



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
CITY OF CHICAGO

March 14, 2024

The Honorable Anna M. Valencia  
City Clerk  
City of Chicago  
Room 107, City Hall  
121 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

**RE: Ordinance designating Apollo's 2000 (2875 W. Cermak Road) as a Chicago Landmark**

Dear Clerk Valencia:

We are filing with your office for introduction at the March 20, 2024, City Council meeting as a transmittal to the Mayor and City Council of Chicago the recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that Apollo's 2000 be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

The material being submitted to you for this proposal includes the:

1. Recommendation of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks; and
2. Proposed Ordinance.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Dickhut  
Deputy Commissioner  
Bureau of Citywide Systems and Historic Preservation

encls.

cc: The Honorable Monique L. Scott, Alderwoman, 24<sup>th</sup> Ward (*w/o enclosures*)

## ORDINANCE

### Apollo's 2000

#### 2875 W. Cermak Rd.

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Municipal Code of Chicago (the "Municipal Code"), Sections 2-120-620 through -690, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks (the "Commission") has determined that Apollo's 2000 (the "Building"), located at 2875 W. Cermak Rd/, Chicago, Illinois, as more fully described in **Exhibit A**, attached hereto and incorporated herein, satisfies two criteria for landmark designation as set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1) and (4) of the Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, the Building is the last surviving theater commissioned by Louis and Meyer Marks, Chicago movie exhibitors and theater builders whose business began with a nickelodeon in 1910 to building two of Chicago largest movie palaces, the Granada and Marbro theater in the late 1920; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1990, Apollo's 2000 has transformed the Building an event and performance space that contributes to the cultural landscape of Little Village and Chicago's wider Hispanic community by promoting Latin music, lectures and supporting local non-profit organizations; and

**WHEREAS**, the Building showcased Spanish Rock bands in 1990s, a time when this popular genre was overlooked by Chicago promoters. Artists such as Maná, Los Fabulosos Cadillacs, Fobia and La Ley have graced the stage at Apollo's 2000 ; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to Spanish Rock, Apollo's 2000 has hosted performances from other genres of Latin music, including Spanish Pop, Latin Jazz, Cuban, and Mexican regional musical styles.; and

**WHEREAS**, the Building has hosted numerous politicians seeking to reach out to the Latino community, including Vice President Al Gore, former Governor Pat Quinn, Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García, and Senator Bernie Sanders; and

**WHEREAS**, the Building originally housed the Marshall Square Theatre, a significant "transitional" motion picture theater in Chicago from 1917 spanning the small nickelodeons that came before it and the larger and more elaborate "movie palaces" of the 1920s; and

**WHEREAS**, with its arched facade framed by domed towers, as well as its sculptural eagles, and its ornament derived from classicism, the Building is a fine example of Beaux-Arts Architecture applied to an early motion picture theater; and

**WHEREAS**, the scale and ornate quality of the Building's architecture, on both its interior and exterior, reflect the ideals of historic movie theater design to use architecture as advertisement and to attract customers with a promise of luxury and escape from the ordinary ; and

**WHEREAS**, the Building meets two criteria for landmark designation set forth in Section 2-120-620 (1) and (4) of the Municipal Code; and

**WHEREAS**, consistent with Section 2-120-630 of the Municipal Code, the Building has a significant historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value, the integrity of which is preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express such historic, community, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 8, 2024, the Commission adopted a resolution recommending to the City Council of the City of Chicago (the "City Council") that the Building be designated a Chicago Landmark; now, therefore,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:**

**SECTION 1.** The above recitals are hereby adopted as the findings of the City Council.

**SECTION 2.** The Building is hereby designated a Chicago Landmark in accordance with Section 2-120-700 of the Municipal Code.

**SECTION 3.** For purposes of Sections 2-120-740 and 2-120-770 of the Municipal Code governing permit review, the significant historical and architectural features of the Building are identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the Building.
- The interior lobby.
- The interior of the auditorium.

A blade sign and marquee have always been part of the Building's exterior elevations. As with many historic theaters, these features have evolved over time in terms of size, material and illumination. The Commission's review of work proposed to the blade sign or marquee should ensure that these continue to be features of the Building, while allowing reasonable change and flexibility to meet new needs.

1990 changes to the interiors of the lobby and auditorium, including floor finishes, new floor platforms, three bars, neon lighting, chandeliers, stage lighting and its ceiling-mounted trusses, cameras, screens, and bathrooms are specifically excluded from the significant historical and architectural features.

**SECTION 4.** The Commission is hereby directed to create a suitable plaque appropriately identifying the Building as a Chicago Landmark.

**SECTION 5.** If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

**SECTION 6.** All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

**SECTION 7.** This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.