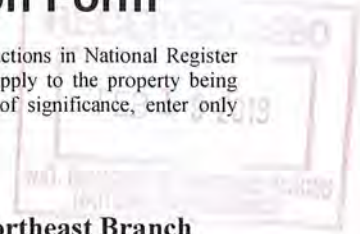


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

3595

# 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: **First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch**

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: **1907-1925 Cottman Avenue**

City or town: **Philadelphia** State: **PA** County: **Philadelphia**

Not For Publication: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

Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Deputy SHPO</u>		Date
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission – State Historic Preservation Office		
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

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

4/5/19

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

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</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>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

---

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE – Financial Institution

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE – Financial Institution

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Stone, Stainless Steel, Porcelain Enamel

### 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 First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch, is a four-story, International Style bank building located at the northwest corner of Cottman Avenue and Castor Avenue in Northeast Philadelphia. The wedge-shaped site, which consists of 0.4 acres, is urban in character and surrounded by small to mid-sized commercial buildings and parking lots. The building, which was designed by the architectural firm of Thalheimer & Weitz and built in 1956-1957, occupies much of the eastern portion of the property. To the west and north of the building, there is an asphalt parking lot with curb cut access from both Cottman Avenue and Elgin Street. First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch retains all seven aspects of historic integrity.

---

#### Narrative Description

On the south elevation (facing Cottman Avenue), the building contains seven storefront and entrance bays on the first floor and 29 bays on the second through fourth floors (**Photo 1**). On the first floor the bays are separated by white marble-clad piers. Moving from east to west, the first three bays contain four-light, aluminum-framed storefront windows with transoms that correspond to the main banking space on the first floor. The center bay contains aluminum-framed glass double doors, which function as the main entrance to the offices above, with a side light and large, single-light transom aside a black granite-clad wall that is slightly recessed from the marble piers but sits forward of the adjacent entrance. The next three bays west of the center bay consist of three individual storefronts with recessed, aluminum-framed glass doors and large, aluminum-framed plate glass windows with aluminum bases. There are also aluminum signage panels above the storefronts, but they are currently devoid of signage. The second through fourth floors are faced in a curtain wall system of porcelain enamel spandrel panels and windows divided by thin, stainless steel mullions that rise uninterrupted from the second floor to the roof. The 29 bays are nearly identical, consisting of vertically alternating porcelain enamel panels, which are blue in color, and square, aluminum-framed fixed windows with narrow, two-light awning vents at the bottom of each opening. The spandrel panels and the windows are roughly equal in size, creating with the vertical mullions a consistent grid that spans the full elevation.



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

The chamfered southeast elevation of the building, which faces the intersection of Cottman and Castor Avenues, contains a one-story, projecting vestibule with a flat, overhanging roof (**Photos 2-5**). Framed in steel and clad in stainless steel, the vestibule, which is roughly square in plan, contains two aluminum-framed glass doors on the southeast side with a center "side" light and a unifying, single-light transom above. The other two sides of the vestibule consist of single-light, aluminum-framed plate glass windows. This entrance served as the entry into the bank. Above the entrance vestibule, the second and third floors are faced in gray metal panels. The fourth floor is a continuation of the curtain wall system from the south elevation.

On the northeast elevation, which is parallel with Elgin Street, the first floor is treated similarly to the south elevation with its four bays separated by white marble piers (**Photos 5 and 6**). Unlike the south elevation, however, the windows do not extend to the ground and are instead located above black granite panels that match the granite in the center bay on the south elevation. The second through fourth floors match the curtain wall treatment on the south elevation, but there are only eleven bays on this side.

On the north elevation, which faces the parking lot behind the building, the first four bays from the east on the first floor are treated similarly to those on the northeast elevation with aluminum windows above black granite panels and separated by white marble piers (Photo 7). The only significant difference is in the second bay from the east, which contains an aluminum-framed drive-through window, above which is a cantilevered, rectangular aluminum canopy. On top of the canopy sits a large piece of mechanical equipment. The center bay contains an entrance with an aluminum-framed glass door with side light and single-light transom. This entrance connects to the main entrance on the south elevation. The remaining three bays contain the opposite sides of the storefronts on the south elevation. On this side, they each contain (from east to west) a large plate glass window and an aluminum-framed glass door with side light and single-light transom. Immediately to the west of each of the doors (between the doors and the white marble piers) is a panel of stack bond buff brick. The upper floors on the north elevation match the curtain wall treatment found on the other elevations.

The west elevation is faced primarily in stack bond buff brick, including the stair tower that projects out by one bay (**Photos 8 and 9**). The north and south sides of the stair tower, however, contain porcelain enamel panels and aluminum windows similar to those on the other elevations, but in a slightly different configuration.

### *Interior*

On the interior, the building contains a banking hall and three retail spaces on the first floor. The banking hall is entered through a small vestibule on the chamfered southeast corner of the building and currently contains carpeted and ceramic tile floors, both of which appear to have been installed in the last ten to twenty years, as well as sheetrock walls and dropped acoustical tile ceilings (**Photos 10-12**). Along the north wall, there is a wood laminate teller counter. Along the south wall, there are low wood partitions separating the public area from the former offices of the bank's staff. On the west wall, there is a large metal vault. To the west of the banking space, there is a transverse corridor that spans the full width of the building – from the main

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

entrance on Cottman Avenue to the secondary entrance from the parking lot north of the building. The corridor contains carpet tile floors and sheetrock walls with varnished wood wainscoting around the elevator on the east wall near the Cottman Avenue entrance (**Photo #13**). The ceilings contain applied acoustical panels. The three commercial spaces west of the corridor are open in plan and contain carpeted or vinyl tile floors, sheetrocked walls, and dropped acoustical tile ceilings (**Photos 14-17**).

The second through fourth floors contain offices and do not have a consistent plan due to some alterations over the years to suit various tenants. Typical finishes within the offices include carpeted floors, sheetrocked walls and dropped acoustical tile ceilings (**Photos 18-21, 23, 24, 26-35**).

The building contains two stairways and one elevator, one near the Cottman Avenue entrance and one on the west side of the building where the stair tower projects out from the main massing. Both stairs are metal, U-return in configuration and contain simple, stainless steel railings (**Photos 22 and 25**). The stair near the Cottman Avenue entrance is paired with an elevator. Both stairs and the elevator provide access between the basement and fourth floor.

### *Integrity*

The First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch, retains integrity. Although the original signage seen in **Figures 9-12** has all been removed, the aspects of design and materials are more than sufficiently retained through the building's intact Mid-Century Modern form, which, except for the addition of a fourth floor in 1962, has undergone very few alterations since the completion of the building in 1957. (Thalheimer & Weitz designed the building to accommodate an eventual fourth floor expansion, which therefore can be considered part of the original plan). Critical to our understanding of the building as a work of Modern architecture are its unornamented, geometric massing, generated in part by the wedge shaped corner property on which it stands. In addition, the building's extensive use of modern building materials that were just coming into widespread use during the 1950s, including its transparent, aluminum-framed storefronts, stone veneer columns at ground level, and its curtain wall – consisting of porcelain enamel spandrel panels with stainless steel mullions – are nearly all intact and still comprise a strikingly modern composition that is a clear break from the Classical building traditions of previous decades and centuries.

The building also retains integrity through the aspects of location and setting. It remains in its original location at a prominent corner on one of Northeast Philadelphia's busiest commercial corridors as it has for over sixty years. The surrounding streets, including Cottman Avenue, Castor Avenue and Elgin Street, the latter of which gives the property its wedge shape, are still lined by commercial buildings and shopping centers, although some have been demolished and replaced by parking lots in recent decades (the parking lot to the immediate north and west of the building, however, was part of the original plan for the site). These streets, which continue to provide critical circulation through this part of the city, were the catalyst for the transformation of Northeast Philadelphia from farmland into a semi-urban community in the 1950s and therefore aid in our understanding of the building.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
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

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1957-1970

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Thalheimer & Weitz, Architects

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
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 First Federal Savings & Loan Association, Northeast Branch, is significant under Criterion A in the Area of Commerce and under Criterion C in the Area of Architecture. Founded by Hungarian-Jewish immigrant Samuel A. Green in 1934 in South Philadelphia, First Federal Savings opened its Northeast Branch in 1957 just as a post-World War II housing boom was transforming the northeastern region of the city from farmland into a sprawling, semi-urban landscape of single-family homes, wide boulevards, and shopping centers. As one of the most prominent residential mortgage lenders in the area, particularly within the Jewish community of Oxford Circle, First Federal's Northeast Branch played a pivotal role in the development of Northeast Philadelphia during the 1950s and 60s. In addition to its significance in this area, First Federal's Northeast Branch is also a notable work in the International Style by the locally and regionally prominent architectural firm of Thalheimer & Weitz. Breaking with the Beaux-Arts norms of previous decades, the building is highly representative of trends that shaped American architecture in the two decades after World War II, including unornamented, geometric massing, the utilization of a curtain wall, and the application of an ever expanding palate of new materials, including stone veneers, stainless steel, and porcelain enamel panels. The period of significance for the property begins in 1957, when the building was completed, and ends in 1970, when population growth in central Northeast Philadelphia began to slow and First Federal's Northeast Branch, though it would continue in operation for decades as an important community bank, started to play a diminishing role in the lending of residential mortgages and loans for new housing construction in the immediate vicinity.

---

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

Significance Under Criterion A in the Area of Commerce:

*Postwar Growth in Northeast Philadelphia*

Until 1854, when Philadelphia's Act of Consolidation united the City of Philadelphia with all outlying districts, townships and boroughs to create the County of Philadelphia, the present site lay on the border between Oxford and Delaware Townships. Despite its proximity to the relatively densely settled Tacony community, located two miles to the southeast on the Delaware River, the area surrounding what is now the intersection of Cottman and Castor Avenues remained rural well into the twentieth century. As late as 1910, Cottman and Castor were the only two streets in the immediate vicinity; the next closest, the Bustleton Turnpike (now Bustleton Avenue), which ran parallel to Castor Avenue, was located nearly a half mile to the east. As shown in a property atlas published by G.W. Bromley in 1910, the area was filled with large farms and only sparsely settled by single family houses (**Figure 5**).



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Philadelphia County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

As industrial development pushed northward from the Frankford and Tacony neighborhoods during the 1920s, a residential expansion in central Northeast Philadelphia followed. South of Cottman Avenue, on either side of Castor Avenue, blocks of small twins and rowhouses for workers began to appear, though in relatively limited numbers. As illustrated in the 1927 Sanborn map (**Figure 6**), most were built on small streets, including Wellington Street and Bleigh Street, although some could be found on Cottman Avenue itself. Reflecting the neighborhood's growing population during this period, the Woodrow Wilson Junior High School was built at the southwest corner of Cottman and Loretto Avenues, one block west of Castor Avenue, in 1927 (the school remains standing and continues to operate as a middle school in the Philadelphia public school system).

Although the onset of the Great Depression slowed homebuilding in lower Northeast Philadelphia after 1929, a rapid recovery following World War II promised to transform the area from farmland to a sprawling semi-urban landscape. With an increased need for housing from returning veterans, the Federal government began to subsidize residential construction in suburban (and racially segregated) settings, away from the perceived ills of inner city life. Assisted by the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (also known as the G.I. Bill), as well as low-interest construction loans and mortgages provided by the Federal Housing Administration, a residential construction boom ensued in the still largely undeveloped northeastern region of the city. While in 1946 only 55 acres in Northeast Philadelphia were developed for housing, that number more than tripled to 160 in 1947 and tripled once again to 520 in 1957. On average, about 300 acres were developed annually between 1946 and 1962, resulting in over 62,000 new housing units by the end of that period. In 1960, the population of the Northeast Philadelphia had reached 274,000, four times as many as in 1945.<sup>1</sup>

In the Oxford Circle neighborhood, as in many locations throughout lower Northeast Philadelphia, this dramatic expansion resulted in thousands of new houses in twin and row configurations, most with small front yards and rear garages. Many were built by Hyman Korman, a Russian Jewish immigrant who had settled in Philadelphia in 1904 and became active in residential development when the first major roads opened up the northeast part of the city in the 1910s and 20s.

The area's rapidly increasing population also attracted businesses. In 1953, the city created a new zoning category for shopping centers along Cottman Avenue, reflecting the auto-centric nature of development in the area. The first major business to open in the vicinity was a branch of Lit Brothers, one of Philadelphia's famous downtown department stores, at the northeast corner of Cottman and Castor Avenues in 1954. The opening of Lits instantly created a node of commerce, attracting both the First Federal Savings & Loan Association as well as a number of other retail outlets that cemented Cottman Avenue's status as one of central Northeast Philadelphia's primary commercial corridors. Over the following decade, several additional department stores, including Philadelphia's Gimbels and New York's S. Klein, opened branches nearby on Cottman

---

<sup>1</sup> Grace Smelo Milgram, "The City Expands. A study of the Conversion of Land from Rural to Urban Use, Philadelphia, 1945-1962," PhD diss., (University of Pennsylvania, 1967): 74, 77.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Philadelphia County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

Avenue, particularly in the Roosevelt Mall shopping center, built several blocks to the east in the early 1960s.

### *History of the First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia*

The First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia was founded in 1934 by banker Samuel A. Green. A Hungarian Jewish immigrant who arrived in the United States in 1905, Green settled in South Philadelphia and quickly became involved in the management of several building and loan associations, a type of community financial organization that specialized in collecting savings deposits from customers and investing the funds in residential mortgage loans. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thousands of working class people in Philadelphia, many of whom were immigrants, became homeowners in this way. Expanding on his work in building and loan associations, Green founded the Roosevelt Bank in 1918. Located at the corner of 21<sup>st</sup> and Wharton Streets in the Point Breeze neighborhood of South Philadelphia, this new state chartered institution offered a wider range of financial products, including mortgages and small business loans. As in Green's earlier building and loan associations, the Roosevelt Bank was a community bank whose primary goal was aiding immigrants, particularly Jews, whose presence was growing throughout South Philadelphia.<sup>2</sup>

Although the Roosevelt Bank prospered through the 1920s – the bank had accumulated over 5000 customers and \$2,000,000 in deposits by the end of the decade – the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 began to freeze up credit, making it difficult or impossible for many to afford and buy homes. In one attempt to jumpstart the housing market, the United States Congress passed the Federal Home Loan Bank Act in July, 1932. Signed into law by President Hoover, the goal of the legislation was to lower the cost of homeownership during the country's worst ever financial crisis. The bill created both the Federal Home Loan Bank Board (FHLBB), responsible for chartering and supervising federal savings and loan associations, and the Federal Home Loan Banks, a group of thirteen regional banks tasked with providing liquidity – the 1932 bill appropriated \$125,000,000 in initial capitalization – to local savings and loan associations (S&L) for mortgages. Although similar in function to the older building and loan associations, the new savings and loan associations set up by the FHLBB were backed by the Federal government.

With the creation of the Federal Home Loan Banks, Green saw an opportunity to begin extending mortgage loans again to his South Philadelphia customer base, but the law required the creation of a new S&L bank. Green subsequently founded the First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Philadelphia, which was granted a charter by the FHLBB in February, 1934. As its name suggests, the bank was the first of its kind in Philadelphia and also in Pennsylvania. In accordance with the minimum requirements for the creation of a new federal S&L bank - 50 subscribers to stock in the amount of \$75,000, ten percent of which had to be immediately paid in cash - Green gathered \$7,546 in deposits from nearly 200 individuals. First Federal's offices were located in the same building as the Roosevelt Bank, which continued to operate at 21<sup>st</sup> and Wharton Streets.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Richard J. Green, "Remarks at the Hebrew Free Loan Society of Greater Philadelphia" (speech, Philadelphia, PA, September 10, 2014), <http://www.hflphilly.org/Docs/Green-30thAnniv.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Hon. Robert A. Borski, "First Federal Savings & Loan of Philadelphia" (remarks on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., March 20, 1984).

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

Although records of First Federal's early years are scarce, the statistics that are available indicate that the bank experienced rapid growth during the late 1930s and 1940s. In 1937, the bank recorded assets of \$1,917,971, a 90% increase over 1936 and that year invested \$1 million in 303 separate mortgages.<sup>4</sup> The following year, the board of directors authorized the payment of dividends at the rate of 4%.<sup>5</sup> First Federal's success allowed the bank to build a new home at 1332 Point Breeze Avenue, adjacent to the original building of the Roosevelt Bank, in late 1940 (both buildings remain standing and continue to operate as Firstrust Bank, the successor to First Federal Savings).<sup>6</sup> With enlarged quarters, First Federal was able to handle even more business, further increasing its assets to \$2,674,329.<sup>7</sup> By the early 1950s, First Federal's mortgage lending had surpassed \$4 million, much of which helped returning veterans and families purchase new homes in Northeast Philadelphia and suburban locations surrounding the city.<sup>8</sup>

With the opening up of Northeast Philadelphia for residential development after World War II, First Federal saw an opportunity to expand their mortgage business, particularly to the many Jewish families who were increasingly moving into the area. In the Oxford Circle and Castor Gardens neighborhoods, in particular, many of the first homes built in the 1920s and 30s by Hyman Korman and Marvin Orleans, another Jewish builder, had already been purchased by Jews seeking to relocate from South Philadelphia and other Jewish neighborhoods. This trend accelerated after World War II, when thousands of new homes west of Roosevelt Boulevard were purchased by returning Jewish servicemen, creating a cohesive ethnic enclave (the area east of Roosevelt Boulevard, on the other hand, became heavily Roman Catholic). Although not explicitly marketed to Jews, many simply felt more comfortable purchasing homes from Jewish builders, according to Orleans himself. Prospective Jewish homebuyers were also attracted by the fact that a synagogue, Temple Shalom at Large Street and Roosevelt Boulevard, of which Korman was a founding member in 1939, already existed in the neighborhood.<sup>9</sup>

First Federal opened its Northeast office – the first branch beyond its South Philadelphia headquarters – in an existing two-story building at 2226 Cottman Avenue in June, 1954.<sup>10</sup> Several downtown banks had already opened or were building new locations in the vicinity, including the Second National Bank at 2200 Cottman Avenue in 1953 and the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society at 2014 Cottman Avenue in 1954, putting pressure on First Federal to establish its presence in the area. Due to its relatively small size, this was likely a temporary location while the bank began to plan for a larger, permanent home two blocks to the west at the corner of Cottman and Castor Avenues. An advertisement in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* that month made it clear that the First Federal was there to serve new homebuyers, announcing that

<sup>4</sup> "Association Reports Increase in Assets," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 16 Jan 1938.

<sup>5</sup> "Fed. Saving & Loan Dividend," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 14 Dec 1938.

<sup>6</sup> "First Federal to Move Monday," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13 Dec 1940.

<sup>7</sup> "Federal to Pay 3 ½%," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 10 Jun 1942.

<sup>8</sup> "Savings and Loan Announces Dividend," *The Jewish Exponent*, 6 Jul 1951.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Binzen, "A Place to Live: The Jewish Builders of Northeast Philadelphia," in *Philadelphia Jewish Life, 1940-2000*, edited by Murray Friedman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003): 113-125.

<sup>10</sup> "First Federal to Open Cottman Avenue Branch," *The Jewish Exponent*, 26 Mar 1954.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Philadelphia County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

the bank's "Safe, profitable 'Federal' savings – and low cost 'Tailored Mortgages' are now available within easy reach of many more thousands of residents of the greater Northeast!"<sup>11</sup>

Permits for First Federal's new home at Cottman and Castor Avenues were issued in May, 1955. As indicated by a zoning application filed that month, the bank initially planned a five-story building designed by Thalheimer & Weitz. By the following January, however, the building had been scaled back to three stories. A groundbreaking was held on February 22, 1956 and the building was officially opened to the public on June 21, 1957 following a dedication ceremony attended by "prominent civic and business leaders of the city."<sup>12</sup>

First Federal's new Northeast Branch housed a large, public banking hall and three tenant retail spaces on the first floor as well as offices for both First Federal management and various other tenants on the second and third floors. Although there were a number of commercial buildings in the vicinity of Cottman and Castor, many of which likely contained small suites of offices, the First Federal building was the first large, multi-tenant office building in the area. In addition to First Federal, early office tenants included the only Philadelphia office of the Electrolux Corporation, a Sweden-based home appliance manufacturer, as well as several insurance and title companies and accountants. As illustrated in one historic photo, two of the ground floor retail spaces were also occupied by insurance companies. The westernmost retail space became the Northeast branch of I. Sabel Shoes, the popular downtown seller of orthopedic footwear (**Figure 11**).

Due in large part to ongoing housing boom throughout central Northeast Philadelphia, First Federal's new Northeast Branch was virtually an instant success. In the three years following the opening of the Northeast branch, First Federal's assets nearly doubled from \$24.8 to \$47.3 million. Mortgages also increased twofold, from \$20.8 to \$41.2 million. Samuel A. Green, who continued to serve as bank president, largely attributed these increases to "vigorous, consistent growth" in the Northeast office. First Federal, which opened a third location at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and John F. Kennedy Boulevard in Center City in 1961, continued to experience double-digit annual growth for much of the following decade, most of which came from mortgage lending.<sup>13</sup>

Other Philadelphia banks, particularly S&Ls, benefitted from the housing boom, too. West Philadelphia Savings & Loan Association, the only S&L bank in southeastern Pennsylvania that was larger than First Federal, played a similar role in construction financing and the lending of residential mortgages for new developments in the far western part of the city and nearby Delaware County suburbs. In 1963, West Philadelphia, which was located at 5219-21 Chestnut Street, held \$97 million in mortgages and had 45,000 members while First Federal held \$74 million and had 34,000 members.<sup>14</sup> Much closer to First Federal's Northeast branch was Third Federal Savings & Loan, which opened at the southeast corner of Roosevelt Boulevard and Unruh Avenue in 1956. Although Third Federal was the largest S&L operating exclusively in Northeast Philadelphia, holding \$36 million in mortgages in 1963, their location on the east side

<sup>11</sup> Advertisement for First Federal Savings, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 Jun 1954.

<sup>12</sup> "S&L Building Set to Open," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 21 June 1957.

<sup>13</sup> "First Federal Enjoys Biggest Year's Growth," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 Jul 1961.

<sup>14</sup> "Comparative Statements of Federal S&Ls in Philadelphia Area," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 Jan 1963.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Philadelphia County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

of Roosevelt Boulevard meant that they catered largely to the Roman Catholic customers who populated the eastern part of Northeast Philadelphia. Aside from S&Ls, a number of other banks opened on or near Cottman Avenue in the vicinity of First Federal's branch during this period. Most, however – including the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society at 2014 Cottman and Second National Bank at 2200 Cottman, among others – were traditional savings banks that did relatively little mortgage business.

By their own account, by the mid-1960s First Federal was financing “more new home construction than any other savings and loan institution in the Greater Delaware Valley.”<sup>15</sup> Although figures do not support this claim – in 1965, West Philadelphia Federal continued to report an advantage in mortgage lending with \$109 million in loans versus First Federal's \$94 million – First Federal was still easily the second largest S&L bank in the city, not to mention probably the largest mortgage lender in Northeast Philadelphia.<sup>16</sup>

In September, 1962, as a result of its rapid growth, First Federal made the decision to add a fourth floor to the Northeast Branch, which had been planned into the design of the building by Thalheimer & Weitz in 1956. The extra floor would provide more room not just for the bank, but would help to satisfy a growing demand for office space in central Northeast Philadelphia during the 1960s. A large portion of the new fourth floor, which was completed by the middle of 1963, was leased to the New York Life Insurance company even before construction began.<sup>17</sup> As part of this project, three new teller stations and additional safe deposit boxes were also added to the building to satisfy increased demand.<sup>18</sup> As another indication of the success and importance of the Northeast Branch, First Federal relocated its executive and administrative operations from its original Point Breeze home to the Cottman and Castor building in late summer, 1968.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the growing importance of the Northeast branch within the First Federal Savings & Loan Association, by 1970 it was playing a diminishing role in financing the settlement of Northeast Philadelphia. Both housing construction and population growth had started to slow in this part of the city during the late-1960s, particularly in the central part where First Federal had financed so many new homes over the previous 15 years. In 1967, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission noted that the Northeast was then using up the last third of its land, primarily at the outer edges of the city where lower density housing – spread out, detached and semi-detached dwellings with more spacious lawns – was becoming the norm.<sup>20</sup> Although First Federal Savings' Northeast Branch remained a prominent community bank for the next four decades, by 1970 it was no longer serving the primary purpose – providing residential mortgages that fueled the development of central Northeast Philadelphia – for which it was built. As illustrated in a 1965 aerial view, there simply was no land left to build on (**Figure 15**).

<sup>15</sup> First Federal Savings & Loan Association. Advertisement. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 Apr 1965.

<sup>16</sup> “Comparative Statements of Philadelphia Area S & Ls,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 Jan 1965.

<sup>17</sup> “S&L Building In Northeast To Add 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 Sep 1962; Philadelphia Zoning Permit No. 86392, issued 10/31/62.

<sup>18</sup> “First Federal Shows 20% Gain in Assets,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 23 Jan 1963.

<sup>19</sup> “Area S&Ls Expand,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 23 Jul 1968.

<sup>20</sup> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, *1967 Regional Projections for the Delaware Valley* (Philadelphia, 1967): 25.



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

Significance Under Criterion C in the Area of Architecture:

The First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia was designed by the local architectural firm of Thalheimer & Weitz. Formed in 1924 by Clarence S. Thalheimer (1898-1984) and David D. Weitz (1895-1976), both of whom were alumni of John T. Windrim's office, this versatile firm became locally and regionally prolific designers of department stores, offices, banks, theaters, and schools, among other building types during the 1950s and 60s. The firm's long career spanned a period during which the Beaux-Arts tradition gradually gave way – after the intervening popularity of the transitional Art Deco and Moderne styles of the 1930s and 40s – to the International Style after World War II. In fact, although the firm's major early works relied on compositional principles and material treatments derived from their Beaux-Arts training at the University of Pennsylvania – the North City Trust Company, an Art Deco, limestone bank building at 5700 North Broad Street in Philadelphia (1930; extant), is a notable example – following World War II, their work largely rejected Classicism in favor of “unabashedly modern Postwar designs”<sup>21</sup> The First Federal Savings & Loan Association, Northeast Branch, is a notable, intact example of Thalheimer & Weitz's commercial work during this postwar period.

Beginning in the late 1940s, commercial buildings increasingly became a focus of Thalheimer & Weitz's work. Benefitting from a wave of modernization that transformed American retail architecture in the postwar period, the firm won numerous commissions from downtown merchants wishing to remodel their old stores or build new ones. Early examples include the Beck Shoe Store at 1318 Chestnut (1948; extant), which is characteristic of Modern architecture in Philadelphia immediately following the war. As defined by architectural historian Jeffrey Baumel, “Early Postwar Modern” buildings, which appeared between 1945 and about 1950 and included Beck's, were transitional in nature in that earlier Beaux Arts and Moderne forms began to fuse with the design elements of the International Style. Similar to other commercial buildings erected during this brief period, the Beck Shoe Store features a relatively planar, unornamented façade with a fully transparent glazed storefront at ground level (now altered), but the composition is dominated by the solid masonry surfaces and prominent central bays of the upper floors.

By the early 1950s, the increasing influence of the International Style on commercial architecture in Philadelphia became readily apparent in Thalheimer & Weitz's design for the W.T. Grant store, located just a few blocks away from Beck's at the southeast corner of 11<sup>th</sup> and Market Streets (1954; extant). In this commission, an emphasis on volume enclosed by an exterior envelope became a defining characteristic and more fully expressed the language of the International Style. In addition, the store's application of materials only recently made available by the building industry – including structural glass, stainless steel, manufactured stone veneers, and insulated spandrel panels – marked the W.T. Grant building as a clear break from the firm's earlier work where heavy masonry surfaces predominated.

---

<sup>21</sup> Jeffrey L. Baumel, “A Study of Postwar Architecture in Center City, Philadelphia,” MS thesis. University of Pennsylvania, 1992, 176.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

Although much of Thalheimer & Weitz's early work could be found in the downtown area, after 1950 their practice was increasingly occupied by commissions outside of Center City, in areas like Northeast Philadelphia and the surrounding suburbs. As a result of post-World War II housing expansion and the opening of the highways, these locations experienced transformative growth during the 1950s and 60s, evolving from farmland into a sprawling, suburban landscape of large housing tracts and shopping centers built for thousands of new residents, nearly all with their own cars.

With years of experience in the design of commercial buildings, Thalheimer & Weitz became one of the preferred architectural firms for large retail developments in and around Philadelphia. Between about 1950 and 1965, the firm designed numerous large shopping centers in locations like Bala Cynwyd in Montgomery County (Bala Cynwyd Shopping Center, 1953-1956, extant but altered) and Clifton Heights in Delaware County (Oak Park Shopping Center, 1961, extant but altered). In Northeast Philadelphia, the firm also became heavily involved in the development of Cottman Avenue as a commercial corridor. Starting with the Cottman-Castor Shopping Center in 1953, which still exists at the northeast corner of Cottman and Castor Avenues but has been heavily altered, the firm went on to design not only the First Federal building at the northwest corner of that same intersection, but also the Cottman-Bustleton Shopping Center (also known as the Roosevelt Mall; extant but altered) a few blocks to the east in 1961. These low-slung developments, often set back from the street with generous parking lots, catered to the automobile. They also frequently featured large department stores as anchor tenants. Well-known Philadelphia stores like Lits, Gimbels and Snellenburgs, who wished to follow their customers as they moved away from the congested Center City area, regularly opened new stores in similar developments across the region. The anchor tenant of the Cottman-Castor Shopping Center, for example, was Lit Brothers, while Gimbels had a branch store in the Roosevelt Mall. Both stores were designed by Thalheimer & Weitz (**Figures 18 and 19**).

Whereas their work in Center City Philadelphia was often constrained by a dense, urban context, in the relatively wide open spaces outside the downtown Thalheimer & Weitz had the freedom to explore more three-dimensional forms. Their department store designs, which often served as the main attraction aside what was otherwise a simply treated, functional strip mall, frequently experimented with the interplay of mass and volume, typically with transparent and/or slightly recessed ground levels below planar masonry walls that served as backdrops for signage. These works were asymmetrical but balanced compositions where the arrangement of simple, geometric forms was the defining principle, rejecting the formality and ornamentation of the Beaux-Arts traditions. The Lit Brothers building, directly across Castor Avenue from First Federal Savings, was highly characteristic of this shift (See **Figure 18**. The building remains standing, but has been heavily altered).

Thalheimer & Weitz's design for the First Federal Savings & Loan Association furthered their experimentation with form, switching out their standard masonry treatments for a new palate of materials better suited to an office use. Like their design for Lit Brothers and other stores, the architects clearly differentiated the public and private uses by stacking the offices – faced in a curtain wall of porcelain enamel panels and stainless steel mullions rather than masonry – on marble-clad columns (acting as stilts or *pilotis*) above the public spaces on the ground level.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Philadelphia County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

Between the columns, full-glazed aluminum storefronts, which are slightly recessed from the facade of the upper floors, lend an effect of transparency and reinforce the interplay of a solid (the office floors) suspended over a volume (the banking hall and retail spaces). As explained by Baumol, this emphasis on the “modulation of exterior building mass and surfaces” became one of the defining characteristics of Thalheimer & Weitz’s work.<sup>22</sup>

Beyond its formal attributes, the First Federal building illustrates how a range of new building materials transformed American architecture beginning in the 1950s. Its curtain wall facade, which differs from many of Thalheimer & Weitz’s previous works relying on masonry, consists of porcelain enameled steel spandrel panels and anodized aluminum windows separated by thin, stainless steel mullions that rise uninterrupted to the roof. This type of curtain wall had only relatively recently come into use, often in high profile projects such as the Lever House (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1952) in New York City, which utilized glass spandrel panels, and the General Motors Technical Center (Eero Saarinen, completed 1956) in Warren, Michigan, which used porcelain enamel panels extensively in a number of buildings (**Figures 20 and 21**). These planar, gridded facades established a new vocabulary for American commercial architecture in the mid-century period and influenced countless architects, including Thalheimer & Weitz, in subsequent years.

Coinciding with the completion of First Federal Savings, *Progressive Architecture* published a 16-page feature on curtain wall systems in their June 1957 issue, signaling the arrival of panels in porcelain enamel, but also in glass and aluminum, as one of the defining cladding materials of the Mid-Century period in the United States. The panels specified by Thalheimer & Weitz for First Federal Savings were manufactured by the Philadelphia- and later Wyncote, Pennsylvania-based Caloric Appliance Corporation (the company also had a plant in Topton, PA). Known as Calcore curtain wall panels, the product was essentially an adaptation for architectural use of the company’s enameled, insulated oven wall construction. As one of the major manufacturers of architectural porcelain enamel panels in the country – others included Seaporcel, Mapes, Wolverine, and Du Pont – Caloric took out a full-page advertisement in the June 1957 issue of *Progressive Architecture* featuring the First Federal building itself as an ideal application of the product (**Figure 13**).

Although curtain wall panels had been used since the early 1950s in projects like Saarinen’s G.M. Technical Center, the First Federal Building represents an early use of the porcelain enamel variety in Philadelphia and in particular Northeast Philadelphia. Due to their modular nature, the panels were well suited to a wide range of building types, and Thalheimer & Weitz continued to use Calcore panels in a number of large projects, including the Benjamin Franklin High School at 500 N. Broad Street in Philadelphia (1958; extant) as well as the Wernersville State Hospital in Berks County, Pennsylvania (1958; extant but altered). The panels, as well as the stainless steel mullions into which they were set, also proved useful when expansion was necessary, allowing a seamless fourth floor addition at First Federal Savings in 1962.

---

<sup>22</sup> Baumol, 177.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

Numerous other Philadelphia architects employed porcelain enamel curtain walls, often those from Calcore, in a wide range of commercial, educational and institutional projects during the late 1950s and 1960s. One of the most prominent was the Sheraton Hotel, designed by Perry, Shaw, Hepburn & Dean, built at 17<sup>th</sup> Street and JFK Boulevard in Center City Philadelphia as part of the Penn Center Development in 1957 (the building was demolished in the 1980s). But perhaps most comparable to First Federal Savings in Philadelphia is the Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Association, designed by architect Philip Mastrin and built at the southeast corner of South 13<sup>th</sup> and Sansom Streets in Center City in 1960 (**Figure 22**). Like First Federal, the Cayuga Federal Savings building features a transparent, slightly recessed ground floor below a curtain wall façade made up of porcelain enamel panels and stainless steel mullions. Aside from the prominent stainless steel fins that screen the corner of the building on the second through fourth floors, the building is highly similar in form and function and represents the growing popularity of curtain wall panel systems in Philadelphia during the mid-century period.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Baumoel, Jeffrey L. "A Study of Postwar Architecture in Center City, Philadelphia." MS thesis. University of Pennsylvania, 1992.

Binzen, Peter. "A Place to Live: The Jewish Builders of Northeast Philadelphia." In *Philadelphia Jewish Life, 1940-2000*, edited by Murray Friedman. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. *1967 Regional Projections for the Delaware Valley*. Philadelphia, 1967.

Milgram, Grace Smelo. "The City Expands. A study of the Conversion of Land from Rural to Urban Use, Philadelphia, 1945-1962." PhD diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1967.

Smalarz, Matthew. "Northeast Philadelphia." In *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*.  
<https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/northeast-philadelphia-essay/>. Accessed 11/8/18.

### Newspapers\*:

*Jewish Exponent*

*Philadelphia Inquirer*

\*see footnotes for specific citations

### **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):** \_\_\_\_\_



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** ~0.4 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 40.051697 Longitude: -75.066448

2. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_

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

The boundary of the property is shown as a dotted line on the accompanying map entitled "First Federal Savings : Site Plan with National Register Boundary."

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel on which the present building is situated. No extant historically associated resources have been excluded.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

### Form Prepared By

name/title: Kevin McMahon, Associate  
organization: Powers & Company, Inc.  
street & number: 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1717  
city or town: Philadelphia state: PA zip code: 19107  
e-mail: kevin@powersco.net  
telephone: (215) 636-0192  
date: November 9, 2018

---

### 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.)

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
 Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
 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: The First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

City or Vicinity: Philadelphia

County: Philadelphia State: PA

Photographer: Robert Powers

Date Photographed: April 25, 2018

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

<i>Photograph #</i>	<i>Description of Photograph</i>
1.	South elevation, view north
2.	Southeast elevation, view northwest
3.	Entrance vestibule on southeast elevation, view northwest
4.	Southeast and northeast elevations, view southwest
5.	Northeast elevation, view southwest
6.	Northeast and north elevations, view south
7.	North elevation, view south
8.	North and west elevations, view southeast
9.	West and south elevations, view northeast
10.	Interior, first floor, banking hall, view northwest
11.	Interior, first floor, banking hall, view southeast
12.	Interior, first floor, banking hall, view east
13.	Interior, first floor, office entrance and elevator lobby, view south
14.	Interior, first floor, commercial space, view north
15.	Interior, first floor, commercial space, view south
16.	Interior, first floor, commercial space, view south
17.	Interior, first floor, commercial space, view north
18.	Interior, second floor, offices, view southeast
19.	Interior, second floor, offices, view southwest

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Philadelphia County, PA

Name of Property

County and State

20.	Interior, second floor, corridor, view west
21.	Interior, second floor, offices, view northeast
22.	Interior, second floor, stair, view east
23.	Interior, second floor, offices, view south
24.	Interior, second floor, offices, view north
25.	Interior, second floor, stair, view north
26.	Interior, third floor, offices, view southeast
27.	Interior, third floor, offices, view south
28.	Interior, third floor, offices, view north
29.	Interior, third floor, offices, view northwest
30.	Interior, third floor, offices, view southwest
31.	Interior, fourth floor, offices, view southeast
32.	Interior, fourth floor, offices, view east
33.	Interior, fourth floor, offices, view north
34.	Interior, fourth floor, corridor, view west
35.	Interior, fourth floor, offices, view south

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

## Index of Figures

<i>Figure #</i>	<i>Description of Figure</i>
1.	USGS Map Excerpt – Frankford Quadrangle – Pennsylvania (1997)
2.	Site Plan with Proposed National Register Boundary and Photo Key
3.	First and Second Floor Plans with Photo Key
4.	Third and Fourth Floor Plans with Photo Key
5.	G.W. Bromley and Co. Atlas, 1910
6.	Sanborn Map, 1927
7.	Sanborn Map, 1950
8.	Site Plan by Thalheimer & Weitz, 1955
9.	Rendering by Thalheimer & Weitz, 1956
10.	View of the south elevation and corner, Lawrence Williams, 1957
11.	View of the south elevation, Jacob Stelman, 1958
12.	View of the corner, Jacob Stelman, 1958
13.	Calcore Advertisement in Progressive Architecture, June 1957
14.	Aerial View of Central Northeast Philadelphia, 1959
15.	Aerial View of Central Northeast Philadelphia, 1965
16.	Advertisement, First Federal Savings, 1956
17.	Advertisement, First Federal Savings, 1956
18.	View of the Lit Brothers Store at Cottman and Castor, Jacob Stelman, 1955
19.	View of Gimbel's Dept. Store in the Roosevelt Mall, Jack Timney, 1961
20.	Detail of the façade of Lever House, New York City.
21.	General Motors Technical Center, Warren, MI.
22.	Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Association, Philadelphia, PA.

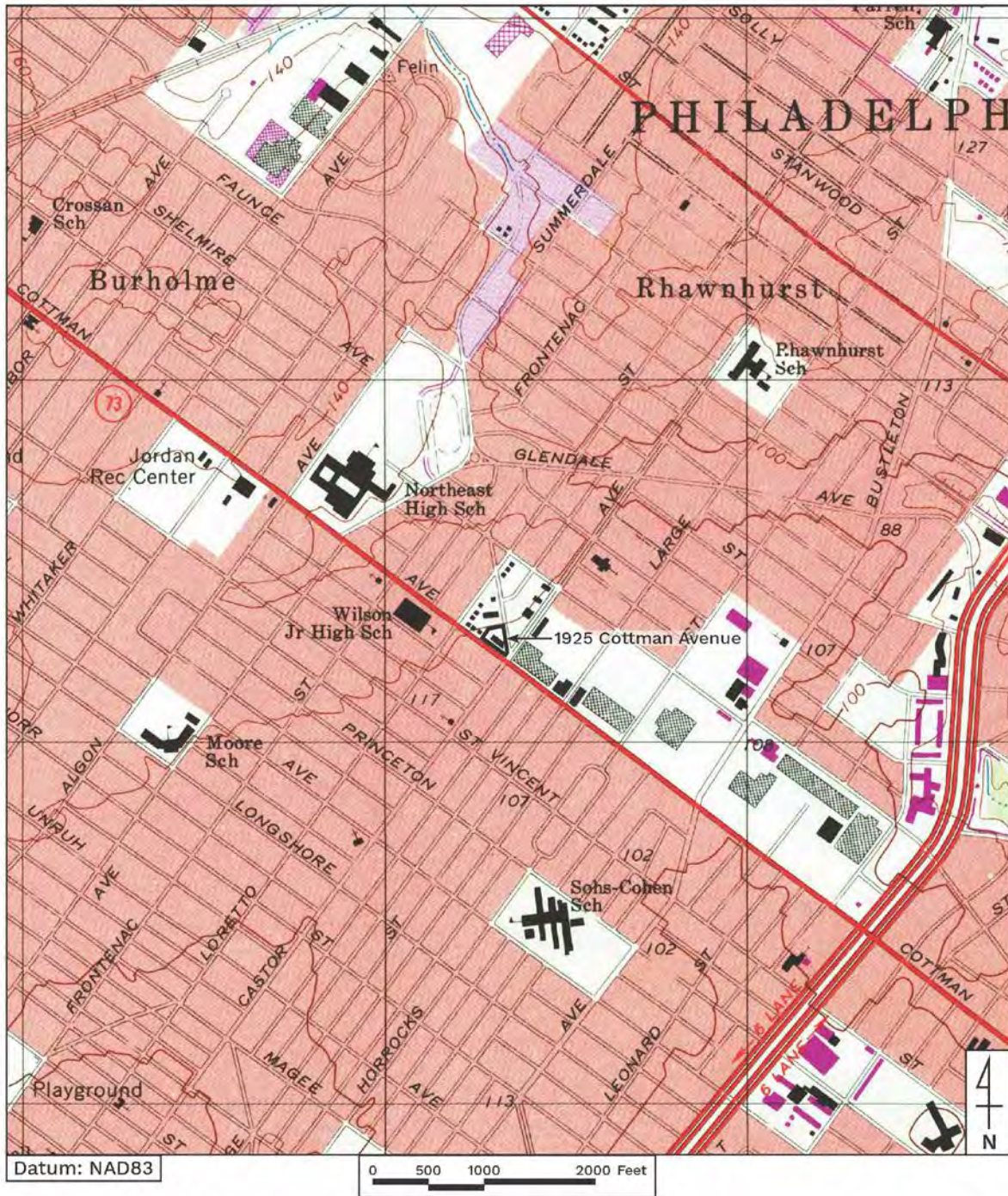
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to 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.



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



USGS Map Excerpt - Frankford Quadrangle - Pennsylvania (1997)  
First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, NE Branch  
1925 Cottman Avenue  
Philadelphia County, PA

Lat. Long.  
40.051697 -75.066448

Figure 1 – USGS Map.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

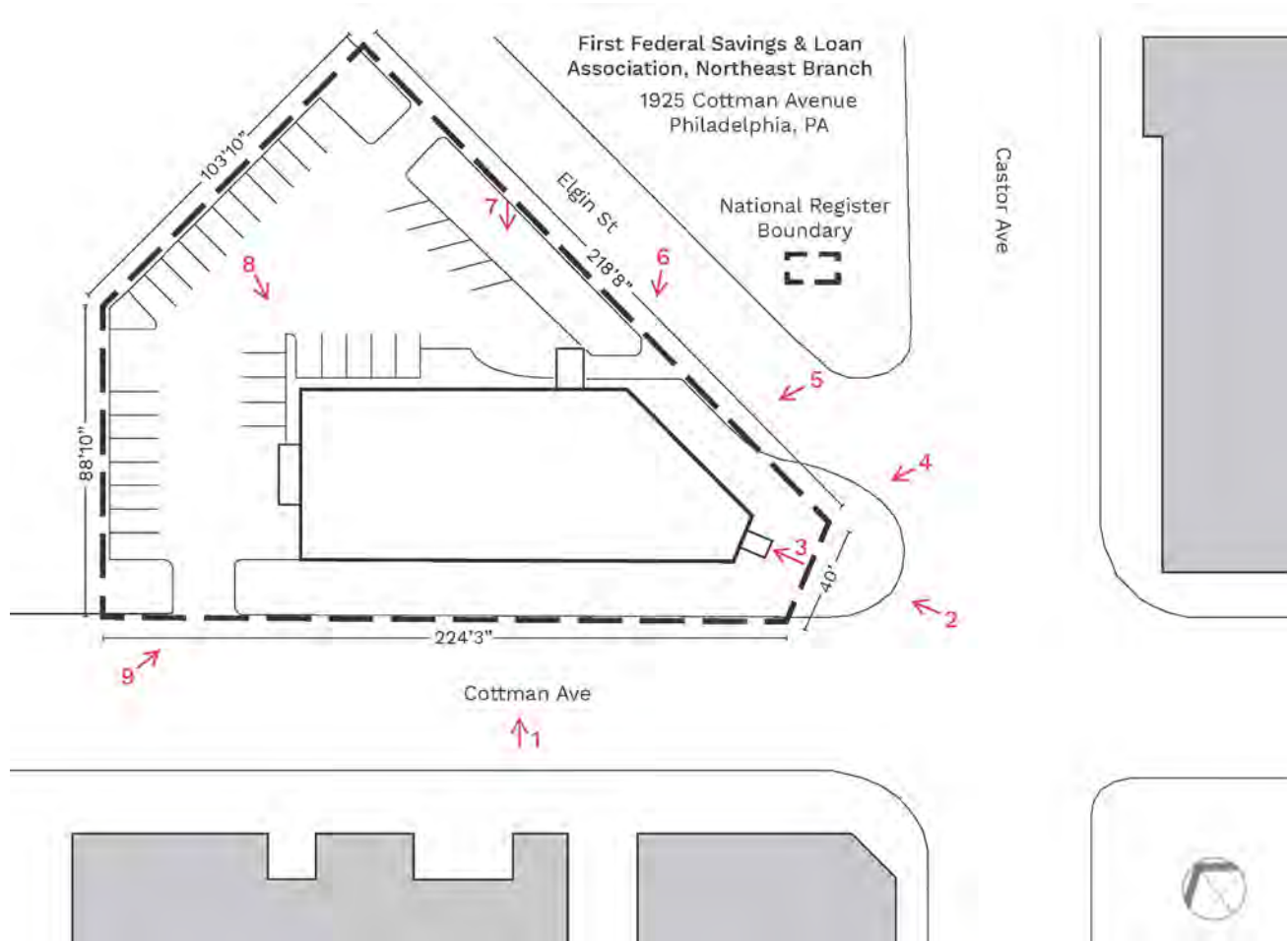
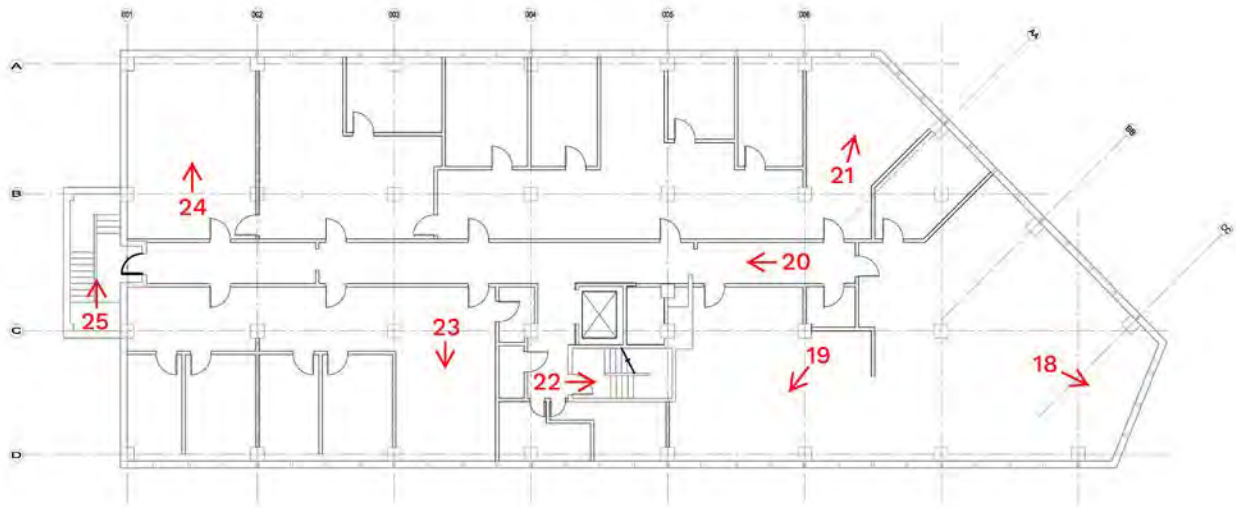


Figure 2 – Site Plan with Proposed National Register Boundary.

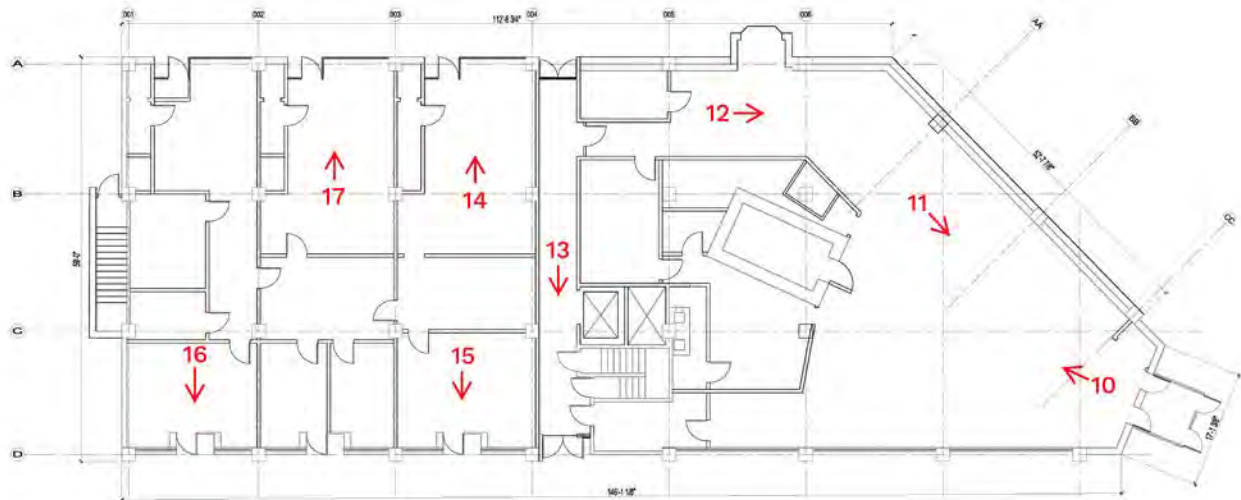


First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



3 EXISTING 2ND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

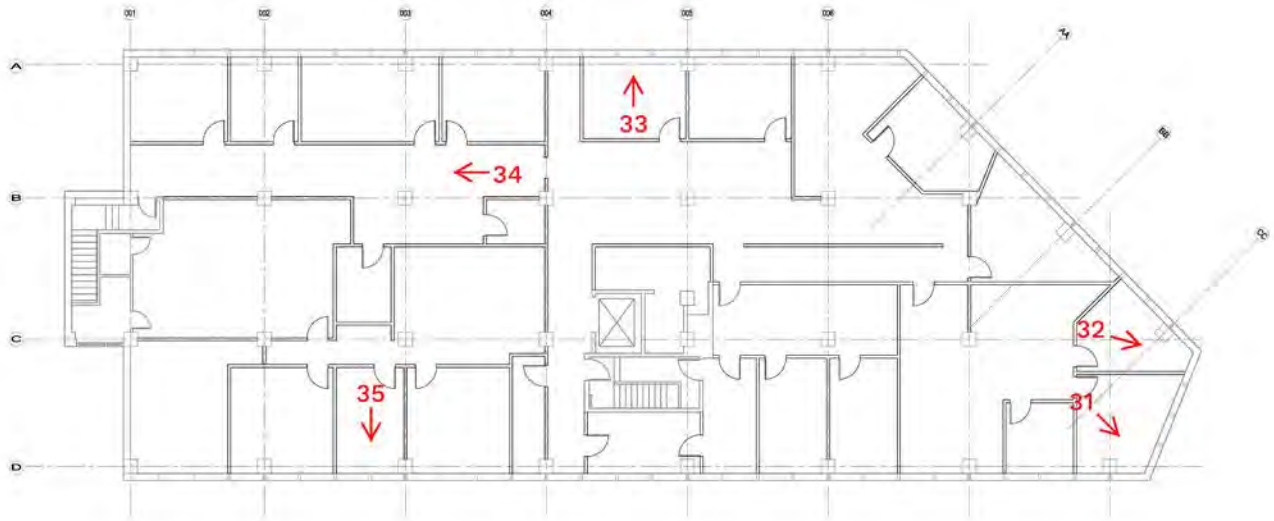


2 EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

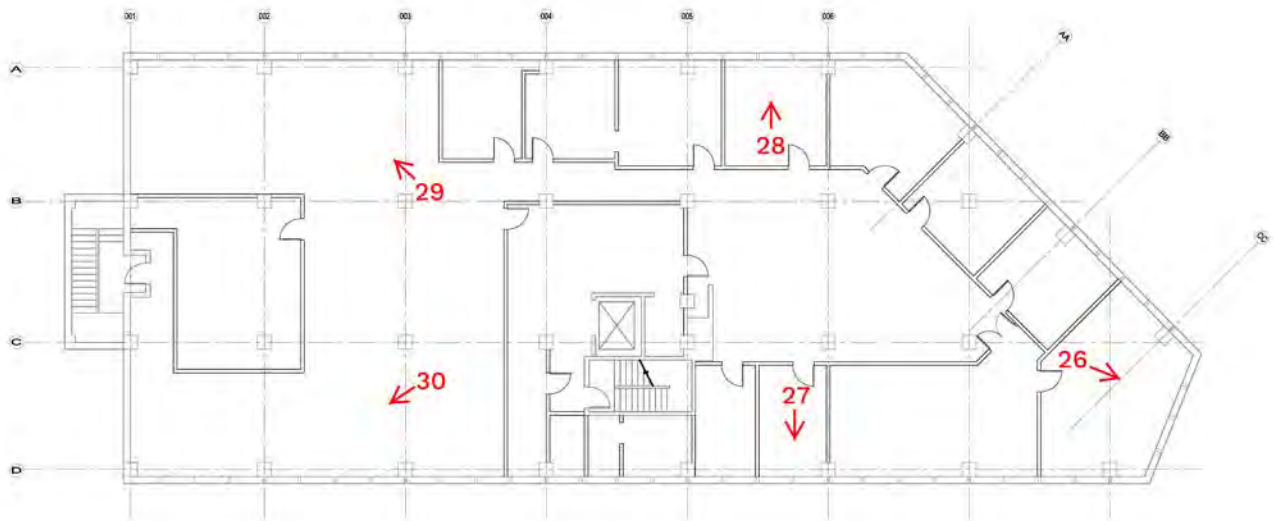
Figure 3 – First and Second Floor Plans with Photo Key.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



5 EXISTING 4TH FLOOR PLAN  
AD1.10 SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



4 EXISTING 3RD FLOOR PLAN  
AD1.10 SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

**Figure 4 – Third and Fourth Floor Plans with Photo Key**

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



Figure 5 – G.W. Bromley and Co. Atlas, 1910. The present site is outlined in red.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

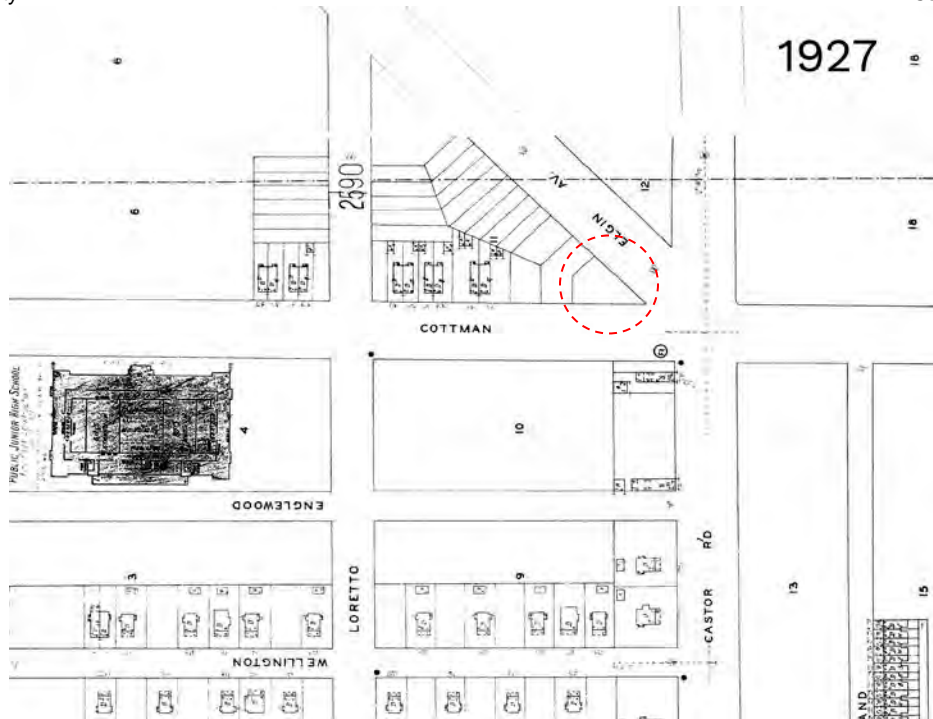


Figure 6 – Sanborn Map, 1927. The present site is circled in red.

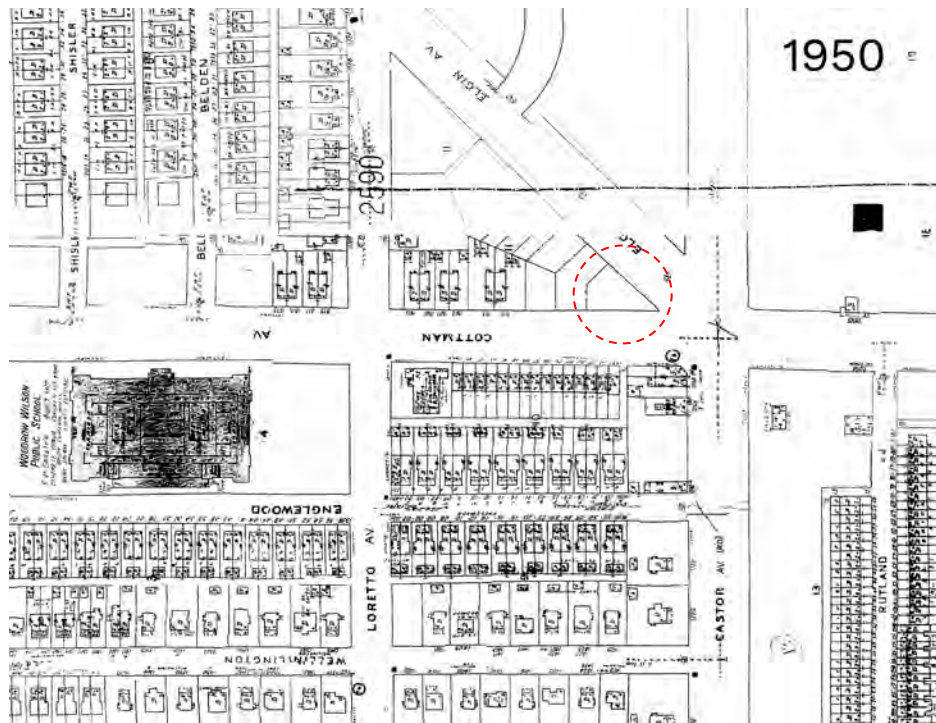


Figure 7 – Sanborn Map, 1950. The present site is circled in red.



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

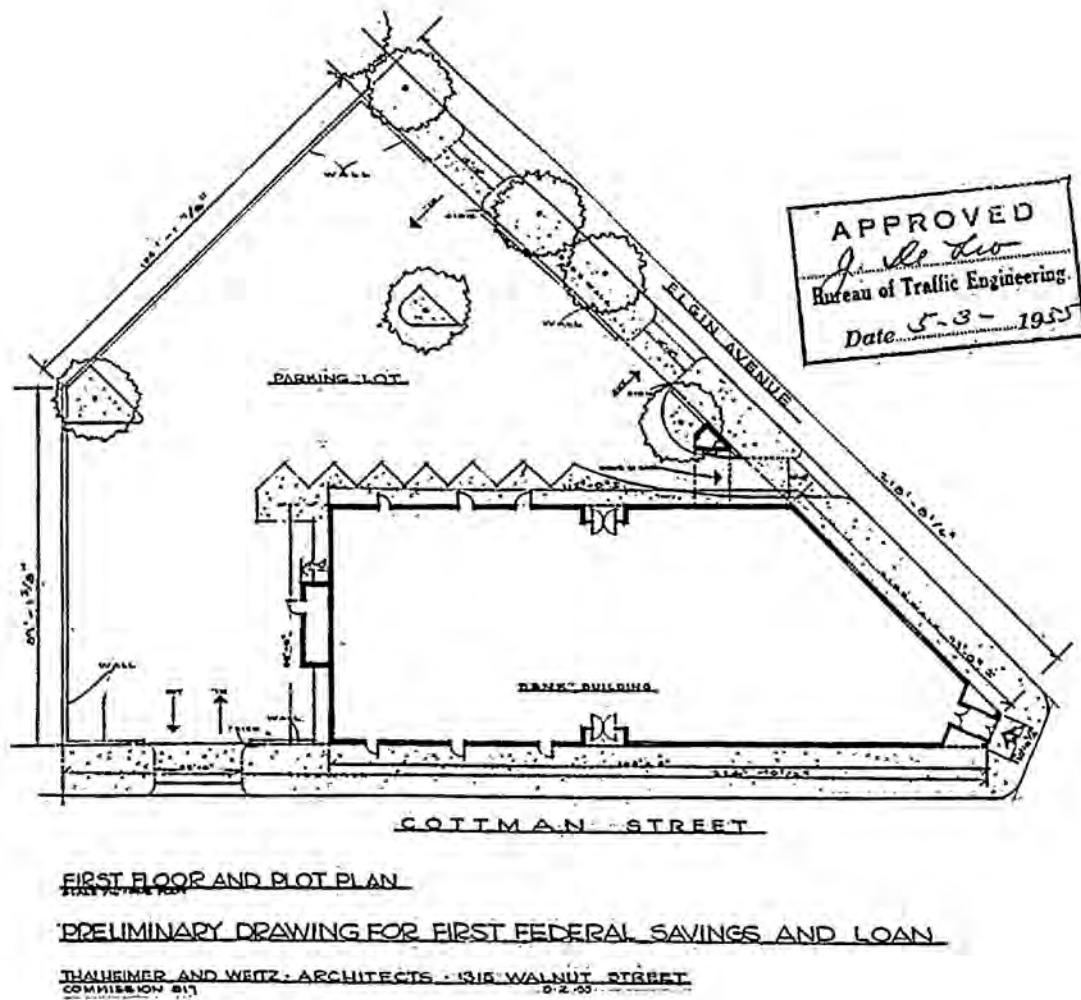


Figure 8 – Schematic Site Plan by Thalheimer & Weitz, 1955.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



**Figure 9** – Rendering by Thalheimer & Weitz, 1956 (Temple University Libraries).



**Figure 10** – View of the south elevation and corner, Lawrence Williams, 1957.  
(From *Year Book 1957, Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects*).



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



Figure 11 – View of the south elevation, Jacob Stelman, 1958 (Athenaeum of Philadelphia).



Figure 12 – View of the corner, Jacob Stelman, 1958 (Athenaeum of Philadelphia).

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



**CONSIDERING  
ARCHITECTURAL  
PORCELAIN?**

The First Federal Savings and Loan Association, Northeast office, Philadelphia, Pa. has used "Calcore" panels, porcelain enameled in light blue by Caloric Appliance Corporation. Architect: Thalheimer & Weitz. General contractor: Golden Construction Co., Inc.

**CALL ON *Caloric* WITH CONFIDENCE!**

You can depend on Caloric. Our know-how in the metal fabricating and porcelain enameling business is based on more than 65 years of experience.

With modern methods and recently-expanded facilities, we can now provide attractive, colorful curtain walls to your exact specifications in any quantity.

In our Topton, Pennsylvania plant we have well over 500,000 square feet of manufacturing space . . . and more than 1000 employees. Our Architectural Porcelain Division sells through distributors or directly to other curtain wall manufacturers. For complete information, write, wire or phone.

**ARCHITECTURAL PORCELAIN DIVISION  
CALORIC APPLIANCE CORPORATION  
12 South 12th St., Phila. 7, Pa. MArket 7-4180**

Figure 13 – Caloric advertisement in the June 1957 issue of *Progressive Architecture*.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



**Figure 14** – Aerial View of part of Central Northeast Philadelphia, 1959. The present site is circled.



**Figure 15** – Aerial View of part of Central Northeast Philadelphia, 1965. The present site is circled.

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State

**FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS**  
& LOAN ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA

PENNSYLVANIA'S **1<sup>ST</sup>** AND HOME MORTGAGES  
FOR INSURED SAVINGS & OLDEST FEDERAL

<b>SOUTH PHILADELPHIA</b> 1332 POINT BREEZE AVE. at 21st and Reed Streets FU 9-8300	<b>GREATER NORTHEAST</b> 2226 COTTMAN AVE. 2 blocks East of Castor PI 2-2200
--	---

**ASSETS: \$24,689,756.79**  
**RESERVES: \$1,863,338.88**

EACH MEMBER'S ACCOUNT AUTOMATICALLY INSURED TO \$10,000

Figure 16 – Advertisement, First Federal Savings, 1956, from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

**GREATER NORTHEAST RESIDENTS**  
... your corner of convenience

Castor & Cottman Ave.

**FIRST FEDERAL**  
SAVINGS & LOAN ASSN. OF PHILA.

<b>ASSETS</b> \$24,765,301.51	<b>RESERVES</b> \$2,146,140.46
----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

Each member account automatically insured to \$10,000. Legal for trust funds

2 Convenient Offices to Serve You

<b>GREATER NORTHEAST</b> Castor & Cottman Ave. PI 2-2200	<b>SOUTH PHILADELPHIA</b> 1332 Pt. Breeze Ave. FU 9-8300
--	--

PENNSYLVANIA'S **1<sup>ST</sup>** AND HOME MORTGAGES  
FOR INSURED SAVINGS & OLDEST FEDERAL

SAMUEL A. GREEN, President

Figure 17 – Advertisement, First Federal Savings, 1957, from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.



First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



**Figure 18** – View of the Lit Brothers Store at Cottman and Castor, Jacob Stelman, 1955 (Athaenaeum of Philadelphia).



**Figure 19** – View of Gimbel's Dept. Store in the Roosevelt Mall, Jack Tinney, 1961. (Temple University Libraries).

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



**Figure 20** – Detail of the façade of Lever House, New York City (Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, 1952).



**Figure 21** – General Motors Technical Center, Warren, MI (Eero Saarinen, 1956).

First Federal Savings & Loan Assoc. of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch  
Name of Property

Philadelphia County, PA  
County and State



Figure 22 – Cayuga Federal Savings & Loan Building, Philadelphia, PA (Philip Mastrin, 1960).





1921

NO PARKING







A modern, multi-story office building with a glass and metal facade. The building features a prominent corner section with a grey facade. The upper floors are primarily glass, reflecting the sky. The ground floor has large glass windows and a central entrance with a glass door. The building is situated at a street intersection.

A traffic light showing a green light, indicating that traffic has the right of way to proceed.

A traffic light showing a green light, indicating that traffic has the right of way to proceed.

NO TURN ON RED

Castor Av

CASTOR AV

NO TURN ON RED

Firestone  
COMPLETE AUTO CARE

BRIDGESTONE

DO NOT ENTER

PRETZEL FACTORY

A white van with 'FIRESTONE' branding on the side, including the phone number '713-947-7183'. The van is driving on the street.





FIRST  
BANK



TONE  
AUTO CARE

TONE





NO TURN ON RED

Castor Av

CASTOR AV

73

NO TURN ON RED

DO NOT ENTER

Firestone COMPLETE AUTO C

BRIDGESTONE

Firestone





Castor Av

CASTOR AV

FedEx





NO PARKING  
2 HOUR  
PERMITS ONLY

NO STOPPING







3172 597

NO PARKING  
ANY TIME  
2 HOUR  
MAY 15 2014

LEWALIN  
1000  
1000



Castor  
Place  
TJ-MAXX  
Curlington







NO PARKING  
ANYTIME

Car  
PI  
WORTH  
7-4  
CITIZEN

KRK-71

















1301

IN CASE OF FIRE  
DO NOT USE ELEVATOR  
FOR ESCAPE

EXIT

1301









FedEx  
PART NUMBER 139382F20  
FedEx  
PART NUMBER 149011F20

[Pinned document with a black binder clip]





























































EXIT

























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia

Date Received: 2/19/2019      Date of Pending List: 3/7/2019      Date of 16th Day: 3/22/2019      Date of 45th Day: 4/5/2019      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100003595

Nominator: Other Agency, SHPO

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CLG  |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      4/5/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary AOS: Commerce and Architecture; POS: 1957-1970; LOS: local.  
Comments: A PDIL 36 CFR 67 has been requested.

Recommendation/ Criteria NR Criteria: A & C.

Reviewer Lisa Deline      Discipline Historian

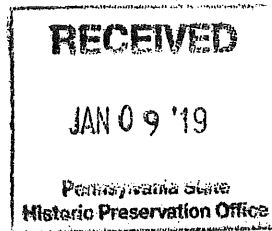
Telephone (202)354-2239      Date 4/5/19

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

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



# CITY OF PHILADELPHIA



PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION

1515 Arch Street, 13th Floor  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102  
Tel: 215.686.7660

Robert Thomas, AIA  
Chair

Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

4 January 2019

Elizabeth Rairigh  
Division Chief, Preservation Services  
PA State Historic Preservation Office  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: 1907-25 Cottman Ave., First Federal & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch

Dear Ms. Rairigh:

I am writing in response to your request that the Philadelphia Historical Commission provide its official Certified Local Government recommendation on the nomination proposing to add the First Federal & Loan Association of Philadelphia, 1907-25 Cottman Avenue in Philadelphia, to the National Register of Historic Places. At its monthly public meeting on 14 December 2018, the Philadelphia Historical Commission reviewed and discussed the nomination and accepted public testimony.

The Commission agreed that the building satisfies Criterion A in the Area of Commerce, as one of the most prominent residential mortgage lenders in the area, particularly within the Jewish community of Oxford Circle, and as such, the branch played a pivotal role in the development of Northeast Philadelphia during the 1950s and 60s; and under Criterion C in the Area of Architecture, as a notable work in the International Style. The Commission supported the National Register nomination for 1907-25 Cottman Avenue.

Thank you for providing the Philadelphia Historical Commission with the opportunity to comment on this amendment.

Yours truly,

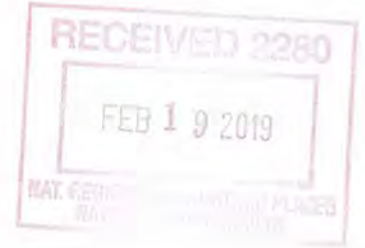
Jonathan E. Farnham, Ph.D.  
Executive Director





Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION



February 13, 2019

Joy Beasley, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service, US Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington DC 20240

Re: NR nomination discs

Dear Ms. Beasley:

The following nomination form is being submitted electronically per the "Guidance on How to Submit a Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places on Disk Summary (5/06/2013)":

- First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Philadelphia, Northeast Branch; Philadelphia County

The enclosed discs contain the true and correct copies of the nomination listed above. The proposed actions are for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have questions regarding the nominations please contact David Maher at 717-783-9918.

Sincerely,

David Maher  
National Register section  
Preservation Services