

From: [David Hill](#)
To: [dencc - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 123 Speer Boulevard Landmark Designation - Written Testimony
Date: Friday, May 7, 2021 1:53:53 PM

I'm writing to urge the Denver City Council to approve landmark designation for the building at 123 Speer Boulevard.

I'm a Denver writer who specializes in architecture. I've written for Architectural Record, Architect, Preservation, Modern in Denver, and other publications.

I believe that 123 Speer is architecturally important and a valued piece of Denver's history.

Designed in the Brutalist style by Fulmer & Bowers, a New Jersey architecture firm, 123 Speer has a monumental quality that sets it apart from many office buildings of the era. The main tower, an eight-sided volume that cantilevers off a narrower core, is both muscular and delicate. (There's also a five-story stair tower and a two-story windowless studio.) A Denver Post article from May 4, 1969, noted that the building "is occupied by a spacious lobby of unusual design and décor," with an exterior composed of "crushed Colorado Red Rock."

Although the product of an out-of-town firm, 123 Speer is no cookie-cutter building. Architect Raymond Bowers designed it, as he told Broadcasting magazine in 1969, as a "local kind of building, to fill in with the Rocky Mountains in both shape and color." In its design and location, the office tower was meant to make a bold statement, and it does.

More than 50 years after it was constructed, 123 Speer remains virtually unchanged. It's a superb example of Brutalist architecture, a popular type of Modernism that fell out of favor but in recent years has seen a revival. Dozens of Instagram sites lovingly document Brutalist buildings around the world. There are Brutalist maps of London, Paris, Boston, and other cities. Architect Brad Cloepfil, principal of Allied Works Architecture, revived the style for his design of the Clyfford Still Museum, one of Denver's most celebrated buildings of the last 10 years. (Brutalism, by the way, has nothing to do with brutality. The term derives from *béton brut*, French for "raw concrete.")

Some, including Denver Post columnist Vincent Carroll, have called 123 Speer an "eyesore." Carroll is entitled to his opinion, of course, and Brutalist architecture has long been divisive. But consider this: When the Denver Art Museum's tower, designed by Italian architect Gio Ponti, opened in 1966, the New York Times pointed out that "some unkind souls" had blasted the building as "an Italian castle wrapped in aluminum foil" and "a campy set for a production of Hamlet." San Francisco Chronicle architecture critic Allan Temko, zeroing in on the museum's tile façade, called it the "largest reversible lavatory in the world."

And yet, today the Denver Art Museum's Ponti building is considered one of the city's architectural gems. Following a \$150 million renovation and expansion, it will reopen to the public in October.

Denver's Community Planning and Development office determined that 123 Speer has the potential for historic-landmark designation. In a report, city staff called the building a "rare example" of Brutalist architecture in Denver, made even more distinctive by its use of locally sourced red aggregate, which "makes an aesthetic statement ... reflecting the hues of the front range landscape." Further, the report noted that 123 Speer "retains a high degree of integrity" in design, materials, and workmanship.

I agree. Please vote yes to designate 123 Speer a Denver landmark.

Thank you.

—David Hill

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Denver, CO 80206
(303) 733-9293

From: [rosemary.stoffel](#)
To: [dencc - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Denver7 landmark designation
Date: Thursday, May 6, 2021 12:00:50 PM
Attachments: [Ch. 7 building CCletter-2.docx](#)

May 6, 2021

Dear City Council members,

I urge you to vote in favor of historic landmark designation for the Denver7 building at 123 E. Speer Blvd.

This highly visible building has remained a familiar touchstone in our rapidly changing city. It is impossible to pass near the prominent location at Speer and Lincoln and not see it. Other professionals have described the architectural merits of the building in detail, and I urge you to not dismiss this Brutalist structure as irrelevant because you personally don't like it. As I learned more about this style as a lay person, I better understood why it is important. I challenge you to stand in front of this building and take note of how this style was adapted to be specific to Denver by the use of native Colorado red rock. Notice how it was deliberately situated on the site, too. No other city has anything exactly like it.

Please don't dismiss ideas about how the tower could be kept intact and redevelopment allowed on the remainder of the site. Look at other letters you've received and see some very reasonable and creative ideas. The result could be uniquely Denver, acknowledging the past while allowing new uses and a potentially spectacular "new" building.

This application has come before you because it met (and exceeded) the criteria necessary for landmark designation. Very few buildings meet this high bar. You have heard and read arguments in favor and against the application from the citizen applicants and their supporters, from the well-funded Scripps Media group, and in the media. Please consider these pros and cons fairly and don't allow Denver to lose another familiar, distinctive, and historically important building. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Stoffel
2275 S. Monroe St.
Denver, CO 80210
303-903-0613

From: [Kathy Corbett](#)
To: [Landmark - Community Planning and Development](#)
Cc: [dencc - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of support for 123 E. Speer Boulevard
Date: Friday, March 5, 2021 11:03:13 AM
Attachments: [123 E Speer Blvd Support letter KCorbett.pdf](#)

Please find attached my letter of support for this very important landmark designation effort.

All best,

Kathleen Corbett

Corbett AHS, Inc.
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From: carlamcconnell@comcast.net
To: [denc - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter to Council re: 123 E Speer Blvd Landmark designation issue
Date: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 6:00:10 PM
Attachments: [123 E Speer, Ch 7, landmark designation issue.docx](#)

Please find attached my comments concerning Landmark designation for 123 E Speer Blvd, scheduled for Council hearing on May 10, 2021.

Thank you.

Carla McConnell
662 Ulster Way
Denver, 80230

From: [Autobee, Nicholas](#)
To: [dencc - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Preserve Denver 7 Building
Date: Monday, May 10, 2021 2:45:46 PM

Council,

I am writing in support of the preservation of the Denver 7 News building, by a vote to landmark the building. Aside from a loss of architectural significance, demolition of this building is not a positive action toward sustainability. It will be a huge waste of materials and the carbon footprint it took to construct. There's plenty of opportunity for adaptive reuse of the building for housing and business. Denver's historic places are what make it unique and attractive to live in and visit. We don't need to destroy them to build housing and business. We should be focused on upzoning and reducing car infrastructure to do that.

Nick Autobee