

A Look Back in Time

The Gregario Gallo Auto Accessories Store and Gas Station, located at 2122 60th St, is situated on the Northeast corner of the 60th Street and 22nd Avenue intersection. The neighborhood around the property combines historic period commercial and residential buildings directly to the west, north and east.

Section 15.04 of the City's Zoning Ordinance establishes standards for designating structures and sites as historic and the site or structure must meet at least one of these standards. It was determined that The Gregario Gallo Gas Station is architecturally significant under Standard 3.

“Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method of construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.



The Gregario Gallo Gas Station, rising from from a stone and concrete foundation, has two distinct portions: the gasoline dispensing and sales area and the service garage section. Brick is the primary building material in this classically inspired structure. Its classical character is defined by the Tuscan Order, concrete pilasters and entablature with plain architrave, a plain frieze, a raised cornice and a centered keystone/egg combination ornamental element. These features frame the two end walls as well as the canted wall and the two walls to either side of it. Above the entablature is a brick parapet that is embellished by short pilasters, three inset brick panels in each plane and a very thin cornice, each segment of which is adorned with two modillions.

Few things in the twentieth century have affected the American landscape as did the automobile. It inspired an omnipresent network of roads, as well as many unprecedented building types, examples of which include the roadside motel and the fast food restaurant. Another unique auto culture building type is the gas station, a structure that evolved in the twentieth century. In a functional sense, gas stations provided an orderly and efficient way to fuel the nation's rapidly growing number of automobiles. But, they were more than that. Indeed, gas stations were a key marketing tool through which oil companies tried to attract the drivers of those automobiles to their pumps.

The need to market gasoline added a new dimension to the oil industry, as well as to the stations that sold it. To attract buyers, companies started offering related products; batteries and tires for instance. They also began cleaning windshields and checking the oil. If the oil needed changing, they could do that too. These new activities affected the station office building as display windows, through which the new merchandise could be exhibited, were installed and oil change/service garages were added.

The gas station building itself was the largest packaging device available to gasoline marketers. As a three-dimensional billboard, the gas station certainly gained attention; when repeated across the countryside, it acquired extra sales value. The carefully designed station multiplied the worth of every word of printed advertising and became a fundamental part of the entire merchandising effort. A distinctly standardized design could, in any setting, be synonymous with a particular brand of gasoline.

