

226

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: North Eighth Street Plaza

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1500-1532 North Eighth Street

City or town: Pekin State: Illinois County: Tazewell

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

	<u>03/20/15</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Illinois Historic Preservation Agency</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____	_____
Signature of commenting official:	Date
_____	_____
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Don E. Beall *5-18-15*
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/business; specialty

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/business;specialty

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK;STONE;METAL;GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The site of the North Eighth Street Plaza includes two rectangular, one-story, flat-roofed buildings. The site is a little more than 370 feet running north and south. There are thirteen storefronts in the larger first building. The second building is at the north end of the property separated from the first by a fifty-five foot wide parking lot. The second building has one twenty-five-foot wide storefront. The rears of the buildings are concrete block. While the side and front (main) façades are mostly Indiana limestone there are also some storefronts that are brick. The rear has service entrances installed in various years, and the front has large glass windows with wood and metal frames. There are some original wood doors and some metal doors for customer use on the front. A five-foot projecting canopy affords protection to customers from the weather. In addition to the parking lot separating the two buildings on the north, there are also parking strips in the front and rear. Six-inch diameter pipe rails sixteen inches high separate the parking spaces in the front from the walkway. In 1994 the state acquired ten feet of the property to widen the right-of-way for North Eighth Street (Illinois Route 29). The façade materials are all original. Openings are original, but some doors and windows have been replaced.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

Narrative Description

The North Eighth Street Plaza is built on grade without a basement. It was designed originally as a multi-unit shopping center for offices and retail stores. The front (west) and side (south) walls are of masonry bearing Indiana limestone.¹ The south end wall is original cast stone. The rear and north side wall are concrete block. The built-up roof is on a flat, wood structure. The five-foot canopy is hung from cantilevered structural members. About one-third of the bottom side of the canopy is still covered in the original cementitious material. The rest is replacement aluminum soffit material installed in 1983.

The separate building on the north end of the property (1532), measuring twenty-two feet by ninety feet, is also constructed of concrete blocks with a flat roof, but the front façade is covered with Norman brick, which is thin and elongated like Roman brick, but not quite as thin. It is believed that this building originally had metal doors and window frames.²

Since the buildings were built in sections over an eight-year period not all sections of the building are identical. For example, the façade material at 1526 is Indiana limestone; 1528 has wire-cut, stacked, Norman brick. Generally, however, all the units are tied together by the canopy and joined in such a way that they are one continuous building, except for the separate 1532 building. The median unit size is 1280 square feet, but they vary in size from 560 to 5200 square feet, the largest unit for years housing a hardware store. There is approximately 24,500 square feet under roof. The construction stages are also reflected in the interior spatial configuration: inside, firewalls identify the northern extent of each subsequent structure. The buildings enjoyed full occupancy, usually by long-term tenants, until the mid-1990s, when the widening of North Eighth Street (Illinois Route 29), which made access to the stores difficult, coincided with a decline in customers. Since then rentals have not been stable. During its lifetime, however, it has been home to everything from dry cleaners to chiropractors and martial arts to the art of dance.

The neighborhood in which the North Eighth Street Plaza was built had been platted and developed as a residential neighborhood since the early twentieth century. In 1950 Orfeo Gianessi bought the seven commercial lots on which the buildings stand. He started construction in the fall of that year with the building at 1500 North Eighth Street, on the corner of Lawndale Avenue. In 1951 he built 1502, 1504, 1508, and 1510. In 1952 he built 1512-1516, which was the largest store, measuring sixty-six by eighty feet. Three years later in 1955 he constructed 1518, 1520, 1522, 1524, and 1526, which included the two smallest units, each measuring a mere fourteen feet by thirty-eight feet. Units 1528 and 1530, the last of the adjoining units saw completion in 1957. They were notable for being ten feet shorter than all the others, which were eighty feet in depth. Reaching across the parking lot, he put up the last building, 1532, in 1958.³ The building north of 1532 is not part of the development. It is separated from 1532 by only eleven inches. The corner of the this building extends little beyond the envelope of the building so as to give the impression that it is connected to 1532, but it is not. Gianessi served as his own general contractor, having acquired building experience with a number of other construction

¹ Kenyon and Associates, "North Eighth Street Plaza," 2010, typescript, Gianessi-Lippi Collection

² Ibid.

³ Doralina Lippi, "Commercial Property, 4/8/91," memorandum, Gianessi-Lippi Collection.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

projects for himself and family members. In 1955, when the plan was about half fulfilled, his new son-in-law, Silvano Lippi, who happened to be an architect, helped out with advice and counsel.

Each unit has had minor alterations in the publically-accessible areas of the building according to the requirements of the tenants: floor coverings, hardware, fixtures, framing around doors and windows, and so on. There have been, however, four significant changes that have occurred yet do not substantially alter the character or appearance of the building. First, in 1965 the utilization of space in the southernmost unit (1500) for a dry cleaning shop called for removing original windows on the front and side and replacing them with jalousie, or louvered, windows. On the side (south façade) window openings were filled in the white synthetic siding. These changes were required to improve air circulation and venting of heat and fumes in the dry cleaning shop. Second, in 1979 the flat roof over the units at 1528-1530 had a low pitched hipped roof built on it, possibly to resolve a rainwater problem between the units. The glass block window on this unit is original. Third, during the period around 1983 portions of the underside of the canopy collapsed and were replaced with synthetic soffit material. Fourth, in order to protect the exposed wood window frames, a metal cap was installed to cover about seventy percent of the sills of the large windows on the front façade. Existing street light standards are original, but were moved ten feet closer to the building as part of the 1993 road widening. They have always been on the public right of way and are not included in the nomination.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

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.)

- 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

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1950-1964

Significant Dates

1950-1958

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Gianessi, Orfeo

Lippi, Silvano

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The North Eighth Street Plaza is significant in the area of Commerce because it is a very early example of a strip- or mini-mall or strip shopping center built in 1950, heralding the post-World War II automobile age and the beginning of the decentralization of commerce in the United States and the concomitant changes in the shape and role of cities and suburbs in the socio-economy of the post-World War II era. It is also significant in the area of Architecture because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the small strip shopping centers that played a large role in the diffusion of retail commerce and services from the city center to accommodate the automobile-driving consumer. It is the earliest building in Pekin and the surrounding area to serve that purpose.

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

Growth and development of Pekin: Criterion A

The North Eighth Street Plaza meets Criterion A for Commerce because it marks a significant point in the spatial and temporal development of the city of Pekin on which the nature of selling goods and services would turn. At the time of its construction it was located a few yards beyond the developed part of the 1950 city. As the first of its kind as a building type in the locality its appearance marks the entrance of Pekin into the post-war automobile age. From its earliest days until the second half of the twentieth century Pekin's commercial and industrial heart had been located in the central business district, but it has been altered because of the changes heralded by buildings such as the North Eighth Street Plaza.

At present the central business district remains active. Because it is the county seat there are a number of relatively large buildings serving civic functions and local government. The warehouses, distilleries, and other manufactories that jammed the riverfront are all gone, save for one or two. The area is now open space, with most of that space given over to a roadway cloverleaf serving the giant McNaughton bridge spanning the Illinois River. A Main Street program helps keep the historic downtown alive, but it is clear that most retail transactions occur on the strip along Route 9 to the east.

The first settlers arrived in what was to become Pekin in 1824 on an Illinois River landing ten miles downstream and opposite from Peoria. Five of the early settlers combined to lay out a town site and name it Cincinnati after Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1826. The first attempt at development failed to meet expectations so the town was reorganized and platted as Pekin in

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

1829. Ann Eliza Cromwell, wife of one of the five founders, was given the honor of naming the place. She chose Pekin for Beijing (Peking) China, “the celestial city.” She may also have thought as many at the time, erroneously, that Beijing was the spot on the globe directly opposite Illinois. In addition to naming the town, Mrs. Cromwell also named many streets, designating each with first names of her female friends.⁴

From its first settlement until the late 1840s Pekin was essentially a frontier community. It grew steadily as a small river port providing ferry, transshipment services, and steamboat supplies such as firewood. Like all small towns in Illinois it was also a farm town for the burgeoning agriculture of the rich prairies. Pekin served briefly as the county seat, which was soon relocated to Tremont, a blow to development. Even so, by the end of the 1840s there were 1500 people comprising a population that one publicist described as “a mixture of original frontiersmen, Indians, veterans of two wars [Blackhawk and Mexican], river men, farmers, and the first few hard-working, thrifty German immigrants who were to contribute much to its future growth.”⁵ The next period in Pekin’s history gave the town a character far different from its earlier days.

The year 1849 marks a turning point in Pekin’s development. In that year Pekin incorporated as a city. More important, the Smith Wagon Company started business near the middle of town, and Jonathan Haines commenced the manufacture of his “improved” reaper.⁶ The city was on its way to becoming a significant center for manufacturing farm implements. In 1850 the state legislature returned the county seat to Pekin. Distilling became one of Pekin’s major industries, as it had for Peoria, its larger neighbor to the north. During the second half of the nineteenth century there were six distilleries founded in Pekin; in keeping with the industrial consolidation movement at the end of the century, these six were combined in the American Distillery in 1892.⁷ The establishment of manufacturing coincided with the arrival of large numbers of German immigrants. Throughout the 1880s the city acquired a thorough “German-ness.” German was the language used in public schools, commerce, and between neighbors. The influx of Old World craftsmen and tradesmen at first brought a tremendous stimulus the local manufacturing economy. The new population, however, exercised a conservatism that also had its effects.⁸

During the pre-Civil War decade and Civil War that conservatism was expressed in secessionist sympathies and even the establishment of a Knights of the Golden Circle chapter, despite the community’s sending over three thousand men into the Union army. To further the Union cause eleven Pekinites, mostly German, organized the country’s first Union League Club in June, 1862. Other cities created Unions League Clubs in the northern states to support

⁴ Edward Callary, *Place Names of Illinois*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), p. 272; *History of Tazewell County, Illinois*, (Chicago: Charles C. Chapman & Co., 1887), p. 565.

⁵ Pekin Association of Commerce Centenary Committee, *The Pekin Centenary, 1849-1949*, (Pekin: 1949), p. 9.

⁶ *Pekin Centenary*, p. 15.

⁷ The American Distillery stayed in business during Prohibition by producing alcohol for industrial and medicinal use. It was purchased in 1980 by MGP Ingredients, Inc. of Kansas and is now owned by Aventine Renewable Energy, the nation’s second largest gasohol marketer, Union Tank Car Company on-line information publication, www.utlx.com/aventine, accessed July 9, 2014; “Pekin Distillery to Reopen,” *Peoria Journal-Star*, November 24, 2009; *Pekin Centenary*, p. 105.

⁸ *Pekin Centenary*, p. 31.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

President Lincoln, northern war aims, and the Republican Party. The Pekin club shortly moved to Chicago, where it remains in operation.⁹

The population was small and grew slowly from the Civil War to the 1920s. The community's demand for skilled workers and the large tightly-knit Germans community dissuaded other ethnic groups and agricultural workers from immigrating. Until World War I speaking German was almost a necessity in order to carry out common transactions in many stores. The Americanization pressure that came with the war drove the German language out of town. Churches no longer held German services and the German-language newspaper Anglicized its text.¹⁰ In many of the decades preceding the war the population increased by less than one hundred, an increase attributable to local births of already-established residents. From 1870 to

1920 the population barely doubled from 5696 to 12,086, a fraction of the growth rate experienced throughout the state.¹¹ There was little physical change in the city as well.

During the first half of the twentieth century the growth rate increased to about thirty percent between each decennial census. The largest increase, however, was 1950 to 1960 when the population increased almost fifty percent to 32,656. The addition of thousands of residents and hundreds of homes on newly added sub-divisions followed the nationwide pattern of development following World War II. In 1948 alone 450 homes were built.¹² The juggernaut of suburban development and shopping centers had its effect on the size, shape, appearance of Pekin as it did in the rest of the nation. The post-war increase in population with a concomitant growth in the number of automobiles and places to drive them had become the principal forces driving the shape of communities.

The automobile age arrived in Pekin in the 1920s. The government of Illinois commenced construction of a network of paved state highways funded and built by state government by way of road-building bonds. The road system laid out in the mid-1820s connecting Pekin to other towns were impassable or at best difficult most of the year. The road connecting Pekin to Tremont to the east (where there were links to the central part of the state) and west across the Illinois River for routes to the north (where bridges and ferries could be relied upon to provide access to Peoria) became Illinois State Route 9. The original north-south route through town that led north a few miles to East Peoria became Illinois Route 29. Both state routes exist in Pekin and follow their original pathways.

Context: function of culture, space, and time

The North Eighth Street Plaza is a product of the mid-twentieth century pattern of development. It is a type of roadside architecture that could have been built only in this period and as such announces the coming hegemony of the car culture. There are other examples of roadside architecture on the highways into Pekin. Route 29 (Court Street in the central part of

⁹ *Pekin Centenary*, p. 21.

¹⁰ *Pekin Centenary*, pp. 31, 57.

¹¹ John Clayton, *Illinois Fact Book and Historical Almanac, 1673-1968*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), p. 40.

¹² *Pekin Centenary*, p. 99.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

town) entering Pekin from the south passes by the huge Aventine gasohol plant, small mechanical businesses and workers' housing from the early- to mid-twentieth century. To the west and across the Illinois River late-twentieth century improvements resulted in the removal of the nineteenth century warehouse district in favor of open space. From the river the highway runs two miles across flat bottomland empty except for corn and soybeans until it reaches the bluffs. Route 9 heading east to Tremont is the community's current commercial strip comprised of fast food chain outlets, casual dining chain restaurants, outlets for national brand goods and services arrayed singly, in new strip shopping centers, hotels, and big box stores, as well as the national headquarters of the Pekin Insurance Company. This large insurance company, now with over 7,000 agencies, originated in Pekin in the 1920s, starting out in the central business district. Its campus is located at present on the eastern edge of the historical limits of the city to accommodate current transportation needs such as employee parking and loading docks. Similarly, the old Pekin High School (demolished in 2014) had been relocated from an interior neighborhood to east of town for parking, athletic fields, and modern, one-story school construction.

Eighth Street and Route 29 merge north of the central business district where after a few graceful turns the road heads north to East Peoria. Route 29 passes through the original town plat and the subdivisions immediately to the north. When the North Eighth Street Plaza was built in 1950 it was only a few yards within the city limit. The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of residential properties constructed from the nineteenth through the twentieth century, with newer ones closer to the edge.

The neighborhood just two blocks to the south of the North Eighth Plaza was filled with homes from the early twentieth century to about 1930, when the Depression and World War II ended most building. After the war, Pekin developer Robert Monge subdivided the land on which the Plaza sits. Orfeo Gianessi purchased seven lots from him in 1950 for \$21,000 and began construction as soon as he closed on the property in August of that year.¹³ It was the first roadside commercial property proposed for its location, and consequently provoked the opposition of some of the residents, an episode that perhaps testifies to its uniqueness in the community. Except for the developed area to the south, Gianessi's property was mostly raw land.¹⁴

There are three other examples of early roadside architecture on Eighth Street, although each differs in time and purpose from the North Eighth Plaza: first is the Eighth Street Sweet Spot drive-in hamburger stand/ ice cream shop. The wood frame structure with its walk-up service windows located at the convergence of Seventh and Eighth Streets has been popular with Pekinites since the 1940s. The second appears to be a Pure Oil gas station from the 1930s. Alterations with siding and fenestration leave only its basic form to tell its history. Third is a canopy-and-cube gas station on the corner of Eighth and Caroline Streets. The building has had several non-gas station uses since its construction in the early 1930s, and its appearance has changed although its classic form, once used in most of the nation, remains readily apparent.¹⁵

¹³ "Agreement," March(?), 1950, Handwritten purchase agreement between Orfeo Gianessi and Robert Monge, Gianessi-Lippi Collection.

¹⁴ Sanborn Map Company, 1867-1970, "Pekin, Illinois."

¹⁵ See John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), pages 130 to 164 on the various standardized forms of gas stations.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

These buildings compare with the North Eighth Street Plaza in that all are roadside architecture, but differ in that the former are single-occupancy and not associated with any particular location.

There were no other strip shopping centers built in the area as early as 1950, the year construction started for the North Eighth Street Plaza. A search has turned up only one such place: a one-story multi-unit commercial building designed by the Chicago firm of Keck and Keck in 1946 to be used by the residents of the Altgeld Gardens residence operated by the Chicago Housing Authority. It differs from the North Eighth Street Plaza in that it is curvilinear rather than rectilinear and dedicated for use by a particular set of residents in a particular complex of buildings rather than intended for use by anyone driving by. The Keck's referred to theirs as a "shopping building."¹⁶

Peoria, Pekin's large neighbor to the north, built a strip shopping center in the early 1950s, but only after Orfeo Gianessi opened his for business. In fact the Peoria shopping center did not happen until after the developer, Marvin Goodman, and his architect, Dean Duboff, visited the North Eighth Street Plaza prior to their construction of the Sheridan Village shopping center in Peoria.¹⁷

Orfeo Gianessi and family

Orfeo Marco Gianessi was born in 1897 and claimed Talamello, Italy, as his hometown even though he spent much of his childhood in France, Italy, and Greece as a condition of his father's career as a mining administrator. In 1912 he arrived in the United States to join his father, brother, and cousin in the coal mines near Seatonville. Orfeo had no taste for the mines, however, and set off to make his way in the world on his own.¹⁸

Orfeo constructed his first building and established his first business just barely into his twenties. In 1922 he married Carolina, an eighteen year-old local girl whose parents were Italian immigrants. The two of them ran the Three G's Grocery (Gianessi's Gas and Groceries). In addition to food and sundries, the Three G's Grocery was among the earliest vendors of fuel for automobiles in the community.¹⁹ Serving as his own general contractor and always having an actual hand in the construction he built other stores in Pekin. In these early establishments he partnered with family members, eventually letting them carry on the business. One of Orfeo's projects best known to Pekinites was the Radio City Tap in North Pekin. Eventually he sold it to his niece and her husband who made it the first place in the area to serve pizza after traveling to St. Louis and Chicago to see how to make them. Another popular business he operated was the Kozee Inn, a 1940s supper club in the nearby town of Creve Coeur.²⁰

Orfeo and Carolina had two daughters, Lavonne and Doralina in the 1920s. After World War II, they adopted Carolina's nephew Michael. Lavonne married George Yourick and Doralina married Silvano Lippi in 1955, at the time a newly-licensed architect who would work for the State of Illinois for awhile and the Caterpillar company for many years. More than half

¹⁶ Thanks to Anthony Rubano of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency for finding this in "Altgeld Gardens," *Progressive Architecture*, (June, 1946), no.p.

¹⁷ Kenyon and Associates, "North Eighth Street Plaza," 2010, typescript, Gianessi-Lippi Collection.

¹⁸ Statement from Orfeo Gianessi's grandson, Blake Lippi, June 27, 2014. Typescript. Gianessi-Lippi Collection.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ "101 Years in Pekin, Ill," *Pekin Daily Times*, March 10, 2004, p. A3.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

of the North Eighth Street Plaza was completed by the time the young architect joined the family, yet he still provided technical expertise to his father-in-law for the construction of the remaining portion of the buildings. Orfeo, Carolina, and Doralina managed the family properties and operated businesses in some of them. In the North Eighth Street Plaza, Doralina and her sister Lavonne owned and operated D. and L. Hardware for three years then the Plaza Shoe Store for several years, ending in 1963.²¹ Orfeo died in 1994. His wife died in 2005 at the age of one hundred-one. Both kept an active interest in family business affairs into their nineties.²² The North Eighth Street Plaza is still in the family in the person of P. Blake Lippi, son of Doralina Gianessi Lippi.

As Orfeo and Doralina told it, when she was going to college in New York City and living in Flushing Meadows in Queens, Orfeo noticed a strip shopping center, took the idea home with him, and within a month after his return he purchased the land for the North Eighth Street Plaza.²³

Shopping center typology: Criterion C

Arguably every era of road building has produced particular kinds of roadside buildings since Roman post-houses and Arabian caravanserais. None, however, have had the effect on the social and structural life of cities as the shopping center. The North Eighth Street Plaza has architectural significance because it is the earliest example of a strip- or mini-mall shopping center in the area. Architectural historians—Richard Longstreth in particular—have produced important studies in the development of shopping centers. Much of this work, however, has focused on the large regional centers rather than small neighborhood centers; very little survey work has been completed for the latter. Longstreth’s investigation of the shopping center’s earliest years delves into several types in the pre-World War II period. Small neighborhood centers providing shelter for five to ten individual businesses appear before 1920, “modest in form, limited in scope.”²⁴ Shopping centers in the next two decades did not simply add more businesses, some were commercial enclaves that became destinations themselves.²⁵

Shopping centers are differentiated by size, purpose, and location. The study of shopping centers has not yet arrived at universally-accepted names for each of the various types. Labels such as mall, plaza, strip, regional, or neighborhood are often used interchangeably and have vernacular associations. The International Council of Shopping Centers has developed ten classifications, one of which, the “Strip/Convenience” shopping center, closely describes the North Eighth Street Plaza. The Strip/Convenience shopping center is an

[a]ttached row of stores or service outlets managed as a coherent retail entity, with on-site parking usually located in front of the stores. Open canopies may connect the store fronts, but a strip center does not have enclosed walkways linking the stores. A strip center may be configured in a straight

²¹ “Doralina Lippi Resume,” Typescript, circa 1975, Gianessi-Lippi Collection.

²² “101 Years in Pekin, Ill,” *Pekin Daily Times*.

²³ Kenyon and Associates, “North Eighth Street Plaza,” Typescript, 2010, Gianessi-Lippi Collection.

²⁴ Richard Longstreth, “The Diffusion of the Community Shopping Center during the Interwar Decades,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 56, no. 3 (Spring, 1997), p. 268.

²⁵ Longstreth, “Community Shopping Center,” p. 273.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

line, or have an “L” or “U” shape. A convenience center is among the smallest of the centers, whose tenants provide a narrow mix of goods and personal services to a very limited trade area.²⁶

The North Eighth Street Plaza meets the ICSC criteria so as to make it a virtual archetype, save for the detached unit on the north end of the property; it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the type, period, and method of construction . There are currently 68,128 Strip/Convenience shopping centers in the United States out of a total of 111,502 shopping centers of all general types.²⁷ The North Eighth Street Plaza is among the earliest built in the post-war period. It is certainly the first built in Pekin and Tazewell County. When Orfeo Gianessi began constructing it in 1950 he had not the slightest idea that his type of new building would become a ubiquitous feature of the landscape.

²⁶ “U.S. Shopping-Center Classification and Characteristics,” Appraisal Institute, CoStar and the International Council of Shopping Centers, www.icsc/uploads/research/general (accessed April 22, 2014).

²⁷ Ibid.

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

- Gianessi-Lippi Collection, private family papers and other material, Pekin, Illinois. *History of Tazewell County, Illinois*, (Chicago: Charles H. Chapman Co, 1897).
- Longstreth, Richard, "The Diffusion of the Community Shopping Center during the Interwar Decades," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 56, no. 3 (Spring, 1997), pp. 268-293.
- McMahon, Edward T., "The Future of the Strip," *Urbanland*, <http://urbanland.uli.org/economy-markets-trends/>
- Pekin Association of Commerce, *The Pekin Centenary, 1849-1949*. (Pekin: 1949).

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 Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than 1

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 40.581278 | Longitude: -89.640785 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

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

Beginning at a point on the NE corner of Lawndale Avenue and North Eighth Street, approximately 370 feet N to the N edge of the detached unit at 1532 North Eighth Street, thence E 127 feet to the E edge of the alley, thence S to Lawndale, thence W to the beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the original lots and buildings historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ted Hild
organization: Consultant (for owner)
street & number: 2001 Fairway Drive
city or town: Springfield state: Illinois zip code: 62704
e-mail ted.hild@sbcglobal.net
telephone: 217-741-1758
date: _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: North Eighth Street Plaza

City or Vicinity: Pekin

County: Tazewell State: Illinois

Photographer: Ted Hild

Date Photographed: May, 2014

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

1. Unit 1518.
2. Unit 1524.
3. Looking at site boundary to the west. Building on left is included; smaller, white building on right is not included
4. Looking south to rear (east) façade Building in foreground is 1532.
5. Looking at site boundary at main (west) façade. Building on right is included; building on left is not included.
6. Front (west) façade, looking south.
7. Parking bumpers on front.
8. Front (west) façade. Note difference in material from numbers 1524 and 1526.
9. View of an original doorway and window at number 1520.
10. Detail showing aluminum soffit replacement on left and original pargetting on right. Also shows original, different sizes of windows.
11. Front (west) façade looking northeast.
12. Side (south) façade of building at number 1500 looking northwest.
13. Rear (east) façade along alley looking northwest.
14. Rear (east) façade along the north end of the building looking north.
15. Unit 1500 Dry Cleaners.

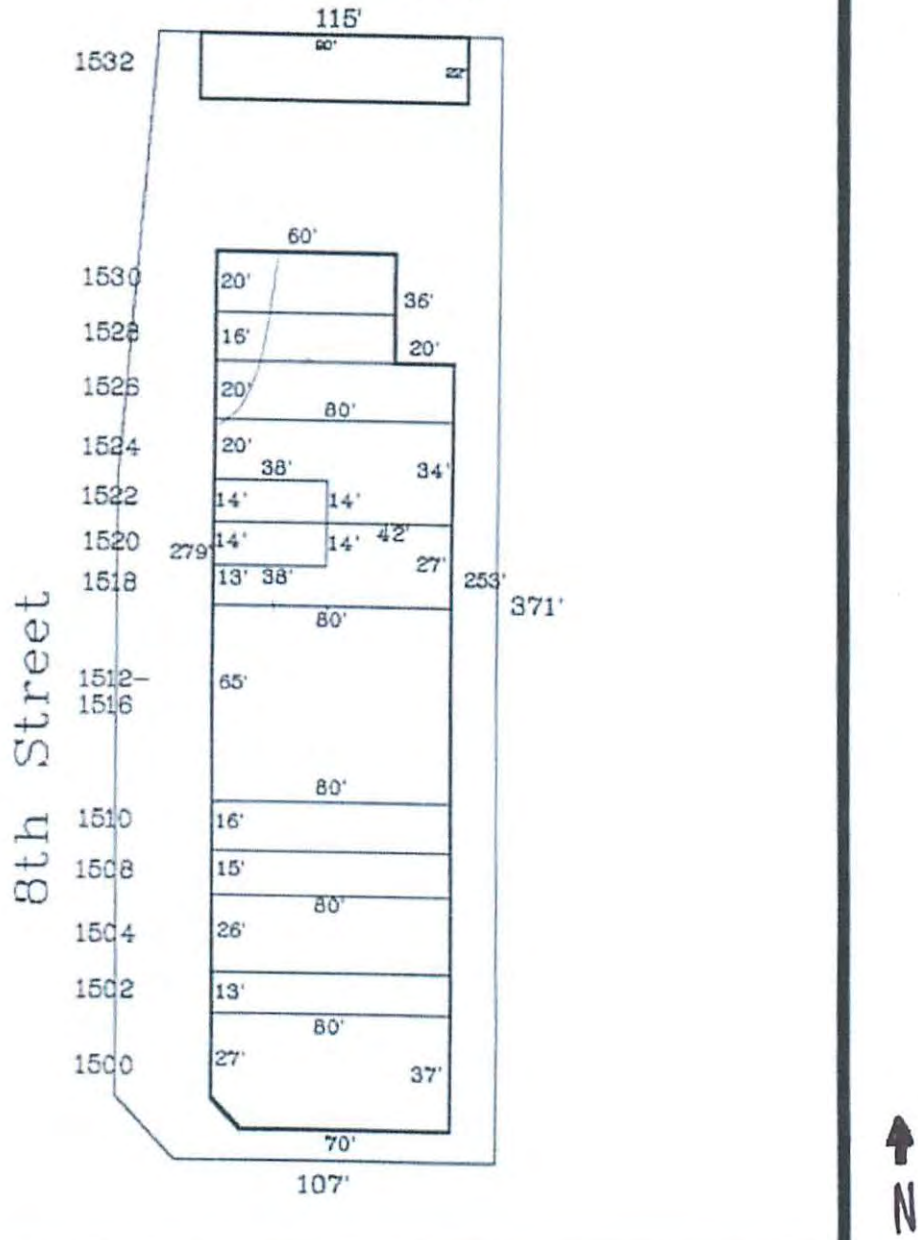
North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property

Tazewell-IL
County and State

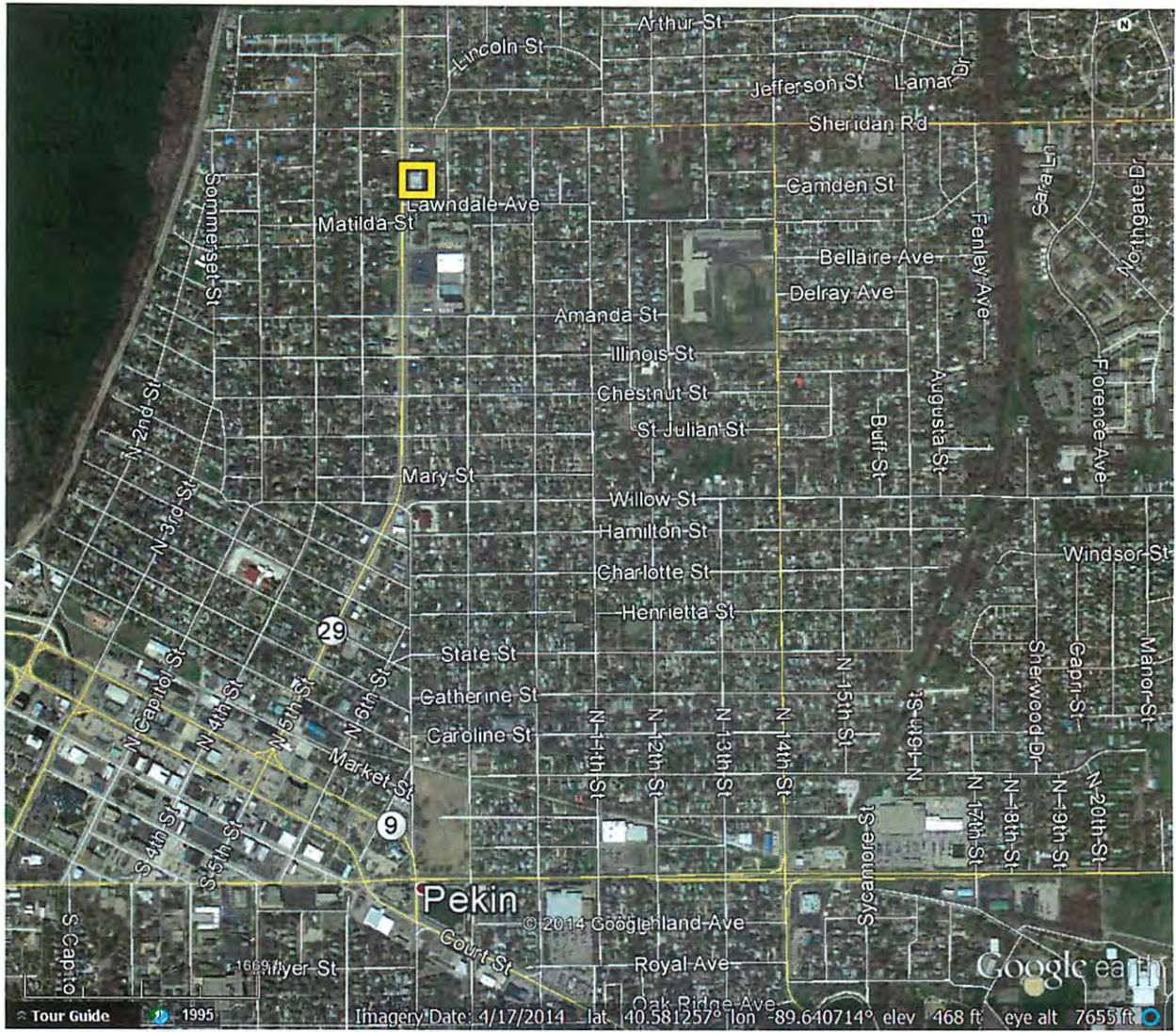
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

SITE PLAN



North 8th Street Plaza
 Illinois--Tazewell County--Pekin





Latitude: 40.581266 Longitude: 89.640719

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

North Eighth Street Plaza
Name of Property
Tazewell, IL
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page ____

Historical photograph



Aerial view after the 1993 road widening. (Left is north)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

North Eighth Street Plaza

Name of Property

Tazewell, IL

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page ____

Historical Photograph



Looking north in mid-1980s, showing the parallel parking spaces prior to road widening

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

North Eighth Street Plaza

Name of Property
Tazewell, IL

County and State
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page ____

Historical Photograph



South façade in mid-1980s showing non-origanal windows on the 1500 building (dry cleaners).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

North Eighth Street Plaza

Name of Property

Tazewell, IL

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page ____

Historical Photograph



Architect and son-in-law Silvampo Lippi, looking northeast, 1957, showing some of the construction technique.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

North Eighth Street Plaza

Name of Property

Tazewell, IL

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page ____

Historical Photograph



Orfeo Gianessi and daughters Lavonne and Doralina. Building as completed circa 1958, west (main) façade.









NOTICE
This area under
24-hr. video and
audio surveillance





CUSTOM PICT
DECORATIVE DECOYS



OPEN

NO
skateboarding
bicycle riding
roller skating or
rollerblading
VIOLATORS WILL BE
PROSECUTED

SWEENEY'S
FAMILY DOLLAR

SWEENEY'S
FAMILY DOLLAR

100

100









 **CLEANER**
SHIRT LAUNDRY • DRY CLEANING •

MIGRATION
MANAGEMENT LLC

WASH STATE

NO EXTRA CHARGE
EMERGE →
FOR FAST SERVICE

3





1500

BY CITY REQUEST
THIS IS ONLY A REQUEST
OPERATED VANS AND TRUCKS
CARRIED WITH PERMITS

BY CITY REQUEST
THIS IS ONLY A REQUEST
OPERATED VANS AND TRUCKS
CARRIED WITH PERMITS







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY North Eighth Street Plaza
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ILLINOIS, Tazewell

DATE RECEIVED: 9/03/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/19/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000226

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: Y PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 5.18.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



March 24, 2015

Barbara Wyatt
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW Suite NC400
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Wyatt:

Enclosed for your review is the following National Register Nomination Form that was recommended by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council and signed by the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer:

Clay County Courthouse, Louisville, Clay County

Peck and Hills Furniture Company Warehouse, Chicago, Cook County

North Eighth Street Plaza, Pekin, Tazewell County

It is being submitted in a digital format on the enclosed disks, and is the true and correct copy. Please contact me at the address above, or by telephone at 217-785-4324. You may also email me at Andrew.heckenkamp@illinois.gov if you need any additional information or clarification.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew Heckenkamp
National Register Coordinator

Enclosures

1 Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield IL 62701

ILLINOISHISTORY.GOV