



**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
Telephone: (615) 862-7970  
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**  
**Oman Building, 511 Oman Street**  
**June 17, 2015**

**Application:** Historic Landmark Overlay for Oman Building

**Map and Parcel Numbers:** 10402004600

**Council Districts:** 21

**Applicant:** Mayor Karl Dean

**Project Lead:** Robin Zeigler, [robin.zeigler@nashville.gov](mailto:robin.zeigler@nashville.gov), 615-862-7970

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| <p><b>Description of Project:</b> Mayor Karl Dean requests to designate the Oman Building as a Historic Landmark Overlay.</p>  | <p><b>Attachments</b><br/><b>A:</b> Photographs</p> |
| <p><b>Recommendation Summary:</b> The Oman Building meets criterion 3 in that is associated with a material distinctive to the area and with the company that made the material popular for location construction.</p> |   |
| <p>Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council a Historic Landmark Overlay for the Oman Building</p>   |   |

## Vicinity Map



## Aerial Map



## **Background:**

511 Oman Street (formerly McMurry Avenue) was constructed in the 1930s by the Crab Orchard Stone Company to serve as the main office of the Oman Construction Company, of which Crab Orchard was a subsidiary. To honor the company name, the building is made entirely of Crab Orchard Stone, including the shingles. This rare Tennessee sandstone comes from the Crab Orchard Mountains and was highly valued for construction in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It gained popularity after it was used to construct Scarritt College in Nashville in the 1920s and has since been used for buildings and flagstone across the U.S. and overseas.

The Oman Construction Company dates back to 1877 when John Oman Sr., a Scottish stonemason, came to Nashville. His skills were in high demand; he was a contractor for many buildings and bridges in Nashville and other cities. His most famous work was on the exterior of the St. Thomas Church in New York City. His son, John Oman Jr., founded the Crab Orchard Stone Company in 1929 and would eventually take over all of Oman Construction Company. During the half century that it was run from the 511 Oman St. office, the company would expand to have projects on six different continents. The most notable of these are sponsoring the Oroville Dam in California, helping widen the Panama Canal, and working on a 144 mile stretch of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline from Delta Junction to the Yukon. Ironically, the long list of countries that they worked in includes Oman. The Oman Construction Company would leave the 511 Oman St. location in 1989 and today makes software used by construction companies. It has been used as the office for the Metro Parks since 1990.

## **Applicable Ordinance:**

### Article III. Historic Overlay Districts

17.36.120 Historic Districts Defined. B. Historic Landmark. An historic landmark is defined as a building, structure, site or object, its appurtenances and the property it is located on, of high historical, cultural, architectural or archaeological importance; whose demolition or destruction would constitute an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of Nashville and Davidson County; and that meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The historic landmark is associated with an event that has made a significant contribution to local, state or national history;
2. It is associated with the lives of persons significant in local, state or national history;
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic value;
4. It has yielded or may be likely to yielded archaeological information important in history or prehistory; or
5. It is listed or is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Analysis and Findings:**

The Oman Building meets criterion 3 in that is associated with a material distinctive to the area and with the company that made the material popular for location construction.

Staff suggests the Commission recommend to City Council a Historic Landmark Overlay for the Oman Building.



