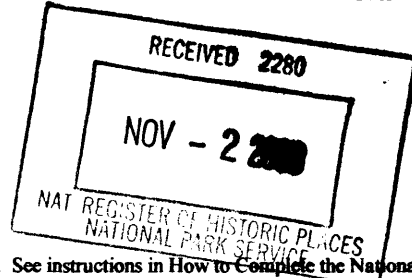


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1461

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 Standard Oil Building
other names/site number Stanbalt building B-2042

2. Location

street & number 501 St. Paul Street not for publication N/A
city or town Baltimore vicinity N/A
state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510 zip code 21202

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]
Signature of certifying official

11-1-00
Date

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 commenting or other official

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):

Edson H. Beall

12/1/00

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

 N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE Sub:

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Beaux Arts Classical

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation steel
roof BUR (built-up roofing)
walls limestone, granite
other structure: steel frame

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)	Period of Significance 1922-1942	Significant Dates 1922
ARCHITECTURE COMMERCE	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)	Architect/Builder Clyde N. Friz (1867-1942), architect	

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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 Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Maryland Room, Pratt Library, Central Branch, Baltimore

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	18	360840	4350580	3
2	_____	_____	4	_____

See continuation sheet.

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	George E. Thomas	date	May 2000
organization	George E. Thomas Associates, Inc.	telephone	(215) 247-6787
street & number	9515 Germantown Avenue	state	PA
city or town	Philadelphia	zip code	19118-2642

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Section 7 Page 1

Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

The Standard Oil Building is a fifteen-story, steel-frame office building facing Preston Gardens on Baltimore's St. Paul Place between Hamilton and Franklin Street. Located at the north end of the business district, and slightly separated from the principal cluster of high-rises of the city, it has a prominent role in Baltimore's skyline. The building is U-shaped in plan, the center of which, on the St. Paul Place (western) front, is filled in at street level by a single-story volume containing the building's lobby and principal entrance. The exterior is clad in limestone and detailed in a handsome version of the reserved and dignified classicism often used for significant commercial buildings in the period. The windows, of a uniform size throughout the "shaft," are one-over-one, metal frame within their limestone surrounds. At the "capital" of the building, metal-clad spandrels in the top two floors and simple pilasters on the piers create a giant order. The "base," consisting of the first two stories, is also articulated by architectural bronze metal frames and pilasters on the shop windows of the St. Paul Place front and the first two bays of the side elevations. A penthouse crowns the building. The exterior and public spaces of the interior survive with a high degree of integrity that richly represent the values and intentions of Baltimore's commercial architects of the 1920s.

The Standard Oil Building occupies the entire block between St. Paul Street, a principal avenue of the city of Baltimore, Franklin and Hamilton Streets to the north and south and Hargrove Street, a small alley on the rear. From St. Paul Street, the property falls off rapidly toward Hargrove, producing an extra story of ground level space along the sides and rear of the building. Sidewalks form the transition between the building and the street with no room for landscaping. The building is shaped as a U with the wings and the void in the center of the upper stories facing St. Paul Street. This plan provides light and air to the offices that filled the building, and produces a principal facade that consists of wings on either side framing the light court. The resulting subdivision gives the main facade a greater verticality than the sides and rear facades.

The exterior ornament organizes the building in a traditional analogy to a classical column that was common in high-rise commercial architecture after the 1890s. The base is formed from the first two stories which are set off with a kind of dado of the third floor above. A "shaft" of floors, numbers four through thirteen rises continuously and without interruption to the "capital" which is formed from the top two floors. Sparely-detailed cornices, articulated with dentils at the top floors emphasize this organization. The whole is crowned by a projecting cornice that caps the building. The verticality of the "shaft" is conventionally expressed by recessing the windows and spandrels on a single plane behind the piers. These are subtly ornamented by a series of returns. At the very top of the building, a raised parapet partially screens the roof-level pent house that houses the elevator machinery and provides access to the roof. The penthouse is clad in limestone and designed with the same restrained classical detail of the remainder of the building.

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Section 7 Page 2

Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

The main entrance on St. Paul Place is signaled by a tetrastyle, Ionic portico *in antis*, which reflects the division in three bays divided by four piers of the main volumes. The main entrance is ornamented by a triangular pediment supported on corbels, with foliate plaques in the frieze below the pediment flanking the central address number. The ceiling of the portico is ornamented by square coffers and panels with bosses edged by egg-and-dart molding. The floor and bases of the reeded columns are granite in two tones with the darker material forming borders and bands across the field of slightly lighter stone. The granite continues as a base along the whole facade. The simply-detailed, bronzed double door is recessed within its limestone frame and surmounted by a four-light panel.

Flanking the central entrance, the base of the two main volumes reflects public office spaces lighted by large, glazed openings separated by architectural steel frames with late Renaissance classical decoration. The doorways are in the central bays of these volumes. Like the main entrance, these are also surmounted by triangular pediments, here with cast floral ornament in the pediments and acanthus leaves and antefixes above. The pediments are supported by slim Ionic columns. The double bronzed doors are again slightly recessed. On the north and south elevations, side doors provide access into the basement level. These are set within limestone frames. The principal change to these elements is the interior painting of the glass at the lower level to conceal interior paneling inserted in the 1950s renovation. Overall, the exterior possesses a high degree of integrity.

The building is entered from the outer portico into a small outer vestibule that in turn provides access to the main lobby. The vestibule consists of a shallow marble clad hall entered from the exterior through large bronze doors of two leafs each and exiting on the opposite side through a pair of glazed bronze doors flanked on each side by single bronze glazed doors. All of the doors have been painted with a gold paint. The floor and walls are of marble in a decorative three color pattern of subtly differentiated stones.

The main lobby is entered through a pair of bronze doors set into the marble partition that separated it from the outer vestibule. The central lobby is two stories high, clad in marble and articulated with pilasters that carry a massive cornice that supports a monumental, barrel-vaulted ceiling. Its surfaces are ornamented with cast plaster bands and floral bosses. In the 1950s, a dropped ceiling was inserted below the barrel vault for air conditioning equipment, cutting off the upper level below the capitals of the pilasters. The decorative molded plaster detail of the upper level remains intact and will be restored. Like the decoration on the exterior, this detail is classical in character, and includes foliate scrolls and vases alternating with stylized floral bosses. The walls of the lobby also continue the motifs of the exterior, including plain pilasters, egg-and-dart molding, and free-standing Ionic columns. The walls below the dropped ceiling are ornamented by tan-pink Tennessee marble with a green marble base. The original Tennessee marble floor also survives essentially intact, with the exception of marble along the openings to the

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Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

elevators.

At the end of the lobby are immense marble clad columns that form a transition into the elevator lobby that runs across the axis of the building and rises up through the wing across the rear of the building. Again the walls are marble clad. A door at the southeast corner of the lobby opens into an internal stair that connects down to the basement and up to the upper levels of the building. Cast iron risers and newels and wrought iron railings link the stair to the architectural vocabulary of the building. A handsome bronze Cutler Mail Chute and post box form one of the accents of this portion of the public space. The main elevators were replaced in the 1950s and are detailed in chrome in a lively late Art Deco fashion with alternating bands of brushed and smooth stainless steel. These are not in keeping with the motifs of the rest of the lobby.

On either side of the main lobby were large rooms that, judging by the exterior entrances from St. Paul Street apparently served a public function. These rooms have been stripped of all interior finishes during a 1950s renovation, and have been subdivided to serve the requirements of the state offices that occupied the building. The northern room is connected to the main lobby by a bronze door opening onto a Tennessee marble landing and stair that makes the transition to the slightly lower level of that room. Its original metal railings survive in place. The southern room was similarly divided during the 1950s renovation and was paneled in Luan mahogany plywood. Set into the plywood are some of the bronze grills of the original radiator enclosures.

Because of the steep drop toward the east in the building's site, the basement is above ground for much of its area. This permits access from street level along Franklin and Hamilton Streets and makes the corridor across the basement one of slightly more public character than one might expect given its basement position. The principal public feature is a cafeteria on the north side that is connected to the basement corridor with access to the interior stair and the elevators. While retaining some of its original architectural fabric, it is largely undistinguished, especially in contrast to the richness of the main floor.

The upper levels of the building are U-shaped in plan. A less expensive pink marble than that of the main lobby clads the elevator lobbies in the central cross wing. Here the original elevator doors survive. Unlike what were probably architectural bronze doors on the first floor, these are simple stamped steel doors with recessed panels that were originally painted. The elevator bank is flanked by an iron fire stair on the north and by public toilets on the other.

Above the first floor, the office spaces throughout have been converted to modern open-plan interiors with

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Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

modern doors and baseboard, leaving little of note except for the exterior walls and windows. All original fabric was removed from these spaces and a vocabulary of drywall partitions and dropped ceilings was used for state offices.

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Section 8 Page 1

Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

The Standard Oil Building forms one of the landmarks of the skyline of Baltimore. It was designed by Clyde N. Friz (1867-1942), one of Baltimore's best-known Beaux Arts designers, responsible for many of the city's classical landmarks. In this instance, Friz adapted the conventions of early twentieth-century classicism to the office building, following patterns that had evolved during the previous thirty years. The Standard Oil Building forms an important landmark of the downtown business district, defining its eastern edge on one of the principal north-south thoroughfares, set off by the small park in front of the building. It was built by the Standard Oil Company at a time when that business was one of the nation's principal corporations, the dominant supplier of gasoline and fuels. Its prominence in Baltimore is represented in this great stone-clad skyscraper. As the work of one of Baltimore's best known early twentieth century architects, and as the corporate home of one of the nation's principal businesses, the Standard Oil Building meets National Register Criteria A and C and warrants being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Deed records indicate that the project for the building was in the planning stage by the fall of 1919 when the first purchases were made for the site.¹ A public announcement for the project appears in newspaper accounts from November 1920, including the name of the architect and the contractor, J. Henry Miller of Baltimore. In the *Daily Record* of November 27, it was noted that the building "will be one of the largest and most expensive in the downtown section... and will cost about \$1,500,000."² It was completed in 1922 at a time when Baltimore's downtown was growing rapidly. In a few years after its construction, the building was described as containing "every convenience and device modern engineering practice has devised for the facilitation of business and the comfort of its occupants."³

The client was the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, one of the most important American corporations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Standard Oil Company was founded in 1870 by John D. Rockefeller, Henry Flagler and others who, within a decade, by mergers, eliminations of competitors and other tactics, controlled over 90% of the nation's refineries. Widely considered the first corporation to completely control its industry, the Standard Oil Company provided one of the principal models for predatory capitalism that transformed American business in the years after the American Centennial.

¹C.H.A.P. files, Baltimore.

²C.H.A.P. files, Baltimore.

³*Baltimore News Post*, 23 March 1928, Vertical files, Maryland Department, Central Branch, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore.

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Section 8 Page 2

Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

In 1882, Standard Oil Company and its affiliates were reorganized to create the Standard Oil Trust, with Rockefeller at its head. In 1892 the trust was attacked and ordered dissolved by the Ohio Supreme Court. The company was reorganized to comply with the order, but due to the complexity of the organization, little changed and it continued to operate from a corporate base in New York City. Seven years later, the trust was reorganized as a holding company under the name Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, and continued to dominate both refining and distribution of oil products. The impact of the Standard Oil Company extended far beyond its ostensible role as a provider of fuels and lubricants. As early as 1900-1, well before the rise of the automobile, advertising money spent on fuel and lubricants by Standard Oil was second only to that spent on food.⁴ In November 1902, Ida Tarbull's investigative reports on the extent of domination of the nation's oil business by Standard Oil were published in *McLure's* magazine. Part of a series of articles that included Lincoln Steffens' well-known series, "The Shame of the Cities," and later of Upton Sinclair's expose of the meat-packing industry, these set the stage for federal intervention in business practices that became the focus of the second term of the Roosevelt administration.⁵

In 1906, the business's national scope became the focus of the Roosevelt administration under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. In 1911 the board of the Standard Oil of New Jersey was ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court to divest itself of direct control of "sixteen out of the twenty [of its] largest affiliates."⁶ As a result, a series of Standard Oil Companies were formed, including Standard Oil of Indiana, and many others that took on other names. Despite the dissolution, Standard of New Jersey was "surpassed in size by only one other industrial company in the country (United States Steel) and still towered above the other oil companies."⁷ The remaining businesses in the Jersey Standard group including both foreign and domestic, producing, refining, marketing, pipeline, and tanker companies.⁸ Links also remained between the former affiliate companies, for example in the form of stock held by leading officers

⁴Ralph M. Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency: N.W. Ayer & Son at Work* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), 216-17.

⁵Nathan Miller, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Life* (New York: William Morrow, 1992), p. 357. In 1904, Roosevelt was re-elected largely with money from the giant trusts including Standard Oil. When Roosevelt began pushing for business reform, Henry Clay Frick complained, "We bought the son of a bitch and then he didn't stay bought!" p. 440.

⁶George Sweet Gibb and Evelyn H. Knowlton, *History of Standard Oil Company (New Jersey) 2: The Resurgent Years, 1911-1927* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 6.

⁷Gibb and Knowlton, 7.

⁸Gibb and Knowlton, 9.

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Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

who remained loyal to the Rockefellers.⁹

Despite the continued strength of Jersey Standard in the wake of the dissolution order, the time of construction of the Baltimore building represented the middle of a period of competitive push to retain and “strengthen the integrated nature of the business.”¹⁰ This was also a period of a great rise in consumption of oil products, particularly in the form of the demand for gasoline for automobiles. After the dissolution, domestic marketing for Jersey Standard was reduced but in 1919 was again put in full swing.¹¹

The Baltimore building was built as part of this renewed effort at domestic marketing. The Baltimore office of the corporation was by far the larger of two established in 1919 for this initiative (the other was created in Newark, New Jersey). The Baltimore headquarters also served two other key functions. First, it was the head of a division that oversaw distribution in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Washington, D.C. Second, it also oversaw the operation of the Baltimore refinery, which had existed since before the dissolution order.¹² The ten years after the construction of the Baltimore office building saw the doubling of production of that refinery to meet increasing demand. That operation was of considerable importance in Baltimore’s harbor, using a site of 125 acres and represented the coming to fruition of the plan of Baltimore’s leading capitalists to link Baltimore to the national industrial economy.¹³ The path toward industrialization was lubricated by oil, making Standard Oil’s pier at Baltimore a central gateway to the city’s future. Sherry Olson reports that by the 1920s, the pier was receiving “a steamer of Mexican crude oil each day, and loaded 100 tank cars of refined product. It [Standard] had its own distribution fleet of oil trucks and a fleet of Chesapeake Bay oil boats.”¹⁴

Baltimore was also at the forefront of the new idea of retailing directly to the customer through automobile

⁹Paul H. Giddens, *Standard Oil Company (Indiana): Oil Pioneer of the Middle West* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1955), 134.

¹⁰Gibb and Knowlton, 10.

¹¹Gibb and Knowlton, 181.

¹²Gibb and Knowlton, 181-3.

¹³Sherry Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 304.

¹⁴Olson, 309-10.

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Standard Oil Building
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service-stations. Stations were a recent innovation and still scarce, but they were obviously the way of the future. In 1919, there were more Standard stations in Baltimore than anywhere else in the country, indicating a consumer culture that was both wealthy and progressive, and an unusually early and large market for gasoline retailing.¹⁵ Gasoline retailing would come to dominate the oil industry in the rest of the century, and the Standard Oil Company's Baltimore and New Jersey offices were in the first wave of this effort.

The architect selected by the Standard Oil Company to design the representation of their corporation was Clyde N. Friz. For nearly a generation, he had been one of the most prominent architects in Baltimore in the early twentieth century. Born in Michigan, Friz grew up in Abilene, Kansas, the son of a farmer. Despite that background, he graduated from MIT in 1892 and after working in architectural offices in Abilene and St. Louis, Missouri, arrived in Baltimore in 1900.¹⁶ In Baltimore, he worked in the office of Wyatt and Nolting, one of the dominant firms in the city who had shaped the late Victorian and turn-the-century. Like Friz, Wyatt was a graduate of M.I.T. His initial practice provided entree into the elite clientele of the city with commissions for important Episcopal congregations. In 1898, he won the commission for the Baltimore County Court House, the project on which Friz began. While at Wyatt and Nolting, Friz met William Gordon Beecher, with whom he established a partnership after the 1904 fire.¹⁷

During his career, Friz was responsible for several of the principal public buildings of the city, of which the Standard Oil building was the among the first. Its success undoubtedly led to other large-scale projects. These other commissions included the 1930 Scottish Rite Masonic Temple on North Charles Street, an organization of which Friz was a member. On that project, John Russell Pope, now remembered for the National Gallery and the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. was consulting architect.¹⁸ Friz's best-known work is arguably the Central Branch of the Enoch Pratt Library, 1933, a great "palace for the people" in the tradition of McKim, Mead and White's

¹⁵Gibb and Knowlton, 184.

¹⁶"Register of Former Students with an Account of the Alumni Associations," *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology* 50 (1915): 185, and obituary, *Baltimore Sun*, 23 November 1942, Vertical files, Maryland Department, Central Branch, Enoch Pratt Library, Baltimore.

¹⁷Friz's career and that of James Wyatt are treated in Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)*, (1956; reprint: Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970), 223-24 and 674-75.

¹⁸John Dorsey and James D. Dilts, *A Guide to Baltimore Architecture* (Cambridge, MD: Tidewater Publishing, 1973), 172.

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Standard Oil Building
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Boston Public Library of the previous century.¹⁹ Each of these important civic commissions rely on the reserved classicism of Standard Oil. Friz also was responsible as the restoration of the Governor's mansion in Annapolis in Harry Nice's administration, and was a leader in the profession in the city and the state, serving as the president of the Baltimore chapter of the A.I.A. and a chairman of the Maryland architectural registration board.

As the Maryland office of one of the premier corporations of the nation and as the important work of a significant Baltimore architect, the Standard Oil Building is eligible for the National Register under criteria A and C.

¹⁹Dorsey and Dilts, 35.

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Section 10 Page 1

Standard Oil Building
Baltimore, Maryland

Boundary Description: Beginning at the northeast corner of St. Paul Place and Franklin Street, proceeding north along the east side of St. Paul Place to the southeast corner of St. Paul Place and Hamilton Street, proceeding east along the south side of Hamilton Street to the southwest corner of Hamilton and Hargrove streets, thence south along the west side of Hargrove Street to the northwest corner of Hargrove and Franklin Streets, thence west along the north side of Franklin Street to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification: These are the limits of the property of the building.

Property Owner - Standard Oil Building

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

name Mr. David Hillman, Southern Management Corp.

street & number 1950 Old Gallows Road telephone (703) 902-9600

city or town Vienna state Virginia zip code 22182