

**AKRON URBAN DESIGN AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**MEETING OF MARCH 5, 2024 - 9:00 A.M.**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THIRD FLOOR, MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**166 S. HIGH STREET**

- (1) **CORRECTION** and **APPROVAL** of Minutes of February 6, 2024.
  
- (2) **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - A. **UD-2024-02-HP** – Application for Akron Historic Landmark status for the Homeier-Universal Building at 816 E. Market Street.

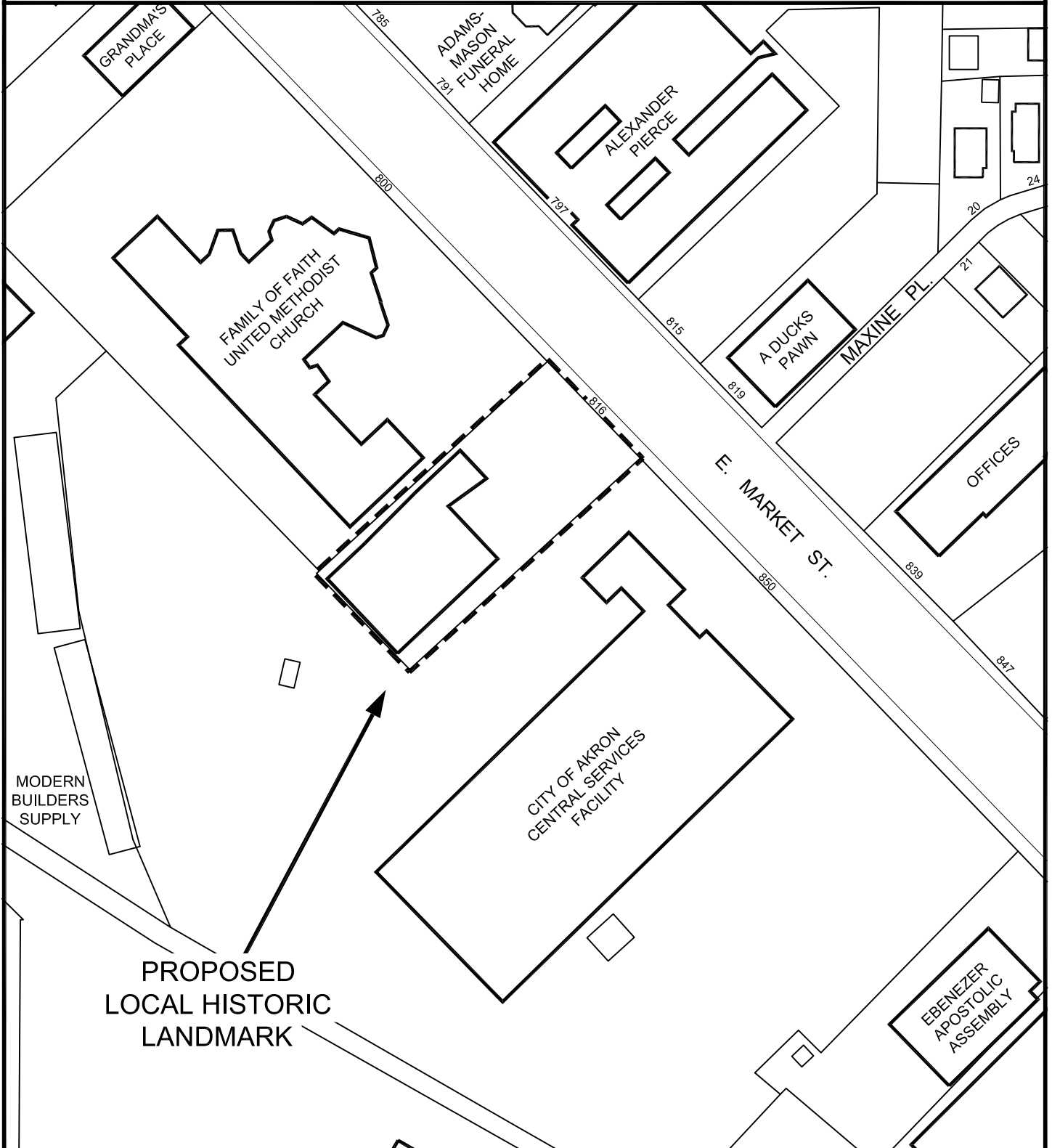
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# UD-2024-02-HP

Application for Akron Historic Landmark status for the Homeier-Universal Building at 816 E. Market Street



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Created 02/15/2024 jwh  
Revised 02/15/2024 jwh



PROPOSED  
LOCAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARK

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: AKRON URBAN DESIGN AND  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**ITEM # 2A  
UD-2024-02-HP**

**FROM: DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**DATE: MARCH 5, 2024**

**SUBJECT: UD-2024-02-HP** – Akron historic landmark status for the Homeier – Universal Building located at 816 E, Market Street.

**GENERAL LOCATION:** The building is located on the south side of E. Exchange Street west of Arlington Street.

### **COMMENTS:**

The Homeier – Universal Building was constructed in 1919. The facility was constructed as a large three-story shop with an attached showroom and dealership for Ford automobiles. It is a concrete frame building with a large elevator for moving vehicles up three floors. The building is a simple open plan warehouse with exposed masonry walls and a cast-in-place concrete structural system. The building was constructed as a fireproof building and likely utilized a unique “floretype” construction technique.

At one time, the Homeier – Universal Company was the largest operating Ford dealership in Akron. An Akron Beacon Journal article from 1934 states that “26 years of experience as authorized Ford dealers was combined in 1932 to form Homeier – Universal Motor, Inc. with headquarters at 816-822 E. Market Street. It was a combination of the Homeier Motor Co. headed by A. L. Homeier and Universal Motor Co. of which John A. McAlonan was president.” The article goes on to state that Homeier – Universal also operated a downtown store at 116 – 118 S. Main Street, a new and used car store at 1100 S. Main, a super service station at Dodge and W. Exchange streets and four other companies. According to the application, the Homeier – Universal Company initiated innovative practices such as a “warranted” overhaul program for used cars and a training school for salesmen.

The existing building is vacant, in deteriorated condition and used primarily for storage. The sales building, which originally extended all the way out to E. Exchange Street, was mostly demoed, with only about 1/3 of the original building remaining. All of the windows in the sales building have been replaced. The exterior surface of the large warehouse structure is deteriorated in specific areas to the point that the interior rebar supporting materials are exposed. Original windows are still in place but many

are broken. Original exterior doors have been replaced. Signage for Carroll upholstery is still in place. There is no evidence of the old painted advertising for Homeier – Universal Motor, Inc. on the north face of the warehouse facing E. Exchange Street. The historic integrity of the structure is compromised due to alterations and neglect.

Prepared in accordance with the City of Akron Ordinance No. 388-1997, the Department of Planning and Urban Development hereby forwards to the City of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission its “Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations” on the Landmark Designation UD-2024-02-HP Homeier – Universal Building.

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:**

- A. Consistent with the City of Akron Ord. 388-1997, the Department of Planning and Urban Development has determined that the application for Historic Landmark Designation for the Homeier – Universal Building is complete. As required, the property owner and all property owners within 500 feet of the subject property have been notified by mail of the March 5, 2024, Public Hearing concerning the designation of the property as a historic landmark. No other individuals or additional groups have requested notice.
- B. If designated, any activity affecting the exterior of the Homeier – Universal Building not covered under an agreement with the State of Ohio Historic Preservation Office will require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the City of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission. Any demolition of the existing structure or additions or additional entranceways will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Before issuing the Certificate of Appropriateness, the Commission will review the proposed activity for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s “Standards for Rehabilitation” and “Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings”. Routine repairs and maintenance utilizing appropriate materials will not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- C. At the close of the Public Hearing, the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission shall determine if the application for the HOMEIER – UNIVERSAL BUILDING meets the criteria for designation. The submitted application contends that the property meets two (2) of the criteria outlined in the City of Akron Urban Design and Historic Preservation Ordinance to define a Historic Landmark (Ord. 388-1997). The criteria are as follows:
  - 1. *Exemplifies the area, property or site of the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the city, state or nation; and*

The structure stands on its original site.

2. *Contains elements of design, details, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural or structural innovation.*

The building likely utilized a unique Truscon Floretype construction technique.

KM/emd