

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION  
DECEMBER 16, 2019  
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS  
HDP-2019-0677  
409 COLORADO STREET

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**PROPOSAL**

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Demolish a ca. 1923 former auto repair garage.

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**ARCHITECTURE**

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Two-story, rectangular-plan, board-formed concrete building with a shaped parapet; the storefront and second-story windows are modern.

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**RESEARCH**

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The building was constructed in 1923 as an automobile dealership and the Day and Night Garage, which operated here from around 1923 until the mid-1940s. Alongside the Day and Night Garage in the late 1930s was the Powell Auto Body Works. After the Day and Night Garage closed in the early 1940s, the space was used as an auto storage garage for a short period of time, and then after World War II, as the home of the Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company, a tobacco business, which stayed in business here along with the Standard Cigarette Service, a cigarette vending company, until the late 1960s. The building was vacant in the mid-1970s and then was the warehouse for the State Board of Insurance Liquidation Division through the 1990s. The Alamo Draft House, the first movie theater in Austin to serve food and show art movies, had its original location in this building in the late 1990s. The building has since been used as a cocktail lounge.

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

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The building was listed as a Priority 2 for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984).

Staff has evaluated this building for designation as a historic landmark and has determined that while the building may not rise to the level of an individual landmark, it is an integral part of the context of the Warehouse District, a branded destination in downtown Austin.

- a. **Architecture.** The building is composed of board-formed concrete that has been partially stuccoed and painted over; the storefront has been changed from the original probable garage openings to a modern metal-framed storefront, and the upstairs windows do not appear to be original to the building. However, the building is distinctive for its shaped parapet that is reminiscent of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, and was once a prominent business building form in downtown Austin. Staff believes that despite the changes to the building, the building has architectural significance.
- b. **Historical association.** The building was constructed as an auto garage and repair facility, and shared space with other auto-related industries in the early years of its existence. It was not until the 1940s that this building actually became a warehouse for the Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company, a use that continued at least through the mid-1990s. The building was also the first home of the Alamo Draft House,

a very successful Austin-based venture that revolutionized the movie-going experience for patrons. While none of the businesses that used this building qualify as individually significant, the use of the building as a garage and later warehouse indicates its significance to the business district in downtown Austin.

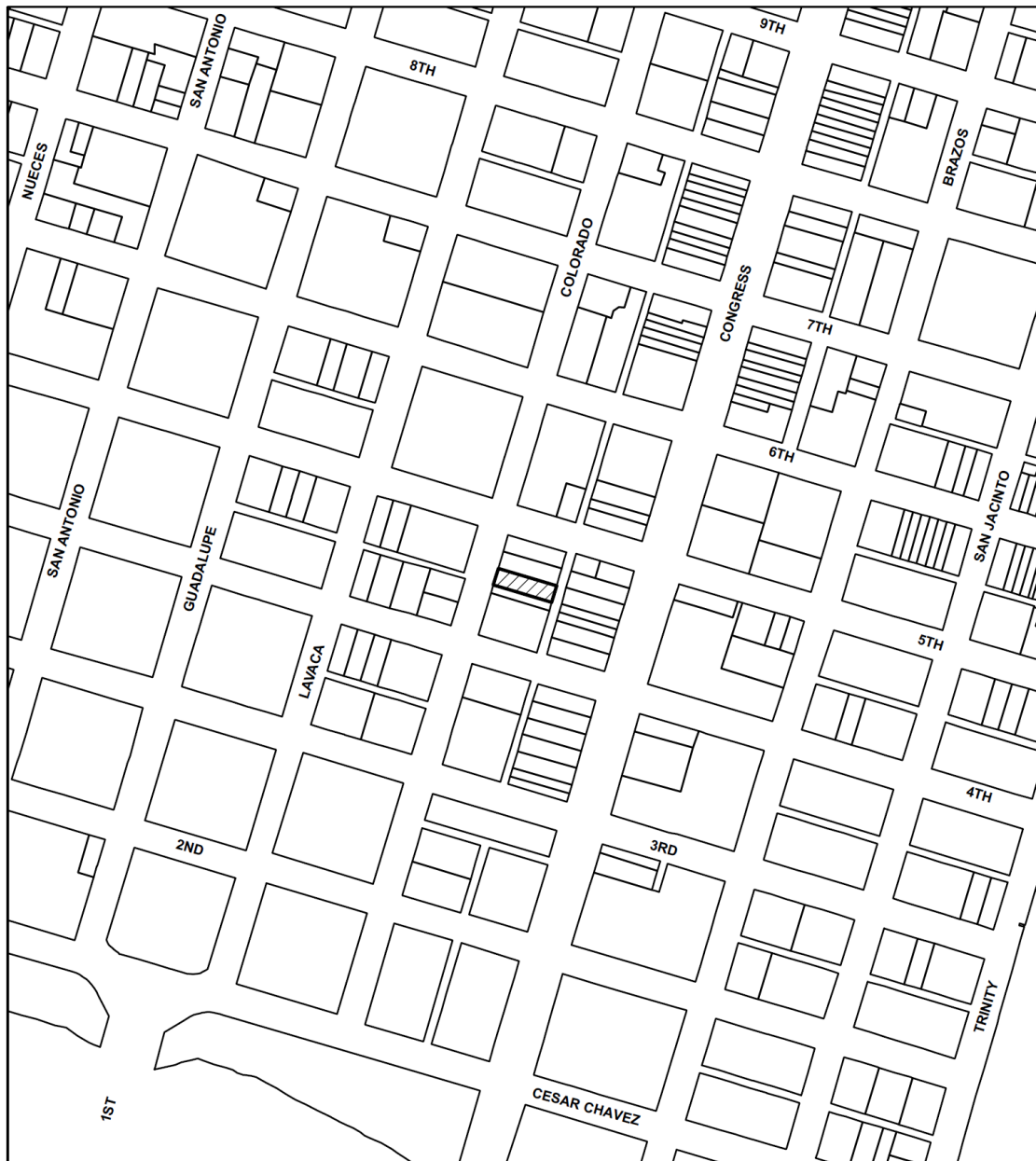
- c. **Archaeology.** The building was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d. **Community value.** The building is important to the context of the greater Warehouse District, but probably does not have community value in and of its own merit.
- e. **Landscape feature.** The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.




#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Encourage rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, including adaptation/incorporation of the façade into any new building proposed for the site. If the Commission votes to release the demolition permit for this building, then staff recommends the completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package, consisting of photographs of all elevations, a dimensioned sketch plan, and a narrative history, for archiving at the Austin History Center, and consideration of erecting a plaque detailing the history of the building and the Warehouse District on the site.

## LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 333'

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2019-0677

LOCATION: 409 COLORADO ST

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



409 Colorado Street  
ca. 1923



2008 photograph



2019 photograph





2019 photograph of the storefront and upper windows

## OCCUPANCY HISTORY 409 Colorado Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center  
By City Historic Preservation Office  
December, 2008

1992	State Board of Insurance warehouse
1987	State Board of Insurance Liquidation Division warehouse
1981	State Board of Insurance Liquidation Division warehouse
1977	State Board of Insurance Liquidation Division warehouse
1975	Vacant
1969	Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company Tobacco Ervin J. Safarik, manager
1969 (cont.)	Standard Cigarette Service

- Music and games, cigarette and candy vending machines "in business since 1937"  
Hollis W. Ponder, proprietor
- 1967      Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company  
Tobacco  
Ervin J. Safarik, manager
- Standard Cigarette Service  
Cigarette vending machines  
Hollis W. Ponder, superintendent  
NOTE: The listing in the city directory indicates that Standard Cigarette Service has been in business since 1937.
- 1963      Standard Cigarette Service  
Vending machines  
Thurman V. Miller, superintendent
- Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company  
Wholesale tobacco – tobacco and cigarette wholesalers, candies, and fountain supplies, vending machines.  
Ervin J. Safarik, manager
- 1957      Standard Cigarette Service  
Vending machines  
Thurman V. Miller, manager
- Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company  
Wholesale tobacco  
Ervin J. Safarik, manager
- Ervin J. Safarik  
Wholesale tobacco
- 1953      Standard Cigarette Service  
Vending machines  
Thurman V. Miller, manager
- Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company  
Wholesale tobacco  
Ervin J. Safarik, manager
- 1949      Standard Cigarette Service  
Wholesale tobacco  
Howard Forrester, division manager
- Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company  
Thurman V. Miller, manager  
NOTE: Thurman and Ava B. Miller also lived on the premises.

- 1947 Standard Cigarette Service  
Hobert Durrett, manager
- Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company  
Thurman V. Miller, manager  
NOTE: Thurman V. Miller also lived on the premises.
- 1944-45 Lytton's Auto Storage  
E. Roy Lytton, proprietor
- 1941 Powell Auto Body Works  
Roger M. Powell, proprietor
- Day and Night Storage Garage  
Roger M. Powell, proprietor
- 1937 Powell Auto Body Works  
Expert body and fender repair, painting and trimming, springs, windshield and door glass, motor repairs, and auto blacksmithing  
Roger M Powell, proprietor
- Day and Night Storage Garage  
Roger M. Powell, proprietor
- 1935 Day and Night Garage  
Roger M. Powell, manager
- 1932-33 Day and Night Garage  
William H. Rumsey and Joseph W. Bailey, proprietors
- 1930-31 Day and Night Garage  
Peter Stapper, proprietor
- 1929 Day and Night Garage  
Automobile garage, repairing and service station; agency, Stewart Motor Trucks  
Peter Stapper, proprietor
- 1927 Day and Night Garage  
Peter Stapper and William H. Rumsey, proprietors
- 409½: Auto Paint Shop  
Ernest R. Cole, proprietor
- 1924 Day and Night Garage  
Peter Stapper and William H. Rumsey, proprietors
- Riley-Simmons Motor Company  
Automobiles  
John B. Riley and Joseph P. Simmons, proprietors  
NOTE: Joseph P. Simmons was also the principal of Austin High School.

1922 The address is not listed in the directory.

1920 The address is not listed in the directory.



Advertisement for Ernest R. Cole's Auto Paint Shop. Cole had an automobile paint shop here in the mid-1920s.

Austin American-Statesman,  
March 7, 1926

**Sacrificed**  
**Moon Sport Touring**  
**Worth \$ 50.00. Fine Shape**  
Equipped with 5 balloon tires and all kinds of extras, just overhauled.  
Offered Monday for only  
**\$235.00**  
By Private Party  
Can Be Seen At The  
**Day & Night Garage**  
409 COLORADO ST.

Advertisement for a car for sale at the Day and Night Garage, run by Peter Stapper and William Rumsey in the 1920s.

Austin American-Statesman, March 7, 1926

**WELCOME**  
**STUDENTS**  
**Better Take the Time**  
To Have Your Car  
Inspected and Repaired by  
Experts  
Let Us Wash, Grease, Oil Your Car  
Storage  
Work Absolutely Guaranteed—24 Hour Service  
**Day and Night Garage**  
409 Colorado St.—Phone 8762  
"Always Open"

Advertisement for the Day and Night Garage, run by Peter Stapper in the late 1920s.

Austin History Center vertical file, automobile repair shops  
ca. 1928



**PETE STAPPER**

Pete Stapper, 79, of 313 East 43rd Street, died in a local hospital Friday. He was a retired auto parts man, a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and had been a resident of Austin 50 years.

Survivors include one son, Joe W. Stapper of Austin; one daughter, Mrs. Charles A. Bruckner of Austin; one brother, Edwin Stander of Smithson Valley, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Arnold Richter of Berheim, Texas and Mrs. Charles Erban of New Braunfels; two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Monday at Hyatt-Monor Funeral Home with the Rev. Albert F. Jesse officiating. Burial will be in Capital Memorial Gardens.

Obituary of Peter Stapper, who, with William Henry Rumsey, opened the Day and Night Garage here in the 1920s and 1930s.

Austin American-Statesman

January 14, 1968

**WILLIAM HENRY RUMSEY**

William Henry Rumsey, 44, resident of Austin 25 years, died at his home, 706 East 15 street, Saturday night following a long illness. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Anna Louise Rumsey, four daughters, Mrs. A. R. Tracy of Dallas, Betty Jo Rumsey, Anna Louise Rumsey, and Tommie Elizabeth Rumsey of Austin; three sons, W. H. Rumsey, Jr., Jimmie Lee Rumsey, and John Norris Rumsey, all of Austin; two sisters, Mrs. Fern Giese of Dallas, and Mrs. Peter Staffer of Austin; one brother, Joe Rumsey of Dallas.

Funeral services will be held from the Cook Funeral home Monday at 3 p. m. with the Rev. K. G. Manz officiating. Burial will be in Oakwood cemetery. Pallbearers will be Herman Roemer, Rudolph Swausch, N. L. Gault, H. F. Ritter, T. A. Wabb and Otto Knippa.

Obituary of William Henry Rumsey, who started the Day and Night Garage here with his brother-in-law, Peter Stapper, in the 1920s. Stapper and Rumsey operated the Day and Night until the mid-1930s, when Roger M Powell took over the business.

Austin American, October 10, 1938

**POWELL, Roger Mills, 93, of Waco** died Thursday. Services 2:30 p.m. Monday at Oakwood Cemetery in Waco. (Wilkinson-Hatch, Waco)

Death notice for Roger M. Powell, who took over the Day and Night Garage from William H. Rumsey and Peter Stapper in the mid-1930s; Powell opened his own auto body repair shop here around 1936 and ran it until the early 1940s. He was the son of Pinckney W. Powell, who had opened the Powell Auto Body Works next door at 413-15 Colorado Street in 1920.

Austin American-Statesman,

January 31, 1988

**MILLER, Thurman V., 74,**

1704 Rabb Road, died

Saturday. Services 4 p.m.

Monday at Wilke-Clay Funeral

Home. Survivors, son, Dr.

Dale V. Miller of Austin;

sister, Mrs. Lee Frazier of

Larned, Kan., brothers,

Eugene Miller of San Luis

Obispo, Calif., Jack Miller of

San Antonio; three

grandchildren; and several

nieces and nephews.

Obituary of Thurman V. Miller, who operated the Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company, a wholesale tobacco outfit, here in the 1940s, and Standard Cigarette Service, which handled cigarette machines, here through the early 1960s. The business was taken over by Ervin Safarik in the 1960s.

Austin American-Statesman

May 26, 1975

## **Ervin J. Safarik**

**Ervin J. Safarik, 69, of Taylor died**

**on Thursday at a Taylor hospital.**

**Born August 6, 1921, in Rices Crossing, Texas, to John Safarik and Carrie Mikus Safarik. He married Vera Becker on December 9, 1943; and had retired from Ponca Wholesale, as manager and supervisor in January 1982, after 35 years of service.**

**Mr. Safarik was a veteran of the Army Air Corps; had been a member of both Taylor and Thornadale Volunteer Fire Departments; and St. Mary's Catholic Church.**

**Survivors include his wife, Vera Safarik; sister, Dorothy Werchan and her husband, Lewis, of Taylor; brothers, Leroy Safarik and his wife, Dorothy, of Taylor, and Johnny Ray Safarik and his wife, Margaret, of Austin; and numerous nieces and newphews.**

**He was preceded in death by his parents; and infant daughter; and brothers, Jessie and Arnold Safarik.**

**Rosary will be recited in the chapel of Condra Funeral Home in Taylor at 8:00 PM, Saturday. Funeral Mass will be at 2:00 PM, Sunday at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Taylor, with Father Lonnie Urban officiating. Burial will follow at St. Mary's Cemetery.**

**Pallbearers include: Jerry Biar, Victor Janosec, Dr. Marvin Leshikar, Bobby Passeman, John Bigon, and Richard Ivicic.**

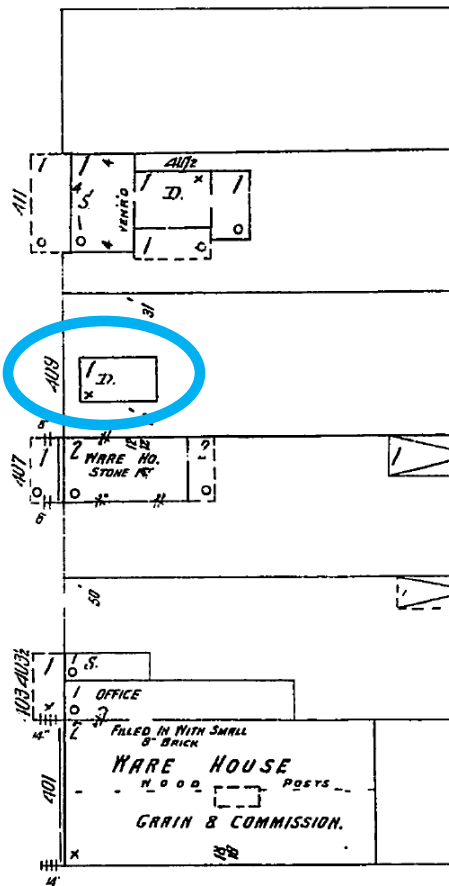
**For those desiring, memorials may be made to the American Heart Association.**

**Arrangements by Condra Funeral Home, Taylor.**

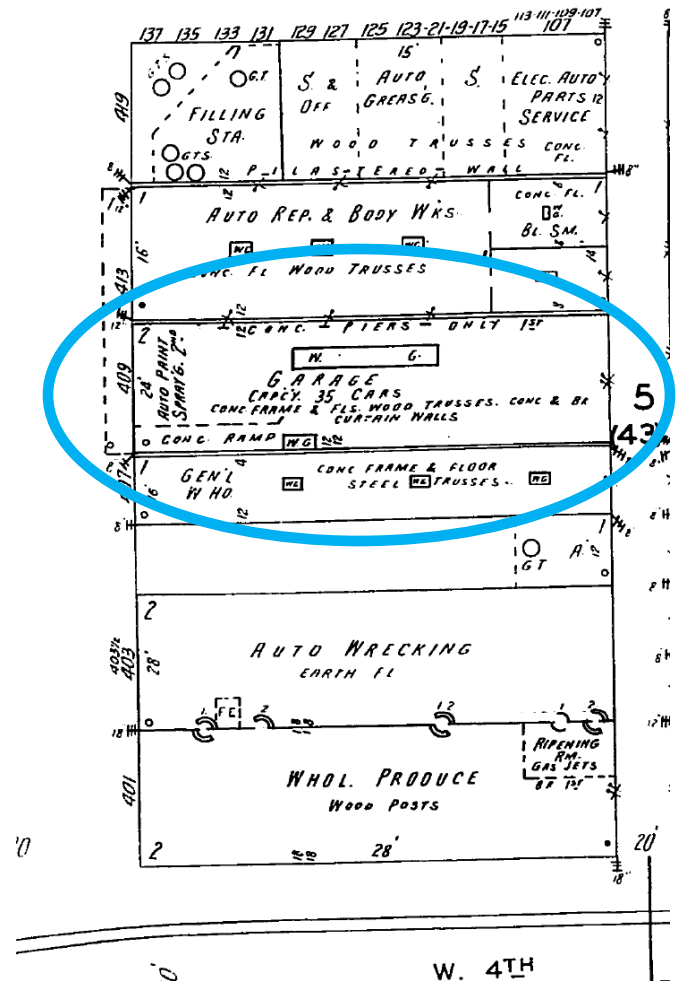
Obituary of Ervin Safarik, who ran a wholesale tobacco business here from the early 1950s through the late 1960s.

Austin American-Statesman  
December 22, 1990

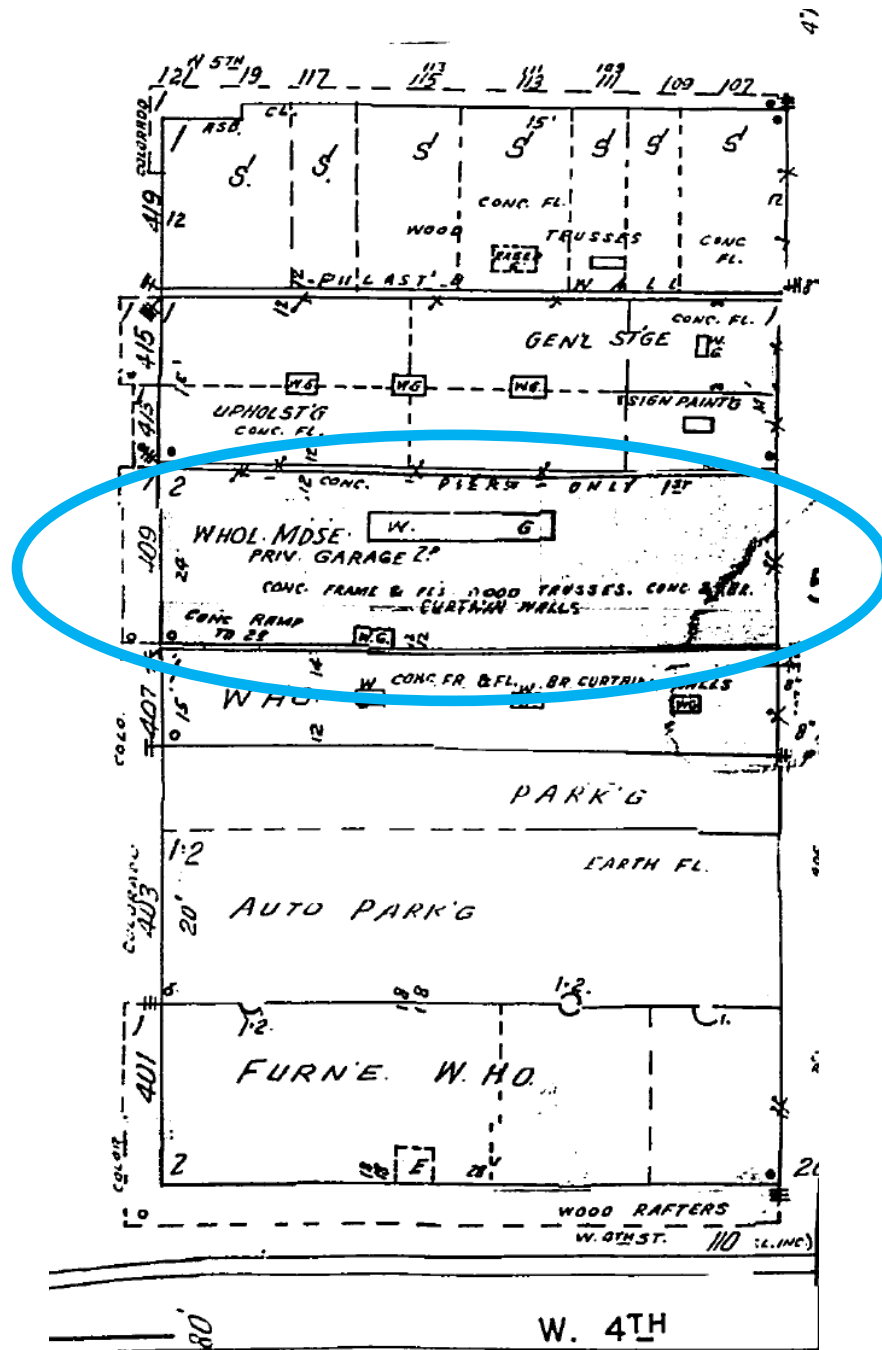
COLORADO



The 1900 Sanborn map shows a dwelling on the site of the current building at 409 Colorado Street.



The 1935 Sanborn map shows the current building at 409 Colorado as a two-story building with auto spray painting on the second floor of the building and the garage occupying the ground floor. The 1935 city directory shows the Day and Night Garage occupying the building; the 1937 city directory shows Powell Auto Body Works and the Day and Night Storage Garage at this address. The building also featured a concrete ramp on the south side and an awning or canopy across the front.



The 1961 Sanborn map shows the building at 409 Colorado Street as a wholesale merchandise warehouse with a private garage on the second floor. Ponca Wholesale Mercantile Company, a wholesale tobacco business, operated here in the 1950s and 1960s. The canopy shown on the 1935 map above is shown on this map as well.

