

PROPERTY INFORMATION

PROPERTY NAME	4709-A: CVS (Current); People's Drug Store (Historic) 4709-B: Virginia ABC Store (Historic and Current)
PROPERTY ADDRESS	4709 Lee Highway Arlington, VA 22207
TAX PARCEL	05033002
USGS QUAD (S)	WASHINGTON WEST (DC)
COUNTY/INDEPENDENT CITY	Arlington (County)

ADDITIONAL PROPERTY INFORMATION

ARCHITECTURE SETTING	Suburban
OWNERSHIP CATEGORY	Private

SITE DESCRIPTION

November 2019: The property is located on the north side of Lee Highway, west of Old Dominion Drive. The building on this lot reads as one building with three distinct parts although it is located on two parcels; the two western buildings (4709-A and 4709-B Lee Highway) are the result of a 1956 addition to the original 1954 building. Since 1956, a sidewalk has delineated the two parcels. Asphalt-paved parking is on the north, south and west of the building.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

November 2019: The commercial building at 4709 Lee Highway is significant under two themes: 1) It is typical of historic commercial architecture along Lee Highway, and 2) It was the site of one of the sit-ins conducted throughout Arlington in the early 1960s.

COMMERCIAL CONTEXT

For the first two decades of the 20th century, streetcars were the principal mode of transportation through northern Arlington County. The location of the streetcar stops determined the size and distribution of the area's commercial buildings. Shoppers rode the streetcar into Washington, D.C., to make their large purchases at the city's many department stores with their more extensive inventory, reserving their trips to local stores for groceries and hardware items. Small one- and two-story frame or concrete-block buildings, often repurposed dwellings, clustered around the streetcar stops. Built as part of the national US highway system in the 1920s, the portion of Lee Highway in Arlington County quickly became the area's main transportation and commercial corridor. During the 1930s and 1940s, retail stores, service stations, and other businesses were built at Lee Highway's major intersections, giving Lee Highway the fragmented, linear, and car-centric appearance it retains today. The provision of adequate parking either in front of the commercial buildings or at the rear became a paramount design feature along Lee Highway. The mostly one-lot-deep commercial zoning along Lee Highway, bordered on the north and south by residential development, mostly prevented the building of large shopping centers and enclosed malls that were popular during the 1960s and 1970s. Widening of Lee Highway and the reconfiguring of several of its major intersections further reduced on-site parking.

Commercial development during the 1970s continued to be unplanned and consisted mostly of small office buildings with businesses and professional services as tenants. Older commercial buildings were demolished, and their sites redeveloped with few unifying design principles. Nonetheless, Lee Highway continued to be home to a wide variety of both local businesses and national franchises. The 1985 *Lee Highway Commercial Corridor Study* noted that approximately one-third of Lee Highway businesses provided professional services such as banking, medical services, real estate, and insurance; another one-third provided convenience services such as dry cleaning, groceries, beauty shops and barbers; with auto-related businesses such as dealerships, auto supply stores, and service stations, along with restaurants making up most of the remaining one-third. The 1985 study also noted that there were 4,000 parking spaces associated with the 292 businesses in the Lee Highway corridor (Arlington County 1985).

The scale, nature, and siting of commercial buildings along Lee Highway has remained remarkably consistent since the 1930s, even where their outward appearance has changed due to frequent remodeling and renovation of individual building facades. One- and two-story buildings, either free-standing or grouped in small strip malls predominate, although a few post-war shopping centers such as Lyon Village and Lee-Harrison are also present. Many of Lee Highway's commercial buildings built before 1970 are concrete-block and are faced with a variety of building materials (brick veneer, marble, metal, stucco, or wood-shingle siding), are oriented to the roadway, and where possible have off-street parking on-site or nearby. Many commercial buildings from the 1970s onwards such as banks and fast-food restaurants have drive-in windows. Lighting, signage, prominent surface parking lots, and large expanses of window displays and advertising easily visible from passing automobiles are integral to many buildings' design. Sidewalks, landscaping, street furniture and other features that promote walkability are more recent improvements to small sections of Lee Highway's commercial areas. Façade and streetscape improvements have occurred over the years at some of Lee Highway's shopping centers and strip malls to reflect current design trends and thus commercial buildings reflect a wide variety of period commercial styles and aesthetics.

CIVIL RIGHTS CONTEXT

On June 22 (1960), five major chains in Arlington agreed to desegregate their lunch counters for the first time. The desegregation had a cascading effect as nearly all department and chain stores in Arlington, Fairfax, and Alexandria, integrated their lunch counter within a few days (ACHPP 2016: 57).

This culminating moment in Arlington County was reached through the bravery and tenacity of the Nonviolent Action Group (NAG), a group started at Howard University, and their supporters. Students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College led the first nonviolent desegregation sit-in at Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina on February 1, 1960. Their passive resistance emboldened others and sit-ins, versus picketing, became a powerful nonviolent method to protest segregation (Jones 2018: 118). In March 1960, Laurence Henry, a Howard University Divinity student, founded NAG when the results of a picket on Capitol Hill with fellow students proved ineffective (Hardin 2015; Jones 2014; ACHPP 2016:57). Henry's first sit-in locale was Alexandria, Virginia. However, the city proactively decided to have black leaders and whites-only businesses participate in a desegregation study to avoid a sit-in demonstration. It is unclear if Arlington County officials were unwilling to undertake a similar study. NAG's first official sit-ins occurred along Arlington's Lee Highway corridor during June 1960. Commercial establishments like Drug Fair, People's Drug Store and Woolworth were selected for NAG sit-ins because of their hypocrisy. Chains of these stores in Washington, D.C. were desegregated by 1960 but locations in Virginia and Maryland continued to operate by the de facto segregation that persisted in the south (Jones 2014).

NAG led the first sit-in with an interracial group on June 9, 1960 at the People's Drug Store (4709-A Lee Highway) and the Drug Fair (3811-3815 Lee Highway). Dion Diamond, a fellow Howard University student, and Joan Trumpauer Mulholland, a student originally from Arlington, were two supporters who would put their academics on hold that summer to participate in other civil rights demonstrations in the South. Diamond began private sit-ins at the age of 15 when he "got tired of looking at signs that said whites only" (Diamond 2018). He became a familiar face of the NAG sit-ins in Arlington and other nonviolent demonstrations to desegregate Glen Echo Park, MD. Diamond continued his work in the south becoming a member of the Freedom Riders and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, which landed him in jail on several

occasions. (Washington Area Spark 2013). Joan Mulholland had a similar history. She was a student at Duke University who was presumably home for summer break to participate in many of the Arlington County sit-ins. She became an icon of the Civil Rights Movements as a white southern woman who defied racial stereotypes by actively supporting racial equality and freedom. Mulholland never returned to Duke but would become a graduate of Tougaloo College in Mississippi, a historically-black academic institution. She was a Freedom Rider who participated in over 50 sit-ins and demonstrations by the age of twenty-three and persevered through being disowned by her family, attacked, shot at, put on death row and hunted by the Klu Klux Klan (JTMF n.d.).

Management at both the Drug Fair and People's Drug Stores closed in response to the sit-ins. The NAG groups returned to the same locations the following day to more success and no arrests. However, when Henry and Diamond attempted to sit-in at the restaurant in Howard Johnson's (4700 Lee Highway), management had them arrested for trespassing (see Figures 8-9); both were expediently released on \$250 bond.

Sit-in participants were trained to withstand crowd retaliation and practice true nonviolence; Calloway United Methodist Church was one HHHVP institution that opened their doors for training. NAG members may not have been physically harmed but they were nonetheless subject to intensely humiliating and antagonistic crowds. One of the most notable crowd retaliation events occurred at the Cherrydale Drug Fair on June 10, 1960, when Diamond was confronted by George Lincoln Rockwell, leader of the American Nazi Party; from 1968-1984, the Arlington office of the American Nazi Party was located at 2507 N. Franklin Road. The group took a brief hiatus to let their actions have their intended effect, which would occur by the end of the month. Sit-ins resumed on June 18, 1960, at the Woolworth's lunch counter and Lansburgh's Department Store in Shirlington, VA, located in south Arlington (ACHPP 2016: 57). In an interview for the Columbia Pike Documentary Project, Joan Mulholland, a native Arlingtonian who resides in the Barcroft Neighborhood and grew up in the Buckingham neighborhood, stated the following regarding the relatively quick desegregation of Arlington's establishments:

These local chains, independent stores, were basically owned by Jewish families. Liberal New York families who had come down for New Deal jobs, and they didn't have any problem personally with serving people, but it was against the state law. If they did serve us, or you went to a church you were allowed in, anybody who enabled you to sit together anywhere, was subject to arrest, also. So I think the stores' managers had no problem serving us personally, but they weren't ready to go to jail today. That's my interpretation. I've heard people who might question that. They aren't from here. (CPDP 2018)

By the end of the month nearly all department and chain stores in Arlington, Fairfax, and Alexandria desegregated.

PROPERTY HISTORY

The building at 4709 A-B Lee Highway was built in 1956 by original owner Poindexter-Nattie of 1237 31st Street NW in Washington, D.C. and builder Skinker and Garrett (Deed Book 1232/351; Building permit #14509, 7-26-1956). Historic Arlington County directories list 4709-A Lee Highway as a People's Drug Store and a Virginia ABC Store at 4709-B (Hill Publishing Company: 1955, 1961, 1966, 1972).

SURVEYOR ASSESSMENT/RECOMMENDATION

November 2019: Although a commercial building, 4709 Lee Highway was not identified in the Arlington County Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) in 2011 (Arlington County 2011).

The commercial building at 4709 Lee Highway was occupied by a former People's Drug (4709A Lee Highway) which is historically associated with the student-led non-violent sit-in demonstrations prevalent across the nation during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. The drugstore site is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A on the local level for its historical association with the non-violent sit-in demonstrations that occurred in Arlington County the summer of 1960 and for its association with the development of the Lee Highway commercial corridor during the pre-/post-World War II period. It is eligible under Criterion C as embodying the characteristics of commercial architecture along Lee Highway including its one-story height, brick veneer, and storefront windows. The

building retains its integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. However, the alterations to the facade impact its integrity of materials and workmanship.

SURVEYOR RECOMMENDATION: NRHP ELIGIBLE

PRIMARY RESOURCE INFORMATION

RESOURCE CATEGORY	Commerce/Trade
RESOURCE TYPE	Commercial Building
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION	1956 (Local Records)
HISTORIC TIME PERIOD	The New Dominion (1946-1991)
HISTORIC CONTEXT (S)	Architecture/Community Planning, Commerce/Trade, Ethnic Heritage (Black)
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	No discernable style
FORM	Rectangular
NUMBER OF STORIES	1.0
CONDITION	Good
THREATS TO RESOURCE	None Known

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

November 2019: This one-story, 1956 commercial building (4709-A, and 4709-B Lee Highway) is an addition to an original one-story, 1954 building (4700 Lee Highway) such that it reads as one building with three commercial occupants. The building's concrete slab foundation supports masonry walls and a flat, built-up roof. Different parapet heights and styles throughout serve to distinguish each commercial unit. From the partially-parged walls visible on the rear façade, it appears portions of the building have a raised foundation to accommodate the natural slope that exists throughout the parcel.

The historic People's Drug Store (currently CVS; 4709-A Lee Highway) is dominated by a storefront system on the primary (south) elevation that contains multiple, fixed-pane windows and an offset pair of mechanical sliding doors. The walls of the front facade are clad in painted, buff-colored brick and stucco; unpainted brick exists on the rear (north) elevation. A vinyl awning covers the full extents of the storefront. Prominent store signage is affixed to the parapet wall above the vinyl awning and it reads (left-right) "Beauty CVS/pharmacy Photo Center." The sidewalk along the primary façade integrates the CVS with its neighboring establishment, VA ABC Liquors & Wines (4709-B Lee Highway). An interior wall double-flue chimney exists on the north side of the wall that separates 4709-A and 4709-B. Rear egress is provided by two hollow-metal doors on the east side of the north wall.

The walls of 4709-B Lee Highway are stucco-covered on the primary façade and painted brick on the side (west) and rear (north) elevations. The parapet height of the liquor store is approximately two feet lower than its neighboring building. This primary façade is mirrored about a central fixed, multi-pane store-front style window. Curved glass block walls flank the central window that transition to a single-leaf glass door with transom. The curved wall that extends out from the doorway to the outer wall completes the mirrored façade. The stucco wall above the entry features the store sign. Exterior ornamentation includes a stone-faced water table on the primary façade and affixed lighting on the west elevation to light the parking lot. Rear egress is provided by an elevated hollow-metal door on the north wall; a ladder affixed to the west side of the door provides additional egress. There are two windows on the rear façade covered by security bars.

EXTERIOR COMPONENTS

COMPONENT	COMPONENT TYPE	MATERIAL	MATERIAL TREATMENT
CHIMNEYS	--	--	--
ROOF	Flat	Cement Fiber/Cementitious	--
WINDOWS	Fixed	Aluminum	--
STRUCTURAL SYSTEM/EXTERIOR TREATMENT	Masonry	Brick; Stucco	American/Common Bond
FOUNDATION	Solid/Continuous	Concrete	--
PORCH	Overhang/Awning	Vinyl	--

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arlington County

1985 "Lee Highway Commercial Corridor Study." March 1985.

2011 "Phase I, Historic Resource Inventory (HRI)." October 2011.

<https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2014/02/HRI-PhaseI.pdf> (accessed November 2019).

2016 "A Guide to the African American Heritage of Arlington County, Virginia."

<https://projects.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2016/09/A-Guide-to-the-African-American-Heritage-of-Arlington-County-Virginia.pdf> (accessed November 2019).

2019 "Arlington County Historical House Cards Database." Accessed November 2019 at,

<https://arlisys.arlingtonva.us/index.html#/collection/CPHD%20-%20House%20Cards%20-%20LEE%20HWY%20-%204000%20block%20of%20LEE%20HWY>.

2019 Arlington County Property Records. Accessed November 2019 at

<https://propertysearch.arlingtonva.us/Home/Search>.

Columbia Pike Documentary Project (CPDP). Joan Mulholland Write-up. September 13, 2018. Accessed November 2019 at,

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2262020033839013&id=181622468545457

----- About. Circa 2007. Accessed at,

https://www.facebook.com/pg/Columbia-Pike-Documentary-Project-181622468545457/about/?ref=page_internal

Diamond, Dion. "The Civil Rights Activist Whose Name You've Probably Never Heard: StoryCorps interview by Rachel Martin." January 12, 2018. Accessed November 2019 at,

<https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=577343980>.

Hardin, Daniel. Contradictions in the Cause: Glen Echo Maryland 1960. June 26, 2015. Accessed November 2019 at,

<https://washingtoneareaspark.com/2015/06/26/contradictions-in-the-cause-glen-echo-maryland-1960/>.

Hill Publishing Company. "Arlington County Directory." 1955.

----- 1961.

----- 1966.

----- 1972.

The Joan Trumpauer Mulholland Foundation. Who is Joan? No date. Accessed November 2019 at, <https://joantrumpauermulholland.org/who-is-joan/>.

Jones, Mark. Sit-ins come to Arlington. June 22, 2014. Accessed November 2019 at, <https://blogs.weta.org/boundarystones/2014/06/22/sit-ins-come-arlington>.

Jones, Wilma. *My Halls Hill Family: More Than a Neighborhood*. Arlington: Wilma J, LLC, 2018.

Washington Area Spark. Crazy Dion Diamond: A 1960 Rights Warrior in the Suburbs. January 20, 2013. Accessed November 2019 at, <https://washingtonareaspark.com/2013/01/20/crazy-dion-diamond-a-1960-rights-warrior-in-the-suburbs/>