

BY AUTHORITY

ORDINANCE NO. _____
SERIES OF 2019

COUNCIL BILL NO. CB18-1539
COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:
Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure

ABILL

For an ordinance designating 5001 Packing House Road, the Armour & Company Administration Building, as a structure for preservation.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 30-4, Denver Revised Municipal Code, the Landmark Preservation Commission has transmitted to the Council a proposed designation of a structure for preservation; and

WHEREAS, based upon evidence received by the Landmark Preservation Commission at a hearing on December 18, 2018, the staff report, and evidence received at the hearing before City Council on February 11 2019, the structure at 5001 Packing House Road meets the criteria for designation as a structure for preservation as set out in Section 30-3, Denver Revised Municipal Code, as amended, by:

(1) History.

a. Having direct association with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;

The Armour & Company Administration Building is directly associated with the economic development in Denver and Colorado, and specifically with the growth and decline of meat processing facilities at the Denver Union Stock Yards (DUSY). The building represents the significant investment and development of local and national meatpacking companies and slaughter houses that once dominated the stockyards. The building is the last extant building of the Armour & Company meatpacking plant on this location. Armour and the other major meatpackers boosted Denver up to the level of other meatpacking centers such as Omaha, Kansas City, St. Joseph, and Sioux City, and created the nation's largest sheep market and the primary hog processing and distributing facility west of the Mississippi at the DUSY.

Armour's investment in the Denver market was matched by Swift and Cudahy, which also operated large meat packing facilities at the yards, in addition to numerous smaller companies. Meatpackers controlled the stockyards, ranches, cattle, and transportation of meat products in Denver and similar markets for decades and wielded enormous influence on Denver and Colorado's economic vitality in

1 this area of the city. The Armour & Company Administration Building is one of the last remaining
2 buildings that represents this important component of Denver’s history.

3 *c. Having a direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had*
4 *influence on society;*

5 The property at 5001 Packing House Road is directly associated with the skilled and semi-skilled
6 laborers who worked at the meatpacking plant, many of whom lived nearby in the Elyria, Swansea, and
7 Globeville neighborhoods. This Armour & Company Administration Building housed the administration
8 headquarters, where the white-collar employees worked and controlled the day-to-day activities of the
9 plant. The majority of the blue-collar Armour employees were immigrants from Russian, Slavic, and
10 other Eastern European countries, in addition to numerous other ethnic groups and native-born citizens.
11 While it is well-known that slaughter house employees worked long hours for menial pay, and in
12 generally appalling conditions, meatpacking still provided the greatest number of stable jobs for nearby
13 residents until the 1960s, when the large meatpacking plants on Packing House Drive closed. As such,
14 the Armour meatpacking plant had a profound impact on scores of employees who supported their
15 families by working at the plant and is one of the few remaining buildings that reflect that employment
16 center for the nearby residents.

17
18 The property is also significant for its association with the Gebhard family and the Colorado Packing
19 and Provision Company (CPPC). Henry Gebhard established the CPPC at this location in 1890 and
20 passed the responsibilities of the business to his son Charles Gebhard, who ran the plant as manager
21 until his untimely death at the age of 43 in 1919. Henry Gebhard helped establish the DUSY in 1881
22 and served on the executive board of the Western Stock Show Association (WSSA), and helped
23 produce the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) by serving on numerous committees from 1906
24 until his death in 1922. He was elected Vice President of the WSSA board from 1913 to 1922, serving
25 under President Elias Ammons. After Armour & Company purchased the CPPC, the Gebhards
26 continued to run the plant as local partners, and the name CPPC was displayed prominently over the
27 entrance to the Armour & Company Administration Building when it was constructed in 1917.

28 (2) Architecture.

29 *a. Embodying distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type;*

30 The 1917 Armour & Company Administration Building is one of Denver’s few intact examples of Neo-
31 Classical style architecture outside of downtown Denver. The Neo-Classical style is evident in the
32 building’s cleanly delineated corbelled cornices, simple geometric designs on the brick walls, and
33 regular, symmetrical form and fenestration. Simplified and elegant, these elements can be

1 interpreted as an expression of the masculine aesthetic that characterized the American West and
2 the ranching culture at the DUSY.

3 (3) Geography.

4 *b. Promoting understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of*
5 *distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;*

6 The Armour & Company Administration Building is a unique and distinctive remnant of the
7 meatpacking history at the DUSY and one of the few buildings left that can educate people about
8 the former prominence of meatpacking and slaughter houses in this part of Denver. All but a few
9 buildings that were part of the Swift and Armour plants were eventually demolished to make way for
10 parking lots. The office building is a distinctive and rare structure that can help people understand
11 the scale and significance of the stockyards and meatpacking plants to Denver and Colorado's
12 agricultural economy.

13 *c. Making a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character;*

14 The Armour & Company Administration Building is representative of the contribution that the
15 meatpacking industry had to Denver's character as a major hub of the livestock industry and host to
16 the annual National Western Stock Show. This property is directly associated with the CPPC's and
17 Armour's development of the meatpacking industry at the DUSY, which supported ranching and
18 livestock industries in Colorado and other nearby states that shipped animals to Denver for
19 processing. In its historic location, the Armour & Company Administration Building is a distinctive
20 landmark within the stockyards, which has collectively defined the character of Denver as a major
21 livestock hub since the early 20th century.

22
23 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF**
24 **DENVER:**

25 **Section 1.** That based upon the analysis referenced above, and the evidence received at the
26 public hearings, certain property herein called the Armour & Company Administrative Building at 5001
27 Packing House Road, and legally described as follows, together with all improvements situated and
28 located thereon, be and the same is hereby designated as a structure for preservation:

29 A parcel of land lying in the southwest quarter of Section 14, Township 3 south,
30 Range 68 west of the 6th P.M., City and County of Denver, State of Colorado
31 described as follows:

32 Commencing at the Center Quarter Corner of said section 14, whence the South
33 Quarter Corner of said section 14 lies S 00° 20' 34" W 2657.09 feet, with all bearings

1 herein being relative thereto, thence S 25° 13' 08" W 1909.86 feet to the Point of
2 Beginning.

3 Thence S 34° 40' W 117.5 feet, along a line 20 feet from and parallel with the rear or
4 northwesterly side of the Armour Admin building;

5 Thence S 55° 20' E 125.5 feet, along a line 8 feet from and parallel with the
6 southwesterly side of the Armour Admin building;

7 Thence N 34° 40' E 117.5 feet, along a line 50 feet from and parallel with the front or
8 southeasterly side of the Armour Admin building;

9 Thence N 55° 20' W 125.5 feet, along a line 20 feet from and parallel with the
10 northeasterly side of the Armour Admin building, to the Point of Beginning;

11 Containing 14,746 square feet or 0.3385 acres.

12 **Section 2.** The effect of this designation may enhance the value of the property and of the
13 structure, but may delay or require denial of building permits found unacceptable by the Landmark
14 Preservation Commission under the criteria contained in the Design Guidelines for Historic Structures
15 and Districts and Section 30-6 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code.

16 **Section 3.** This ordinance shall be recorded among the records of the Clerk and Recorder of
17 the City and County of Denver.

18 COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE: January 15, 2019

19 MAYOR-COUNCIL DATE: January 22, 2019

20 PASSED BY THE COUNCIL: February 11, 2019 _____

21 _____ - PRESIDENT

22 APPROVED: _____ - MAYOR Feb 12, 2019

23 ATTEST: _____ - CLERK AND RECORDER,
24 EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE
25 CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

26 NOTICE PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY JOURNAL: _____;

27 PREPARED BY: Adam C. Hernandez, Assistant City Attorney DATE: January 31, 2019

28 Pursuant to section 13-12, D.R.M.C., this proposed ordinance has been reviewed by the office of
29 the City Attorney. We find no irregularity as to form, and have no legal objection to the proposed
30 ordinance. The proposed ordinance is not submitted to the City Council for approval pursuant to
31 §3.2.6 of the Charter.

32 Kristin M. Bronson, Denver City Attorney

33 BY: Kristin J. Crawford, Assistant City Attorney DATE: Jan 30, 2019