COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MEMO REPORT
OF FINDINGS FOR DEMOLITION

May 20th, 2020

**Address:** 4875 Packing House Road

**Legal Description:** T3 R68 S14 S/2 DIF BOOK 1223-315 (REC# 2018033730 “PARCELS 7/7/B”)

**Current Building Name:** King Energy, Inc. Building

**Construction Date:** Between 1905-1929, additions between 1951-1956 and 1971-1991

**Source of Information:** Denver Assessor’s Office; Sanborn Insurance Maps from 1904, 1904 (corrected to 1925), 1929-30, 1929 (corrected to 1937), 1929 (corrected to 1951), 1929 (corrected to 1956), 1929 (corrected to 1958), 1929 (corrected to 1961), 1962 (corrected to 1967); Denver Post; Rocky Mountain News; HistoricAerials.com.

**Architectural**
Architectural Style: Vernacular Agricultural/Industrial
Architect/Builder: Unknown
Source of Information: Compass

**Historical**
Original owner: Denver Union Stock Yard Co.
Original use(s): Hay Barn
Current use(s): Unknown
Historical background:

4875 Packing House Road (also known as the King Energy Inc. Building or, from this point forward, Hay Barn No. 3) is a large brick building with several additions from different periods constructed from brick, CMU, and wood. Hay Barn No. 3 was originally constructed as part of the Denver Union Stock Yard Co. (DUSY) complex along the South Platte River.

**The Denver Union Stock Yards**

The DUSY was incorporated in 1881 and grew slowly in its earlier years as a modest collection of wooden livestock pens. Over the next several decades the complex expanded through the introduction of rail lines into the stockyards allowing the DUSY to increase its efficiency in moving livestock to and from the stockyards. Around this time, several different companies involved in the slaughtering and processing livestock began developing facilities around the DUSY. These included the Colorado Packing & Provisions company (later Armor and
Company), Swift and Company, and the Colorado Animal By-Product Manufacturing Company, among others. In 1906, the DUSY helped to establish the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) which was and remains one of the largest stock shows in the United States.

With the advent of the NWSS and increased industrial capacity in the area around the stockyards, the DUSY saw its profile as a major livestock center raised dramatically. Over the first several decades of the 20th century, the DUSY set about expanding its facilities. Articles in the Denver Post and Rocky Mountain News throughout 1916 and 1917 record construction activity in the stockyards, noting that the capacity for livestock was increased by 50%-100% for different types of livestock.

The DUSY remained a major livestock processing center into the second half of the 20th century. However, during the post-World War II era, there was a movement to relocate industrial activities such as large-scale food processing away from urban centers. This shift began the slow demise of the DUSY. Beginning in the 1960s portions of the stockyards were slowly transferred to use by the NWSS as the stock show continued to grow. Today, the majority of buildings that made up the DUSY and the surrounding industrial facilities have been demolished to make way for new development as part of the National Western Center.

Hay Barn No. 3

The brick core of the Hay Barn No. 3 is a large rectangular structure featuring a corbeled cornice, decorative piers at the corners, and a terracotta coping. The building is oriented north-south near a bend in the train tracks and Packing House Road (now National Western Drive). The southeast corner of the brick structure was clipped at an angle to accommodate the main axial path leading from the Stock Exchange Building through the stockyard. There are several openings on the north and south elevations of the brick core; however, the original pattern of windows and doors is not apparent with most openings appearing to have been altered.

The exact date of construction for this core brick structure is unknown. The 1904 Sanborn show sections of the DUSY where buildings and the stockyards were present in that year and omits the portion of the site where Hay Barn No. 3 is located. Typically, if a building were located on the site in that year, the Sanborn would have been drawn to accommodate the structure for review and assessment, suggesting that Hay Barn No. 3 was not present in 1904. The Baist’s Real Estate Atlas from 1905 confirms this further with no structure shown at the location of the hay barn.
Figure 1: 1904 Sanborn (Volume 2, Page 259) showing the DUSY and The Colorado Packing & Provision Co. The location of Hay Barn No. 3 (out of frame) is indicated with a red arrow.
Figure 2: 1905 Baist’s Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Denver (Plate 27, cropped) showing the DUSY. The location of Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a red arrow.

The 1925 correction to the 1904 Sanborn also excludes the location of Hay Barn No. 3. The 1929 Sanborn is the first to show Hay Barn No. 3, suggesting it was constructed sometime between 1925 and 1929. A comparison of the 1925 and 1929 Sanborns show that the stockyards had been dramatically expanded by 1929, originally ending just south of the current site of Hay Barn No. 3 and extending between two legs of the railroad spurs that serviced DUSY. By 1929, the eastern of these spurs had been removed and the stockades had been
extended to the east as far as the main line of the railroad running to the Northeast and as far north as Race Street.

Figure 3: 1929 Sanborn (Volume 3, Page 363) showing the DUSY and surrounding meat processing facilities. The location of Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a red arrow. The main axial path leading from the exchange building to Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a blue arrow.

While the Sanborns would suggest that the expansion of the DUSY occurred between 1925 and 1929, articles in the Denver Post and the Rocky Mountain News from 1916 and 1917 discuss massive expansions of the complex. A Denver Post article from May 27th, 1917 discussed the dramatic increases in the handling capacity of the DUSY. Another Denver Post article from
December 30th, 1917, discusses the completed expansions stating, “Early in the year the stockyards company purchased thirty acres adjoining the present yards to the northeast and a large portion of it was put into cattle pens.” A Pictorial Supplement to the *Rocky Mountain News* from November 18th, 1917 shows the expanded cattle pens in an arrangement matching the 1929 Sanborn. Unfortunately, the image is not clear enough to identify Hay Barn No. 3; however, it seems likely that Hay Barn No. 3 was constructed to provide additional hay storage for the expanded stockyards at this time. Hay Barn No. 4, located just north of Hay Barn No. 3 was likely also constructed around this time to serve the increased capacity of the stockades.

![Pictorial Supplement](image)

*Figure 4: Image from Rocky Mountain News Pictorial Supplement from November 18th, 1917 showing the expansion of the stockyards as completed that year. The image was likely taken from the Stock Exchange Building. The main axial path leading from the exchange building to Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a blue arrow.*

Hay Barn No. 3 appears to have remained largely unchanged until between 1951 and 1956 when the existing small brick addition was constructed to the west of the core structure, according to the Sanborns. This addition is very minimal with no brick detailing. It extends from the north elevation of the barn, about one third of the way along the west elevation. The northwest corner of the addition is clipped so as not to interfere with the railroad spur to the north of the building.
Many of the surveys made of this building state that the next major alteration to this building occurred in 1959, with the construction of the large CMU addition along the east side of the building. The addition is slightly shorter than the brick core but is wider and longer, extending along and past the full length of the western elevation of the core, even filling in the clipped corner at the southeast corner. There are large garage doors on the north and east elevations, and all four elevations feature random fenestration of squat rectangular windows high on the walls. The date of 1959 seems to have been chosen for this addition because Denver Assessor Records indicated that as the date of construction for the building, suggesting a major alteration.

Figure 5: 1929 Sanborn, corrected to 1956 (Volume 3, Page 363) showing the DUSY and surrounding meat processing facilities. The location of Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a red arrow. Note the small addition along the western elevation.
in that year. However, the Sanborn from 1961, 1967, and an aerial photograph from 1971 all show the building with the same footprint as indicated in the 1956 Sanborn. The first appearance of the building in its current form is a 1991 aerial photograph, meaning that the large eastern addition was constructed sometime between 1971 and 1991.

Figure 6: 1971 aerial photograph (courtesy of HistoriAerials.com) showing the DUSY and surrounding meat processing facilities. The location of Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a red arrow. Note the absence of the addition along the eastern elevation.
Figure 7: 1991 aerial photograph (courtesy of HistoriAerials.com) showing the DUSY and surrounding meat processing facilities. The location of Hay Barn No. 3 is indicated with a red arrow. Note the large addition along the eastern elevation and small lean-to addition along the western elevation.

Around this time, the northern portions of the stockyard were being repurposed as part of development plans for National Western Center, with many of the livestock pens being cleared for development, as is already evident in the 1967 Sanborn Map and the 1971 aerial photograph. It seems likely that the addition was constructed as a part of this development given the timing and that its construction would have required the clearing of many pens. By 1991 the wooden lean-to addition along the western elevation of the core is also visible. It is unclear as to why the Denver assessor records list 1959 as the date of construction, as this aligns with no known alterations to the building.

**Source of Information:** Denver Assessor’s Office; Sanborn Insurance Maps from 1904, 1904 (corrected to 1925), 1929-30, 1929 (corrected to 1937), 1929 (corrected to 1951), 1929 (corrected to 1956), 1929 (corrected to 1958), 1929 (corrected to 1961), 1962 (corrected to 1967); *Denver Post; Rocky Mountain News; HistoricAerials.com.*
Designation Eligibility Assessment

Landmark Designation Criteria:

A structure or district may be designated for preservation if, due to its significance, it meets the criteria listed in subsections (1), (2), and (3) below

(1) The structure or district maintains its integrity;

(2) The structure or district is more than 30 years old, or is of exceptional importance; and

(3) The structure or district meets at least 3 of the following 10 criteria:

☒ It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;

☐ It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;

☐ It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;

☐ It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;

☐ It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;

☒ It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;

☒ It promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;

☒ It represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations;

☐ It is a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural understanding;

☐ It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

Integrity: If a structure maintains its integrity, it may be designated for preservation.

☒ Has integrity
☐ Does not have integrity
Does the structure have potential for designation?

☒ Has potential for designation
☐ Does not have potential for designation

Hay Barn No. 3 is potentially eligible because *it has direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation.* The hay barn is associated with the historical development of the Denver Union Stock Yards (DUSY) and with the growth of the National Western Stock Show (NWSS). The barn appears to have been constructed during a period of expansion at the DUSY as acres of new stockyards were added and more animals needed to be fed while on site. The original form of Hay Barn No. 3 has been obstructed over the years with additions between 1951 and 1956 and between 1971 and 1991; however, these additions are related to the ongoing use of the barn by the DUSY and then the site’s redevelopment by the NWSS. These additions have therefore attained significance in their own rights and the property retains integrity in representing periods of growth at the DUSY and redevelopment by the NWSS.

Hay Barn No. 3 is potentially eligible because *it promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity.* The hay barn appears to be the last remaining hay barn that serviced the DUSY. As one of the few remaining vernacular agricultural/industrial buildings that was a key part of the day-to-day operations of the DUSY, Hay Barn No. 3 represents a rare structure with the clear ability to promote an understanding of the urban environment of the former stockyards. The industrial form of the building also illustrates the massive scale of operations at the DUSY, standing in sharp contrast with the appearance and of hay barns on small scale farms and ranches.

Hay Barn No. 3 is potentially eligible because *it represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations.* Originally constructed to store the hay used to feed the livestock kept at the DUSY, Hay Barn No. 3 represents the historical use of the land now being redeveloped as the National Western Center. Hay Barn No. 3 is a vernacular agricultural/industrial structure which represents the former agricultural/industrial character of the site and an important component of day-to-day operations at the stockyards. The barn demonstrates how the stockyards functioned during the height of the DUSY being one of 5 identified Hay Barns,, and the last remaining, which were required to feed the fast herds of livestock that passed through the stockyards.