

State of California — The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code 3CS, 5S3

Other Listings
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

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*Resource Name or #: Sears & Roebuck Company Department Store

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

*a. County: Riverside

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: Riverside West

Date: May 17, 2012

c. Address: 5261 Arlington Avenue

City: Riverside

Zip: 92504

e. Other Locational Data: APN 226-180-015-1

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

This property is located on the northeast corner of Arlington and Streeter Avenues and contains the Sears & Roebuck Company Department Store constructed in 1963. The building is located at the center of the parcel, and is surrounded on all sides by surface parking. The building is Mid-century Modern in style, with horizontal massing, a rectangular plan, and a flat roof. The central volume is two stories in height, flanked on either side by one-story volumes clad in painted brick. The primary (south) façade has a framed, rectangular roof overhang. There is a concrete canopy supported by metal posts spanning three façades and creating a covered walkway around the building. There are integrated planters on the west and east facades, and palm trees planted within the canopy at the corners. There are additional palm trees in landscaped medians in the parking lot. The upper story of the primary (south) façade has decorative panels with a raised lozenge pattern. Cladding on the lower story of the primary façade is a combination of stone and painted stucco. The primary entrances are on the primary (south) façade and consist of two sets of double, metal, fully-glazed doors with transoms and fixed, floor-to-ceiling storefront windows on either side. On the east façade are two additional entrances consisting of double, metal, fully-glazed doors with transoms. On the rear (north) façade, a folded plate roof supported by metal posts shelters the merchandise pick-up area. There is a loading dock located below grade on the east side of the rear (north) façade. On the west side of the rear (north) façade there is a storage area that is surrounded by a concrete pierced screen. On the west side of the parcel is a one-story Tire and Auto Center with a rectangular plan and a flat roof. The Tire and Auto Center is connected to the west façade of the main building.

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP6 – 1-3 story commercial building

*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)

View looking Northwest (February 2013)

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and**

Sources: ☒ Historic

☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both

1963-1964, building permit

***P7. Owner and Address:**

***P8. Recorded by:**

Historic Resources Group
12 S Fair Oaks Ave, Ste 200
Pasadena, CA 91105

***P9. Date Recorded:**

February 20, 2013

***P10. Survey Type:**

Intensive

***P11. Report Citation:** Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, *City of Riverside: Modernism Context Statement*, November 2009. Historic Resources Group, *Citywide Modernism Intensive Survey*, September 2013.

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☐ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*NRHP Status Code 3CS, 5S3

*Resource Name or # Sears & Roebuck Company Department Store

B1. Historic Name: Sears & Roebuck Company Department Store

B2. Common Name: Sears

B3. Original Use: Commercial/retail

B4. Present Use: Commercial/retail

***B5. Architectural Style:** Mid-century Modern

***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

The building was constructed in 1963-1964. The main building and key shop were completed in 1964. The covered patio display was added in 1967; the patio display was altered and the roofline extended in 1968. Laundry pickup area (14 x 73 feet) added in 1987. Thirty-two existing windows enclosed in 1989. Roof replaced in 1989. Four exterior signs added in 1992. Two existing signs refaced and one new sign added in 2000. Above-ground oil storage tank added to auto center in 2001. Roof replaced in 2004.

***B7. Moved?** ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown **Date:**

Original Location:

***B8. Related Features:**

B9a. Architect: Charles Luckman Associates

b. Builder: Lingrerot S.M.C.

***B10. Significance: Theme:** Modern Architecture & Architects of Modernism

Area: Riverside

Period of Significance: 1964

Applicable Criteria: 3/c,d

Property Type: Commercial/retail

The Sears & Roebuck Company Department Store at 5261 Arlington Street is a good example of Mid-century Modern commercial architecture, and the only Mid-century Modern department store in Riverside. In 1929, Sears located in downtown Riverside. In the 1960s they began looking for another site in Riverside to build a larger store to replace the downtown location, which had become cramped and lacked onsite parking. In December 1961, the *Press* announced plans for a new \$4 million store on the southwest side of Riverside, in the midst of a residential neighborhood. It would be a full-line department store with over 2,000 parking spaces.

The new store was designed by the noted Los Angeles architectural firm Charles Luckman Associates and completed in 1964; it is still in use as a Sears today. The building is typical of the post-World War II Sears stores: a large, windowless, freestanding, single-story building surrounded by parking on all sides. Sears began eliminating windows in their stores above the ground floor in the 1930s to improve the lighting and display of merchandise, as well as the efficiency of the mechanical systems. The concept gained popularity after World War II and is now a hallmark of department store design. Decorative elements were concentrated near entrances and often took the form of contrasting materials such as stone and shading devices such as canopies.

See Continuation Sheet.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

***B12. References:**

See Continuation Sheet.

B13. Remarks:

***B14. Evaluator:** Christine Lazzaretto

***Date of Evaluation:** February 20, 2013

(This space reserved for official comments.)



Significance Statement Continued.

Charles Luckman Associates was one of the most prolific corporate architecture firms in the United States. Born in 1909, Luckman achieved success as a businessman as well as an architect. He trained at the University of Illinois, but went into sales after graduating during the depths of the Great Depression. He was dubbed the "Boy Wonder of American Business" when he was named president of the Pepsodent toothpaste company in 1939. Through acquisition, he later became president of Lever Brothers, and helped plan their New York skyscraper, Lever House. Reminded of his architectural roots, Luckman resigned the presidency of Lever Brothers, moved to Los Angeles and began practicing architecture with fellow University of Illinois graduate William Pereira in 1950. Their partnership led to works such as CBS Television City, but the two went separate ways in 1958. The firm was reorganized as Charles Luckman Associates, and soon had offices in Boston, Chicago, and Phoenix. The firm went on to design the Prudential Center in Boston, the new Madison Square Garden in New York City, and the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston. In 1977, Luckman retired and the firm became known as the Luckman Partnership.

The Broadway Department Store retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. It appears eligible for listing in the California Register at the local level of significance, and as a local landmark. It is eligible under the Modern Architecture theme as a good example of Late Modern commercial architecture in Riverside. It is significant under the Architects of Modernism theme as the work of the noted Los Angeles architectural firm Charles Luckman Associates. It does not meet National Register Criterion Consideration G of "exceptional importance" required for properties that are less than fifty years old, and therefore it does not appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at this time.

References

City of Riverside Building Permits.

City of Riverside Modernism Context Statement, prepared for the City of Riverside by Christopher A. Joseph & Associates, Los Angeles, CA, November 2009.

County of Riverside Property Information Center.

Longstreth, Richard. *City Center to Regional Mall*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997.

Riverside County Land Information System (LIS).

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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*Resource Name or # Sears & Roebuck Company Department Store

*Recorded by: Historic Resources Group

*Date: February 20, 2013 ■ Continuation □ Update



View looking Northeast (February 2013)



View of Auto Service Center,
looking Northwest (February 2013)



View of the North Façade, looking Southwest (February 2013)



Detail of the Folded Plate Roof (February 2013)



View of the East Façade, looking Northwest (February 2013)



Detail of South Façade (February 2013)