP-N-348) occupied a commercial building originally built as a residence in the mid-19th century.

**Broad-form Storefronts (c. 1920-1945)**

Most auto showrooms built in northern Kentucky during the 1920s through the mid-1940s are one-story structures, horizontal in orientation, with flat, low-arched, or gently pitched gable roofs, and very large display windows framed by piers and lintels of brick,

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concrete block or glazed block. Unlike their predecessors of the 1910s, these storefronts are dominated by glass rather than masonry. This new building type, also used by other types of commercial enterprises, is sometimes called the "modern broad-front."

Commercial building prototypes did not change basic organization and design until modern materials and design encouraged the change. One modern building was the double-width storefront, which has been labeled the *modern broad-front*. ...Steel beams and columns made this possible. It was most often a low one-story structure that could be twice as deep as it was wide. ...[The building] moved away from the dual-purpose nineteenth-century store, in that it had no living space at all.... The broad-front looked as commercially efficient as it was intended to be. (Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design 1870-1940: An Illustrated Glossary* [Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985], p. 249)

The same property type is also called the "enframed window wall." "Popular through the 1940s, the [enframed window wall] type is visually unified by enframing the large center section [usually of glass] with a wide and often continuous [solid] border, which is treated as a single compositional unit..." (Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street* [The Preservation Press, 1987], p. 68).

While this form was used most frequently for retail stores (ibid.), it was also popular with other types of businesses, as banks and auto showrooms, that required a large, one-story, open space. However, "Window treatment may vary when the type is used for other functions" (ibid.).

A good example of a broad-front auto showroom was Simon and Fischer Auto Sales (CP-N-326; demolished) in Newport, a one-story 1940 building of utilitarian design, faced with wire-cut brick. Less intact is the building at 412 Madison Avenue in Covington (built 1916). While it has seen many alterations, its broad, low facade, and large expanses of glass, hint at its original appearance and use.

**The Moderne influence (c. 1930-1945).** During the 1930s, the stolid, Craftsman- and Commercial Style designs of the 1910s through the 1930s gave way to a lighter, sleeker look favored by a nation in love with speed. Influenced by the Art Moderne style, this new streamlined look was favored by the builders of train stations, bus depots and airports, as well as the designers of the cars, locomotives and planes themselves (Martin

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Greif, *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America* [Universe Books, 1975], pp. 88, 97). It was also embraced by the designers of auto showrooms, who used light colors, broad facades and large expanses of glass to create a distinct, recognizable form. Many auto showrooms built in the late 1930s and early 1940s used buff brick or light-colored glazed block, sometimes in contrasting colors, and incorporated glass block or curved corners. "Often the entire facade [of such buildings] suggests a sleek, mass-produced object, reflecting the highly influential field of industrial design" (Longstreth, op. cit.). Neon signs added color and motion.

The influence of aerodynamic Moderne on auto showrooms is perhaps most evident in the former Covington Buick dealership at 620 Scott Street. Polychrome glazed block was used by the Van Der Veer Motor Company at 207-09 East Fourth Street (c. 1940; greatly altered), a Ford dealership, and the George Rosen Auto Sales complex (CP-N-348; date unknown, remodeled 1940s), both located in Newport.

### **Auto Dealerships and Urban Business Districts**

**New cars on Main Street.** Regardless of form, the auto showroom was at home on Main Street through the mid-20th century. Like their neighbors, these buildings were oriented to the street; they were built directly on the sidewalk, with the showroom entrance through the front of the building. Parking areas were relegated to side or the rear, or--according to Sanborn maps--were located on adjacent blocks (Howard Edwards Motors, CP-N-343). Signs were generally attached to the building rather than freestanding; in earlier examples, they may have been painted on the brick (Broering Building, CP-N-347). Modest in size by contemporary standards, these signs were intended to catch the eye of a population that was still traveling, for the most part, in a more leisurely manner: on foot or by streetcar.

Like the businesses of an earlier era that required larger spaces (such as livery stables, hotels or lumber yards), most auto dealerships were located on the periphery of business districts rather than in the prime retail areas. In Newport, for example, most were on side streets, on arteries that parallel Monmouth Street (the main commercial street) or on the edges of the commercial district rather than in its heart. (Gottfried and Jennings observed that within central business districts, broad-fronts were often built on side streets [op. cit.].) The Third Street building, for example, was one of three doing business on that avenue, between Washington Avenue and York Street, during the 1950s. The others

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included Simon and Fischer Auto Sales (CP-N-326, 1940s; demolished) at 41 East Third Street, and Newport Dodge (late 1950s; demolished) between Monmouth and Saratoga Streets. Others, identified through city directories or Sanborn maps, included the Baker Motor Car Company at 113 Beech Street; Campbell County Chevrolet at 1038 Monmouth Street (date unknown; demolished); and Cliff Howard Hudson Sales and Service at 702 York Street (date unknown). This dispersion may have been a function of zoning restrictions, or of relatively lower land values on outlying blocks. It may also have represented a conscious movement of commerce out of the traditional business district as automobiles afforded their owners greater mobility.

**From new cars to used cars.** By the mid-20th century, some buildings built as new-car showrooms had, like the Third Street building, been converted to garages or used-car salesrooms (George Rosen Auto Sales, CP-N-348). The sturdy construction and open plans of the showrooms also made them readily adaptable to new uses. From the late 1930s through the mid-1940s part of the Third Street Motor Car building was occupied by a small printing company; by the 1950s the whole building was taken over by a beer wholesaling concern. In like fashion, by the 1960s the Baker Motor Car Company and Van Der Veer buildings became printing plants, the Howard Edwards (CP-N-343) showroom was converted to a furniture store and the Broering Building (CP-N-347) became a nightclub.

**From cities to suburbs.** After World War II, most auto dealers gradually followed their customers to the suburbs. Here they built buildings that, derived from the Modern movement, "entailed new concepts of form and space" (Longstreth, op. cit., p. 126). Instead of primary facades oriented to the street, they were conceived as "three-dimensional objects differentiating indoor and outdoor space while permitting a sense of continuity or 'spatial flow' between the two" (ibid.). These buildings were well suited to the automobile age: set back from the highways, surrounded by parking and crowned by towering, illuminated signs, they were designed to catch the eye of the speeding motorist rather than the strolling shopper. Typical of such edifices was the new home of Campbell County Chevrolet, built in the 1970s around the corner from its former location on upper Monmouth Street. By the mid-1980s only three new-car dealerships remained in operation in Newport, and all were housed in buildings built since World War II. Used-car lots, their offices housed in small, nondescript modern structures or trailers, remained plentiful in the city.

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During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, new-car dealerships in northern Kentucky moved farther and farther from the urban core, abandoning central cities and inner-ring suburbs in favor of new locations in outlying areas, in view of interstate highways and other main roads. By 2000, no new-car dealers remained in operation in the city of Newport or the neighboring Campbell County towns of Bellevue, Dayton and Southgate.

### Integrity

The Third Street Motor Car Company Building retains a high degree of integrity. Alterations have been minor and are largely reversible. These include replacement of the two display windows, boarding of window and door openings, and covering of the skylights. The removal of a former loading dock at the west wall does not diminish the integrity of the composition since the dock itself was a later addition to the building. The building retains its character-defining features, including doors, most windows, geometrical ornament and open floor space, as well as skylights, storage cabinets, restrooms and millwork. The building has been vacant for several years and exhibits some water damage to the roof structure and some interior walls, but is still in sound condition.

### Historical Background

According to the 1952 Newport Sanborn map, the Third Street Motor Car Company building was built in 1916. (See map copy.) It is not present on the 1910 edition of the map, which indicates a row of houses in its location. The building first appeared in Newport city directories in 1917. For the next decade the Third Street Motor Car Company, an automobile dealership and garage, operated at 216 East Third Street. In the 1928-29 directory the Darwin M. Stapp Ford dealership is listed at that location.

In the 1930s<sup>1</sup> the Third Street building became the home of the Newport Auto Service Garage, which occupied the building until 1945 or 1946. From c. 1938 to 1942 or 1943 the garage shared space with the Specialty Envelope Company, a printing concern.

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1

The exact date is not known, as directories from 1929-1937 are unavailable.

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Although the upper-story rooms probably were built as offices, from 1944 to 1949 they served as an apartment, likely because of wartime housing shortages. City directories indicate that the family of Robert J. Evans, a salesman, lived there during that interval. In 1944 the Dennert Distributing Company, a beer distributor, moved into the building; it continued to be used as a beer depot through the 1980s. The building has been vacant since 1991, used intermittently for storage.

The land on which the Third Street Motor Car Company Building sits is part of Lots 164, 165 and 166 of the Original Plan of Newport: the 180 lots that comprised the historic core of the city as platted in the 1790s. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century much of the 200 block of East Third Street was owned by the Thompson family, a prominent Newport family who resided in the nearby Southgate-Maddox House (National Register, 1973) at 24 East Third Street.

Campbell County deed records indicate that parts of lots 165 and 166 were conveyed from Frances Thompson to W.W. Morgan on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1882 (deed book 30 pages 413 and 414). Morgan then sold the lots to Ernest Kettenacker on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1915 (book 113 page 206). Parts of lots 165 and 166 were sold by John Taliaferro (J.T.) Thompson and his wife, Juliet H. Thompson, to Kettenacker on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 1915 (book 113 page 205). (According to the 1916-17 Newport city directory, Kettenacker owned a saloon at 201 East Third Street.)

Kettenacker sold the three parcels in 1918 to George W. Oetjen (book 118 page 412). Oetjen in turn owned them until 1926, when he sold them to Darwin M. Stapp (book 162 page 26). Stapp continued to own the property until 1931, when he sold it to the Specialty Envelope Company, Inc., a Kentucky corporation (book 168 page 203), for "\$1 and other good and valuable considerations." In 1937 Specialty Envelope conveyed the property to Walter J. and Helen L. Binder, and Theodore and Mary A. Braun (book 179 page 299 and book 208 page 278), ostensibly for \$1. (The deed indicates that Binder was president of Specialty Envelope.) In 1943 the Binders and Brauns sold the property to Chester and Loretta Plattner (book 220 page 246), who then conveyed it to Leroy J. and Clara Mae Sandalback a year later (book 221 page 14).



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Third Street Motor Car Company Building  
Newport, Campbell County, Kentucky

## **10. Geographical Data**

### **Verbal boundary description**

The Third Street Motor Car Company Building is located within the corporate limits of Newport, Kentucky. It includes parts of Lots 164, 165 and 166 of the Original Plan of Newport as follows: Beginning at a point in the south line of East Third Street, at the northwest corner of said building; then proceeding east along said line to the northeast corner of said building; then proceeding south at right angles to the southeast corner of said building, at Parker Alley; then proceeding west along said alley to the southwest corner of said building; then proceeding north to the place of beginning.

### **Verbal boundary justification**

The nominated property includes the parcel of land visually associated with the Third Street Motor Car Company. The remainder of the acreage currently associated with the building has been excluded from the nomination because it represents a later period of development and does not contribute to the significance of the property. It contains sufficient land to enclose the building while excluding areas of lesser integrity or different use: namely, a parking lot to the west and a vacant lot to the east.

UTM reference: 16/716720/4330120



Saratoga St.

E. Third Street

E. Fourth Street

Washington Ave.

Third Street Motor Car Comp. Building  
Cannell Co., Ky

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## 12. Additional documentation

### Photograph key

Name of property: Third Street Motor Car Company Building (same for all photographs)

Location: Newport, Campbell County, Kentucky (same for all photographs)

Photographer: Margo Warminski (same for all photographs)

Date taken: February 2002 (same for all photographs)

Location of negatives: 144 Ridgewood Place, Fort Thomas, Kentucky 41075 (same for all photographs)

View: Main (north) facade, looking south.

Photo: 1

View: Main facade: original building at left; 1930s addition at right. Looking southeast.

Photo: 2

View: West entrance, main facade. Looking south.

Photo: 3

View: Detail of geometrical brickwork, main facade. Looking south.

Photo: 4

View: Detail of brickwork and bracket, main facade. Looking south.

Photo: 5

View: Double doors with geometrical beveled-glass panels, main facade. Looking south.

Photo: 6

View: East and south elevations. Looking northwest.

Photo: 7

View: South and west elevations. Looking northeast.

Photo: 8

View: West elevation. Looking southeast.

Photo: 9

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View: Interior, first floor. Looking southwest toward 1930s addition.

Photo: 10

View: View of painted-over skylight, first floor.

Photo: 11

View: Looking toward former men's restroom in northwest corner of first floor. View to the northwest.

Photo: 12

View: Transverse hallway, second floor. Looking east.

Photo: 13

View: East room, second floor. Looking east.

Photo: 14

View: Typical wood door and enframement, second floor. Looking south.

Photo: 15