FINAL

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name HCS Motor Car Company

other names/site number S. Cohn & Son Inc.; Capital View/098-295-01417

2. Location

street & number 1402 North Capitol Avenue N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Indianapolis N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Marion code 097 zip code 46202

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be consider significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:)

Name of Property | County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-state
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Manufacturing Fa

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

19th and 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK
roof METAL: Steel
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- [x] **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] **B** removed from its original location.
- [ ] **C** a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] **D** a cemetery.
- [ ] **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] **F** a commemorative property.
- [ ] **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

Areas of significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1920-1927

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hunter, Edgar O. Architect; Rubush, Preston C. Architect

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- [ ] preliminary determination if individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____

Primary location of additional data:

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State agency
- [ ] Federal agency
- [ ] Local government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

Name of repository:

Name of Property | County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	571780	4404380
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amy Kotzbauer

organization ASK Consulting Services, LLC date 03/14/2008

street & number 6805 Kingswood Drive telephone 3176528456

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46256

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name 1402 N. Capitol Associates, LLC; Attn: Richard Hen

street & number 902 N. Capitol Ave telephone 3174236000

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46202

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

7. Narrative Description:

The HCS Motor Car Company building at 1402 North Capitol Avenue was constructed in 1920-1921 with a reinforced concrete frame and floors with twelve-inch, buff-colored glazed brick, curtain walls. The neo-classical style building was designed by Rubush & Hunter and illustrates many of the architectural features common to their work.

In a historic context study and property type analysis completed for Indianapolis' automobile industry by the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission in 1990, the HCS building at 1402 North Capitol is highlighted several times and is identified as a significant example of the third of four property type classifications: Automobile and Parts Factory Sites (1900-1940). This type of automobile factory building is described as compact, multi-story, single buildings organized for vertical movement of parts and finished products. They were typically one to four-story buildings built after 1910 but not later than 1920. Many incorporated sales showrooms and offices in the first floor and were generally constructed with reinforced concrete, with brick or tile curtain walls. Most had industrial metal sash windows and were built specifically to manufacture automobiles and automobile parts. The years 1910 to 1925 reflected a marked increase in the size and sophistication of concrete construction in these types of buildings.

At the time of its construction, five-sixths of the exterior walls were comprised of industrial metal sash frame style windows with mesh re-enforced glass panes. However in the 1950s, 71% of these windows (76 of 108 original openings) were removed and many of the openings in-filled with concrete block. By 2005, there remained two floors of original windows on the south and east sides of the building. Most surviving examples of this building type exhibit alterations to the windows including glass block or concrete block in-fill. However, an indication of the overall window pattern remained so as not to unduly harm the property's architectural integrity. All of the original window and door openings were re-established during the rehabilitation project that took place between 2005 and 2007.

The front, or east façade, is five bays wide with three wide central bays and two narrower window bays at the north and south ends of the façade. The north and south facades are each eleven bays wide. By 2005, the west façade, or rear façade, was completely blocked in on all four floors. After a complete rehabilitation project at the property, all door and window openings were re-established with NPS approved windows and design elements.

The first floor has a concrete water table around the building and at the top of the first floor there is a horizontal, molded concrete band running along the rear façade of the building and across the front façade. The concrete band on the front facade is interrupted at the center bay, indicating the location of the former metal marquee and front entry which appears in a circa 1925 Bass Photo Company photograph (neg # 71824-f).

7. Narrative Description Con't.:

The façade design consists of a brick pier and spandrel pattern crowned by a cast concrete cornice and terra cotta capped parapet ornamented with blank shields. Other than the raised brickwork which appears in the spandrels, the other decorative elements appear at the top of the building. At the top of each flat pier is a triangular shaped inset terra cotta piece. The cornice and parapet coping is a curvilinear pediment with a single large terra cotta volute. The above-mentioned Bass photograph shows that there was a large HCS Motor Car Company logo below the scroll work, with the same logo appearing above the main entrance, which was formerly located at the center of the front façade. This logo consisted of an American shield flanked by spread wings with "HCS" superimposed symmetrically in the center, however, it was removed from the building at an unknown date.

The interior spaces of the HCS building were originally very industrial with mostly concrete finishes including floors, walls, support columns and ceilings. Most of the floors were completely open with two rows of support columns and some office spaces toward the front or east façade of the building. Freight elevator and restroom spaces were along the rear or west façade of each floor. During the recent rehabilitation, these spaces were modified for use as conference and training rooms, however their basic shape was retained. The fourth floor was differentiated by a steel ceiling structure which featured three large skylights. By 2005, these skylights had been removed and roofed over. Today, the interior spaces have been converted to office use, however great care was taken to preserve the industrial feel and character of the building. The building was the focus of a Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program project which was completed in August of 2007.

8. Statement of Significance:

The HCS Motor Car Company factory building at 1402 North Capitol Avenue is historically and architecturally significant in the history of Indianapolis' automobile industry. It is also historically important as the site where HCS automobiles and later HCS taxi cabs were manufactured from 1921 to 1927, and has been identified repeatedly in surveys and context studies of the industry.

The manufacture of automobiles, automobile parts and the sale of automobiles in Indianapolis was an important part of the City's industrial development particularly in the first half of the twentieth century. Up until the late nineteenth century the City's industrial importance was agricultural in nature -- slaughtering and meat packing were the number one industry in 1890. The automobile industry's growth in central Indiana was stimulated in large part by the discovery of natural gas in the 1880s and 90s, and its growth in Indianapolis greatly influenced by the industrial advantages that a large railroad center provided.

At the end of the 19th Century, the manufacture of carriages and wagons was the City's seventh leading industry and was ranked a close second in the national market producing 13.5 percent of the nation's

total. A clear predecessor to the automobile industry, the strong marketplace position of this industry helped propel the emerging automobile manufacturers in Indianapolis to national prominence very quickly. For instance, by 1905, there were already seven automobile manufacturers in Indianapolis accounting for 36% of the City's total value of products produced.

In 1911, the 500 Mile Race in Speedway was started as a way to allow automobile manufacturers to showcase their products through competition. The race helped focus even greater attention on Indianapolis and helped popularize the automobile nationally. This attention also began to attract race car builders and automobile parts manufacturer to the City, making the automobile and related manufacturing industries a dominant force in the local economy.

It was through Speedway associations that the Empire Motor Car Company was founded in 1909, and Harry C. Stutz became clearly significant to the industry as this company's first designer and factory manager. Stutz was one of the most important people in the automobile industry in Indianapolis and the nation, and his name is interwoven into the history of the national automobile industry and his infamous Stutz Bearcat, a jazz-age icon in popular history.

Harry C. Stutz arrived in Indianapolis in 1903 as superintendent of the Lindsay Automobile Parts Company and between 1903 and 1911 he worked for six different automobile and parts makers. In 1911, he launched his own, Ideal Motor Car Company, by building a race car for the first 500 Mile Race. In 1913 he formed the Stutz Motor Car Company and manufactured the renown Stutz Bearcat.

In 1919, after he resigned from the Stutz Motor Car Company of America and sold his remaining shares, he formed the HCS Motor Car Company and the Stutz Fire Engine Company, both of which lasted until 1927. Stutz chose to sell the company to a group of New York investors when he was at the prime age of 42 so that he could build a moderate-sized quality car – a junior version of the Bearcat -- and take advantage of the post-war boom. His instant success in this venture was evidenced by the numerous advance orders that were received for this new creation – the HCS. Advertisements from the day claimed the HCS to be the greatest achievement of veteran automobile designer and builder, Harry C. Stutz… and hatched the slogan – "The HCS Car: born with a reputation".

The HCS was an assembled car using components produced by other Indianapolis-based automobile parts companies. The engines used included the 50 hp "Weidely", produced at the Premier Motor Car Company factory at 201 South Shelby and a six-cylinder "Midwest Engine" made by the Midwest Engine Company at 19th and Martindale. The HCS was the Pace Car of the 1921 500 Mile Race and Harry drove it himself. In 1923, another HCS model was used as a race car and broke the 1919 qualifying record with a run of 108.17 mph. Stutz' HCS race car started first and finished first in the 1923 race.

In 1925, the HCS became the HCS Cab Manufacturing Company, producing taxi-cabs, until bankruptcy closed the facility in 1927. The national economic climate resulting from the First World War

contributed to the demise of a number of Indianapolis' companies including HCS. The already expensive Indianapolis-made autos became more expensive when compared to Detroit makers and with war-time inflation prices skyrocketed. Although immediately after the war sales went up as pent-up demand was unleashed, just as quickly a post-war recession set in and most of Indianapolis' automobile manufacturers were out of business by the end of the 1920s.

The HCS building was designed by one of Indianapolis' most important architectural firms -- Rubush & Hunter. With principals Preston C. Rubush (1867-1947) and Edgar O. Hunter (1873-1949) at the helm, this firm gained considerable local prominence in its field through important commissions such as the Masonic Temple (1907); City Hall (1909); the Circle Theater (1916); the Indiana Theater (1927), and the Stutz Motor Company complex (1914-1920). Rubush & Hunter's dominance in Indianapolis, can be attributed to several factors: they were both well trained professionals, their skill sets complimented each other; they were politically savvy and very involved in community activities; they employed recent technology and were creative yet practical in their designs; they assembled a proficient team of partners including other designers, craftsman, engineers, and contractors; and they were practicing at a time of unprecedented growth in Indianapolis. Although no direct connection to Stutz has been uncovered, the firms work for Stutz coincides with Preston Rubush's election as the first president of the Hoosier Motor Club in 1914.

The HCS building was constructed in 1920, the same year buildings across the street were built to house the Stutz Fire Engine Company (demolished). Between 1910 and 1920, North Capitol Avenue became known as "Automobile Row" because of the number of automobile manufacturing facilities that located along it north of the 500 block.

The historic context study and property type analysis completed about Indianapolis' automobile industry, identified the HCS building as a significant example of the property type: Automobile and Parts Factory Sites (1900-1940). This type of automobile factory building is described as compact, multi-story, single buildings organized for vertical movement of parts and finished products. They were typically one-to four-story buildings built after 1910 but not later than 1920. Many incorporated sales showrooms and offices in the first floor and were generally constructed with reinforced concrete, with brick or tile curtain walls. Most had industrial metal sash windows and were built specifically to manufacture automobiles and automobile parts. The years 1910 to 1925 reflect a marked increase in the size and sophistication of concrete construction in these types of buildings.

In comparison with most of the automobile and parts factory complexes, which frequently used separate buildings for different assembly functions, complexes in urban settings needed to have a vertical orientation for the manufacturing process. Single building urban-based sites set aside different floors for various production operations. HCS is an important example of this. Frame assembly took place on the first floor, engine assembly on the second, painting on the third, and car finishing on the fourth.

Automobile manufacturing buildings were typically functional buildings with minimal architectural ornamentation ranging from plain reinforced concrete to well-appointed brick facades with concrete and terra cotta accents. HCS is a good example of the latter, with many brick, cast concrete and terra cotta details and accents.

During the 1940s, the building housed the Continental Optical Corporation's factory. By 1974, the occupants were the Shuron Continental Division of Textron, Inc, and from 1977 to 2005, the building returned to an automobile related use under the ownership of S. Cohn & Son Company, an automotive wholesale parts distributor. Between 2005 and 2007, the building was rehabilitated for an office use and utilized the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. All work completed during this period met with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the project has been approved by the National Park Service.

In 1980, an in-depth study of the automobile industry was completed and the North Capitol automobile row was deemed eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, including the HSC Motor Car Company building. In 1984, the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission prepared a thematic district nomination for listing in the National Register for automobile industry related buildings. In August 1986, the 43 properties included in this nomination were listed in the Indiana State Register of Historic Sites and Structures. The HCS Motor Car Company building at 1402 North Capitol Avenue was included in this listing.

9. Bibliography:

Casler, Patricia J., "The Architecture of Rubush and Hunter" (M.S., thesis, School of Architecture and Planning), Columbia University, 1985.

Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, Indianapolis Automobile Industry Thematic District (a National Register of Historic Places nomination), 1986, pp. 88-92.

Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission, Indianapolis-Marion County Automobile Industry, 1890-1940: Historic Context Study & Property-Type Analysis, 1990.

Katzell, Raymond A., The Splendid Stutz: The Cars, Companies, People and Races., 1996, pp. 321-334.

Research files of Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, "Architects-Indianapolis: Rubush & Hunter".

10. Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at the northwest corner of North Capitol Avenue and West 14th Street; proceeding west along the north line of West 14th Street for approximately 210 feet, thence north 81 feet, thence east 210 feet, thence south 81 feet to the place of beginning.

10. Boundary Justification

The boundary described above corresponds with the footprint of the HCS Motor Car Company building which is built with no setbacks from streets or alleys running adjacent its facades. The building has no other yard area associated with its historic use and a survey was completed in January 2005 by Jefferey A. Meyerrose which support these measurements.

HCS Motor Car Company, Marion Co., photo 1

HCS Motor Car Company, Marion Co., photo 3

HCS Motor Car Company, Marion Co., photo 9

HCS Motor Car Company, Marion Co., photo 12

HCS Motor Car Company, Marion Co., photo 16

HCS Motor Car Company, Marion Co., photo 21