

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Battelstein's
Other name/site number: Battelstein's at 812 Main, Downtown Battelstein's
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 812 Main Street
City or town: Houston State: Texas County: Harris
Not for publication: [] Vicinity: []

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this
[n] 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 [x] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[] national [] statewide [x] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [x] A [] B [x] C [] D

Signature of certifying official / Title: Mark Wolfe, State Historic Preservation Officer
Date: 12/16/19
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[] entered in the National Register
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register
[] other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: COMMERCE/TRADE: Department store

Current Functions: WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification: MODERN MOVEMENT: Modern

Principal Exterior Materials: BRICK, STONE

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 6-9)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: COMMERCE, ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance: 1950-1967

Significant Dates: 1950, 1967

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Finger, Joseph, Rustay, George (Architects); Tellepsen Construction Company (Builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 10-16)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 17-19)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. *Approved May 7, 2019.*
- 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:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston, Texas

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 0.14 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 29.758261°N Longitude: -95.364287°W

Verbal Boundary Description: Lot 3 and Tracts 11 & 12, Block 92, South Side Buffalo Bayou (SSBB), Houston, Harris County, Texas.

Boundary Justification: The boundary includes the legal parcel historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Amanda Barry, Associate, with assistance from Anna Mod
Organization: MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
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Date: April 2019

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 20-26)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 27-56)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 5, 57-68)

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2019 Photographs

Name of Property: Battelstein's
City of Vicinity: Houston
County: Harris
State: TX
Name of Photographer: Amanda Barry
Date of Photographs: March 2019
Location of Original Digital Files: MacRostie Historic Advisors, LLC
20 N. Sampson Street, Suite 102
Houston, TX 77003

Photo 1

East façade facing Main Street, view northwest

Photo 2

East façade facing Main Street, view southwest

Photo 3

East façade facing Main Street, detail of inset second floor balcony and ribbon windows, view west

Photo 4

First floor, original mezzanine beyond and at right, view west

Photo 5

First floor, original mezzanine beyond and at left, view east

Photo 6

Mezzanine with original supports and grooved plaster, ribbed frame formwork construction, view southwest

Photo 7

Third floor, possible children's fashions, view east

Photo 8

Fourth floor, possible men's fashions, view east

Photo 9

Fifth floor, ladies' fashions, view east

Photo 10

Seventh floor, transition to administrative space, view east

Photo 11

First floor, detail of original aluminum frieze with crimped aluminum spandrel at location of historic entry, original light cove at ceiling, view west

Photo 12

First floor, detail of original chamfered pilaster with polished granite at location of historic entry, view southwest

Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Narrative Description

Battelstein's is a 63,960 square foot ten-story concrete-framed Modern commercial high-rise located at 812 Main Street in downtown Houston, Texas. The building was designed by Joseph Finger and George Rustay and built by Tellepsen Construction Company. Completed in 1950, the building is a Modern interpretation of the two-part vertical block. The upper eight floors contain the upper zone and are uniform, identical to one another in design and differentiated from the lower zone of the ground floor storefront and second floor with inset balcony. The high-rise has a rectangular plan that measures approximately 52 feet by 128 feet with the shorter span facing east onto Main Street. The building's principal exterior materials are smooth-faced limestone on the east façade and brick on the north and south (side) elevations. The predominant window type throughout is a two-light with two-light transom bi-fold aluminum window. Floors within the building were divided into two functions: retail and administrative. The building's exterior is in good condition with minor alterations to the ground floor storefront since its construction. The interior retains the spatial relationships of volume and composition in the primary public spaces. Although the upper floors are compromised, they still retain their original open plan, and many retain their decorative ceilings.

The property began as an early twentieth-century building. Sanborn maps from 1924 and historic photographs indicate that the original 812 Main Street building was a two-story commercial building (Map 5, Figures 1 & 2). The architect for the 1924 building is unknown. In 1934, Battelstein's hired Joseph Finger to remodel the building.¹ In 1937, the building was enlarged to five floors and is visually represented in a 1948 advertisement for the department store (Figure 3).² No finishes that date to this period remain. However, the transition between the older, 1930s portion and the 1950 addition is evident in the stairwell between the sixth floor (the roof level of the 1930s building) and seventh floor where the stairs transition from concrete to exposed metal. Additionally, exposed structure on the lower floors is ribbed frame formwork construction and exposed structure on the upper floors is board formed concrete construction.

Site

Battelstein's is located at 812 Main Street in downtown Houston. The setting is urban with wide sidewalks and the city's MetroRail "Red Line" runs along Main Street in front of the building (Photo 1 & 2). Downtown Houston's Main Street is oriented to Buffalo Bayou, resulting in a street grid that is positioned approximately 45 degrees from true north. The building is sited at Lot 3, Tracts 11 & 12, Block 92, South Side Buffalo Bayou (SSBB) Subdivision. Block 92 is bounded by one-way streets: Rusk Avenue to the north, Main Street to the east, Walker Street to the south, and Travis Street to the west. The building is adjacent and physically connected to the J.W. Marriott Houston Downtown Hotel, historically known as the S.F. Carter Second National Bank Building, to the north (side) and the 801 Travis Building to the west (rear). A fourteen-story parking garage, the 816 Main Garage, is adjacent to the building at the south (side).

The surrounding area is an urban commercial neighborhood with skyscrapers, multi-story parking garages, and surface parking lots. The building is two blocks south of the Main Street/Market Square Historic District (NRHP 1983), approximately one block southeast of the Mellie and Niels Esperson Building, one block northwest of the Melrose Building (NRHP 2014), one block south of both the Gulf Building (NRHP 1983) and the Houston Bar Center Building (NRHP 2018), three blocks southwest of the Houston Post-Dispatch Building (NRHP 2002), and half a mile east of Houston City Hall (NRHP 1990), also designed by Joseph Finger.

¹ Texas Association of General Contractor's Bulletin, various dates; *Jewish Herald*, March 26, 1909, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com>.

² "Abe Battelstein is a Rarity – He's a Native Houstonian," *Houston Chronicle*, November 7, 1950.

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Exterior

Battelstein's is a ten-story concrete-framed Modern commercial high-rise (Photos 1 – 3).³ The building's façade faces east onto Main Street; the north (side) elevation borders and is partially obscured by the J.W. Marriott Hotel; these two buildings share a light court that begins approximately 40 feet west of the primary elevation. The south (side) elevation is obscured by an adjacent fourteen-story parking garage. The building abuts the 801 Travis Building at the rear. The Modern high-rise has a rectangular plan that measures approximately 52 feet by 128 feet with the shorter span facing east onto Main Street. The building's principal exterior materials are smooth-faced limestone on the east façade and brick on the north and south (side) elevations. The predominant window type is an aluminum bi-fold, two-light with two-light transom. Historic signage visible in historic photos has been removed (Figures 4-6).

The building has a flat roof with a simple, flared ledge coping. On the roof there are two flat roofed, brick veneered, connected penthouses located at the rear of the building. The taller penthouse contains mechanical equipment. The shorter penthouse contains two bathrooms. There is also a circular metal water tower on the roof that is no longer in service. The penthouses and water tower are not visible from the street. They can only be seen from the upper floors of neighboring high-rises and skyscrapers.

East (Main Street) Façade

The existing storefront is obscured by a temporary plywood storefront, painted by local Houston artist Gonzo. The cantilevered canopy with aluminum fascia above the storefront is not original but was installed soon after the building was constructed. It was a shared canopy for the whole block by the late 1950s. The canopy has been truncated and is in poor condition with only remnants of the aluminum fascia remaining.

Beyond the plywood is a non-original aluminum and glass storefront system installed flush with the block face at an unknown date. Remnants of the original inset store display window curbs are extant as well as the historic entry, a cased opening flanked by chamfered polished red granite pilasters (Photo 12). Above the opening is a convex aluminum frieze that historically featured a "Battelstein's" sign spelled out in individual letters (since removed). Above the frieze is a corresponding convex crimped aluminum spandrel (Photo 11).

The second floor has an inset three bay balcony arranged in an "A-B-A" pattern by two engaged columns *in antis* clad with fluted aluminum. The outer "A" bays are book ended by curved, limestone walls and have two aluminum bi-fold two-light windows with two-light transoms. The center "B" bay has three similar aluminum bi-fold windows. Below the balcony are two flagpoles with Art Deco style speed-ring finials (Photo 3).

The upper eight floors are identical and are separated from the lower two floors by an unbroken horizontal limestone band, which also serves as the window sill for the third floor windows. The ribbon windows on each floor are subtly divided into three-bays in a similar A-B-A pattern. The grouping of windows on each floor are enframed by the façade limestone creating a distinctive single framed opening at each level. The window type, material, and composition is identical to the lower floor with one exception: a fixed one-light aluminum window with transom conceals the interior structural column. The condition of the windows ranges from fair to poor. Most of the windows are covered in graffiti.

³ Peter C. Papademetriou, "Doldrums in the 'Forties: Houston Building Design in Transition," *Texas Architect* (November/December 1979): 28-35.

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North (Side) Elevation

The north elevation is obscured from the street, but is visible from the corridors and guestrooms of the adjacent J.W. Marriott Houston Downtown Hotel. The exposed portion of the elevation is faced with red brick laid in a running bond pattern. The same bi-fold aluminum windows present on the east (Main Street) façade are intermittently present on this side elevation. Some window openings have been infilled with brick or mechanical equipment; other window openings are missing windows entirely. Window openings have limestone sills.

South (Side) Elevation

The south elevation abuts a parking garage and is not visible. Interior configuration indicates there are no windows on this elevation.

West (Rear) Elevation

The building abuts the 801 Travis Building at the rear and is similarly not visible.

Interior (Figures 18-30)

Floors within the building were divided into two functions: retail and administrative. Floors one through six were the retail floors and have an open plan that allowed customers to move effortlessly throughout the store between displays. The structural columns on these floors were integrated into the department store design, originally clad with mirrors. Floors seven through ten were the administrative floors and were private spaces. Floor seven has an open plan with cubicles. The historic finishes and configurations have been stripped from the remaining upper floors and are unknown.

Circulation is located at the rear of the building. Each floor is serviced by four passenger elevators with curved brass surrounds. A fifth service elevator is located at the northwest corner. Circulation stairs between floors two and ten are located along the north elevation. The stairs are concrete risers and treads with a simple metal picket balustrade and wooden handrail. The concrete treads transition to exposed metal at the seventh floor where the upper floors were added in 1950. A circular fire escape chute manufactured by Haslett Chute and Conveyor Co. is located at the northeast corner of the building.

First Floor

The first floor is an open plan defined by the column grid with a horseshoe-shaped suspended curvilinear mezzanine (Photos 4 & 5). The mezzanine is detailed with horizontally grooved plasterwork (Photo 6). The mezzanine is accessed by an original semi-circular stair with its original streamline aluminum balustrade. The design of the balustrade is similar to those found on the exterior of Houston's City Hall, also designed by Joseph Finger.

A non-historic mezzanine addition was added along the south wall at an unknown date and is supported with square metal posts. Non-historic gypsum board partitions are extant along the northwest wall; these are remnants from a previous night club conversion. The ceiling is recessed with curvilinear light coves accented by curtains. The square columns are clad with plaster and have no capitals; they are enframed with fluorescent tube light fixtures.

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Second Floor

The second floor is an open plan and similarly features a recessed ceiling with curvilinear light coves. There is a second curvilinear light cove with an infinity motif near the elevator bank. There is a wide set of steps along the south wall leading to an enclosed portal. Historically the steps led to an adjacent building, also owned by Battelstein's. The adjacent building was later replaced by a parking garage.

Floors Three through Six

Floors three through six were individualized, with entire floors serving a singular purpose. The floors are open plan with perimeter spaces that supported private functions including patron dressing rooms (Photos 7-9). Each floor has a unique decorative scheme dating to the 1950s/1960s that incorporates, all of which contributed to the historic character of the space. Remnants of these historic finishes - brightly-colored carpet, bright paint colors, intricately-patterned wall paper, and geometric lighting design - are extant yet significantly compromised due to vandalism and neglect. Based on these extant finishes, it is possible that the third floor was children's fashions, the fourth floor was men's fashions, and the sixth floor was teens' fashions. The fifth floor was women's fashions.⁴

Upper floors

The seventh floor is the transition between retail and administrative space (Photo 10). The seventh floor is an open plan and simple in character with cubicles. Floors eight through ten have been stripped of their historic finishes and configurations and the structure is exposed. The eighth floor retains its original vault located against the north wall. The ninth floor is partially built-out for a failed condo scheme (cabinets, toilets, etc.) from an unknown date.

Integrity

Battelstein's at 812 Main Street is a ten-story Modern high-rise designed by Joseph Finger and George Rustay. Battelstein's sold the building to Bealls in 1980, after which ownership changed hands several times. After unsuccessful efforts to convert the building to a night club and condos, it stood abandoned for over a decade. Though the building has been compromised during this time due to neglect, vandalism, and squatters, Battelstein's retains a high degree of integrity with its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling intact. Downtown Houston has undergone a renaissance since the 1980s and 1990s, which has reactivated Main Street as a pedestrian friendly setting with shops, restaurants and residential buildings. The building's Modern design, materials, and workmanship are extant despite the building being abandoned. The building's uniform, flat, limestone exterior façade cladding, curved inset second floor balcony, and horizontal ribbon of aluminum windows have been retained and are among the building's most character defining features. Interior floors retain vestiges of their original design, indicating that each floor had its own distinct character. The extant interior decorative schemes of retail floors gives the building a feeling of a department store which kept pace with current trends. The building is in good condition with minor alterations to the ground floor storefront and interiors since its construction. The owner of the adjacent J.W. Marriott Houston Downtown Hotel (historically known as the S.F. Carter Second National Bank Building) purchased the building in 2019 and plans to rehabilitate the building for hotel purposes utilizing state and federal historic tax credits.

⁴ Captions of historic photographs indicate that women's fashions were on the fifth floor. See Figures 10 & 11.

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Statement of Significance

Battelstein's, located at 812 Main Street, was a high-end department store founded by Philip "Pop" Battelstein, a tailor, that immigrated to Houston, Texas in 1897 from Lithuania. Battelstein's opened in 1924 as a two-story commercial building and throughout the subsequent decades underwent alterations and additions to meet increasing retail demand in Houston. The current ten-story iteration, designed by prolific Houston architects Joseph Finger and George Rustay, was completed in 1950 and hailed as a "shining example of accomplishment."⁵ The changes and updates to Battelstein's were part of a larger trend of retail improvements occurring throughout downtown Houston in the 1940s and 1950s.⁶ These updates occurred during "the last episode of new construction along the Main Street retail and entertainment corridor."⁷ During the 1960s and 1970s, Battelstein's remained one of Houston's top retailers, opening shops in River Oaks, Sharpstown, and Northwest and Almeda Malls. Though the company was prosperous overall, the fate of the downtown Battelstein's store, in particular, became increasingly uncertain as Houston's population moved away from the city center to the suburbs. Battelstein's is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce as a one of top high-end department stores that underwent extensive modifications to compete in and serve downtown Houston in the mid-20th century. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. The building represents a conservative approach to modern design and serves as a transitional example of the work of architects Joseph Finger and George Rustay. The period of significance spans from the build date in 1950 to 1967, the year the store ceased to operate as a family-owned business and was acquired by Manhattan Industries Inc., a national company. This effectively signaled a change in retail trends.

Origins of Battelstein's

Battelstein's was founded by Jewish immigrant Philip "Pop" Battelstein, who immigrated to Houston from Lithuania in 1897.⁸ Upon his arrival in Houston, Battelstein opened a tailor shop at 314 Fannin Street.⁹ By 1909, Battelstein had relocated to 618 Main Street. Early twentieth-century advertisements for "P. Battelstein & Company" touts their ability to tailor a suite "in any style and cloth you may select at a price that competes closely with factory made clothing."¹⁰ Listed as a "Tailor and Haberdasher," Battelstein also sold neckwear, shirts, vests, smoking jackets, "Wright's Underwear," overcoats, and hats.¹¹

Battelstein's moved to its permanent home at 812 Main Street in 1924 after the store at 618 Main Street burned down with the Old Capitol Hotel. A grand opening was held at the new location on February 14. The announcement in the *Houston Post* read:

With an earnest desire to be of the greatest service to all the men of Houston and vicinity, we present to you with the opening of our new store, every convenience, every comfort, modern appointments and every facility to make the choosing of your clothes a real pleasure. We point to our new home with pride and consider it to be one of the finest and most exclusive men's clothing stores in this section of Texas.¹²

⁵ Tellepsen Construction Company advertisement, "Mid-Century Achievement," courtesy of Archive.org.

⁶ Stephen Fox, *Houston Architectural Guide* (Houston: AIA Houston, 2012), 53.

⁷ *Houston Architectural Guide*, 53.

⁸ Find a Grave, "Philip Battelstein," accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152398802/philip-battelstein>; *Waco-News Tribune*, July 6, 1955, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com>.

⁹ "Battelstein's Opens River Oaks Store," *Houston Magazine*, August 1953.

¹⁰ *Houston Post*, July 18, 1909, accessed February 14, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com>.

¹¹ *Houston Post*, October 23, 1910, accessed February 14, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com>.

¹² *Houston Post*, February 14, 1924, accessed February 14, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com>.

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Sanborn maps from 1924 and historic photographs indicate that the building was a two-story commercial building which Battelstein's shared with other tenants (Figures 1, 2 & 17).¹³ The architect for the 1924 building is unknown. By 1933, Battelstein's occupied the entire ground floor of the building and in 1934 hired Joseph Finger to remodel the building.¹⁴ Finger was Houston's foremost Jewish architect at the time and frequently designed buildings for Jewish institutions and clients, including Temple Beth Israel (1925, NRHP 1984), which Finger designed for his own congregation, Beth Israel Mausoleum (1935), and Beth Yeshurun Synagogue (1949).¹⁵ Finger was also contracted by Congregation Adath Yeshurun for various projects, where Battelstein was a member and Secretary Treasurer.¹⁶ In 1937, the building was enlarged to five floors when they began offering a ladies' ready to wear department, a boy's and young men's shop, and a millinery department (Figure 3).¹⁷

"New and Delightfully Beautiful"

Between 1940 and 1950, the population in Houston increased by 54 percent, a population boom which endured into the 1960s. In 1948, specifically, Houston was rated as the fastest growing city per capita in the county. Leading the corresponding building boom in downtown Houston were the department stores.¹⁸ Among the largest local department stores were Battelstein's, Joske's, Sakowitz, Foley's, and Sears & Roebuck, all of which had a retail presence downtown. While located outside the central business district, Sears & Roebuck initiated a new wave of construction and remodeling when their building on South Main Street was erected in 1939 (Nimmons, Carr & Wright, Alfred C Finn). When it was completed, it was the largest department store in Houston.¹⁹

While retailers were affected by the rationing regulations set forth by the War Production Board during World War II, department stores survived the war in good financial health.²⁰ Signaling the profitability of department stores, George S. Cohen sold Foley Brothers Dry Goods Company, or Foley's, in 1945 to Federated Department Stores for \$3.5 million. The store was grossing \$8 million at the time and by 1947 was grossing \$17 million. The Kenneth Franzheim-designed Foley's building at 1110 Main Street (demolished 2013) opened in 1947 at a cost of \$9 million. That same year, Ben Wolfman, owner of The Fashion, a store which specialized in women's and children's apparel, spent \$2.5 million remodeling his downtown store at 917 Main Street (remodeled again ca. 2004). Joske's, Sakowitz, and Battelstein's were also enlarged and remodeled during the same period.²¹

Battelstein's hired Joseph Finger & George Rustay to spearhead the "additions to and refacing of" the older 1937 Battelstein's store.²² Tellepsen Construction Company served as builders. A midcentury departure from the older store's design, Tellepsen called the building "a shining example of accomplishment" (Figure 13).²³ Battelstein's

¹³ Initially, Battelstein's had only "18 front feet" of the building. By 1933, they occupied the entire ground floor of the building. This information comes from an undated and untitled article in the "Battelstein, Philip (Family)" vertical file at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center.

¹⁴ Texas Associate of General Contractor's Bulletin, 1934.

¹⁵ *Handbook of Texas Online*, Stephen Fox, "FINGER, JOSEPH," accessed March 14, 2019, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ffi37>. The 1949 Beth Yeshurun Synagogue is the congregation's earlier synagogue on Southmore, not the congregation's current synagogue on Beechnut (RTHL 2019).

¹⁶ Texas Association of General Contractor's Bulletin, various dates; *Jewish Herald*, March 26, 1909, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com>.

¹⁷ "Abe Battelstein is a Rarity – He's a Native Houstonian," *Houston Chronicle*, November 7, 1950.

¹⁸ David G. McComb, *Houston: the Bayou City* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1969), 189-190.

¹⁹ Paul Homeyer, "Unmasking Main Street: A Look at Slipcovered Buildings in Houston," *Houston Review* 3, no. 2.

²⁰ Meghann Mason, "The impact of World War II on women's fashion in the United States and Britain," (2011). UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones. 1390. <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations/1390>.

²¹ *Bayou City*, 190.

²² *Houston Architectural Guide*, 53; City directories indicate that the building had already been altered by 1948, with three more floors shown in the Battelstein's City Directory advertisement. These alterations possibly date to the 1934 Finger remodel. See Figure 3.

²³ "Mid-Century Achievement."

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advertised that they were “proud” to present the public with a “new and delightfully beautiful Battelstein’s for [their] shopping pleasure” (Figure 14).²⁴ A patron of Battelstein’s recalled that the cosmetics department was on the first floor when you walked through the door. To the left was men’s shirts, hats, and shoes; to the right, women’s shoes. Upper floors were for ladies’ and children’s fashions.²⁵

Mid-Century Expansion to the Suburbs

Between 1939 and 1949, Houston achieved the number one ranking for percentage gain in retail sales for cities of over 500,000 people. Following the boom of downtown development, major department stores began to expand to suburban sites, including Battelstein’s.²⁶ Battelstein’s opened a second store in River Oaks in 1953. The River Oaks location was praised as “one of the most modern and complete suburban stores in the southwest,” taking “one step ahead” of its downtown parent store with the “addition of a complete line of apparel for infants through the young miss,” in addition to their “traditionally famous, extensive line of known brand fashions for men and women.”²⁷ In 1955, Sakowitz announced two suburban stores, one at the corner of Post Oak and Westheimer and the other at Gulfgate, a \$20 million shopping mall on the Gulf Freeway developed by Theodore W. Brenson. Foley’s followed suit in 1961 when it opened a suburban location at the seventy-acre, air-conditioned Sharpstown Mall. Battelstein’s opened a third location at Sharpstown Mall, as well, in 1961. In 1963, Joske’s opened a store across the street from Sakowitz on the corner of Post Oak and Westheimer. In 1967, Sakowitz opened another store on Memorial Drive and Foley’s added two more stores, one on Almeda-Genoa and one near Hempstead.²⁸

Although the dollar amount of sales remained the same, the opening of suburban stores drastically affected the share of total retail sales for downtown stores, dropping from 51 percent in 1948 to 28 percent to 1958.²⁹ Amidst a growing concern that the popularity of suburban stores would spell disaster for downtown retail, merchants asserted, at least publicly, that Houston was an exemption among national trends of downtown store closures and that their volume was up considerably. They attributed this to easy access in and out of downtown, wide streets, ample parking facilities, adequate hotel accommodations, “the comparatively new appearance of downtown stores,” and continued construction of businesses and office buildings.³⁰

To compete with the suburbs in the 1950s and 1960s, Battelstein’s continued to invest in and update the image of their downtown store, remodeling the second floor in 1955 and redecorating in 1960. Harry Battelstein, Philip Battelstein’s son and then president of the company, said “the first floor has been designed into a Boulevard of shops...individual shops for stocking accessories, stationary, jewelry, and handbags and gloves are set off from each side of the center aisles so that shoppers may browse.”³¹

A New Era for Houston Retail

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, locally owned stores were increasingly competing with national companies. In 1967, Manhattan Industries Inc., a “diversified New York apparel and retail firm,” purchased Battelstein’s from the Battelstein family.³² In 1969, Manhattan Industries launched a new campaign to “revamp” the image of Battelstein’s

²⁴ Battelstein’s advertisement, “It makes us feel good...” courtesy of Archive.org.

²⁵ This is a patron’s personal recollections. Photographs confirm that at least the fifth floor was for ladies’ fashions. See Figure 10 & 11.

²⁶ *Bayou City*, 191.

²⁷ “Battelstein’s Opens River Oaks Store,” *Houston Magazine*, August 1953.

²⁸ *Bayou City*, 191-192.

²⁹ *Bayou City*, 192.

³⁰ J.R. Gonzales, “Loss of downtown Macy’s marks the end of an era,” *Houston Chronicle*, January 4, 2013, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://blog.chron.com/bayoucityhistory/2013/01/loss-of-downtown-macys-marks-the-end-of-an-era/#photo-189004>.

³¹ “Loss of downtown Macy’s.”

³² “Levy Sparks Battelstein’s facelifts,” *Houston Chronicle*, July 15, 1979.

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and reach out to a more diversified public. Battelstein's opened two twin stores at the Northwest and Almeda Malls, which added 500 employees, bringing the total number of employees to 1,100.³³ In addition to opening their twin stores, Battelstein's placed Marcia Kober in charge of remodeling their River Oaks, Sharpstown, and downtown stores. The new décor included "brightly colored carpeting and wall covering and pattern for contrast of design and texture."³⁴

Throughout the 1970s, Houston continued its trend of strong retail sales. In 1973, three million of Texas' twelve million people lived in the Houston-Gulf coast area, with 78 percent of the area's total effecting buying income, \$12.4 billion, in Houston alone. Houston ranked fourth in total retail sales in the nation and ranked first in percentage increase of sales over ten years ending in 1973, up 164.8 percent. Battelstein's was still among the top retailers, which also included Foley's, Sears, J.C. Penny, Joske's, Montgomery Ward, and Sakowitz.³⁵

While sales during this period were strong, crime and vagrancy increasingly became a problem in downtown Houston. Suburban stores were becoming more and more advantageous to shoppers, with free parking being one of the most important factors.³⁶ In 1979, Battelstein's executives stated that the downtown operation would either "move to a location closer to other major retailers or close."³⁷ In 1980, Battelstein's was purchased by Bealls which retained the downtown location.³⁸ Bealls vacated the building at an unknown date and ownership changed hands several times. After unsuccessful efforts to repurpose the building as a nightclub and condos, it stood abandoned for over a decade. The owner of the adjacent J.W. Marriott Hotel (historically known as the S.F. Carter Second National Bank Building) purchased the building in 2019.

Contributing Factors to the Decline of Downtown Retail

The shift of commerce from downtown to the highway is recognized as one of the most profound changes in the American landscape of the twentieth-century.³⁹ There are four programs which are thought to have influenced rapid suburban expansion: Federal Housing Administration insurance for mortgages (1934-present); federal income tax deductions for home mortgage interest, points, and property taxes (1920-present); federal corporate tax deductions called accelerated depreciation for greenfield commercial real estate (1954-1986); and federal funding for highways (1916-present). Shopping malls, in particular, developed quickly after the introduction of tax breaks for accelerated depreciation of commercial real estate.⁴⁰

In addition to financial incentives, the rise in popularity of the automobile also contributed to the expansion to the suburbs. While initially cars functioned essentially as motorized carriages that easily maneuvered streets in conjunction with horses, bicycles, trolleys, etc., cars of later years required maneuvering room far in excess of their predecessors, and made it increasingly difficult to navigate Main Streets across the country.⁴¹ Designed largely for pedestrian clientele, downtown was inconvenient for hurried shoppers and their big "tail finned cars."⁴² Vehicle registration in Houston increased from 290,000 in 1949 to 607,000 in 1959, and store owners scrambled to

³³ "Twin Openings for Battelstein's," newspaper unknown, August 3, 1969.

³⁴ "Battelstein's Opening Twin Stores in Malls," *Houston Chronicle*, July 31, 1969.

³⁵ "Minding the Stores," *Texas Monthly*, August 1975.

³⁶ "Loss of downtown Macy's."

³⁷ "Battelstein's facelifts."

³⁸ "Loss of downtown Macy's;" Battelstein's is listed at 812 Main in the 1980 City Directory. Bealls Department Store is listed at 812 Main in the 1981 City Directory.

³⁹ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), vi.

⁴⁰ Dolores Hayden, *A Field Guide to Sprawl* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 2004), 8 and 66.

⁴¹ *Miracle Mile*, 9.

⁴² City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office and Ryden Architects, Inc., *Midcentury Marvels: Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945-1975* (Phoenix: City of Phoenix, 2010), 227.

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accommodate their patrons who were increasingly arriving by car rather than by foot.⁴³ The need for an auto-centric shopping experience gave rise to two building forms: the shopping center, “which sought to combine the efficiency and related atmosphere of Main Street with the convenience of off-street parking;” and a stand-alone business placed “relatively close to the street where they could easily be seen and to provide parking for individual businesses,” neither of which could be accomplished downtown.⁴⁴

White flight was also a contributing factor to the decline of downtown retail. It directly affected the economic base of major cities throughout the nation during the 1950s and 1960s when affluent urban dwellers relocated to the suburbs.⁴⁵ Retailers subsequently followed their commercial base.

Modern Architecture in Houston

The influence of European modernism slowly caught on in United States by the 1940s. Modern architecture in Houston, too, reflected local architects' rather tepid acceptance of modernism. Battelstein's represents this trend well. Caught between two waves of the Modern Movement—the first spanning between the 1920s and 1940s, and the second spanning from WWII to the 1970s—Houston architecture of the late 1940s and early 1950s went through a transitional period. Architects weren't fully committed to the “machine esthetic” of emerging Modern designs, specifically the International Style, which was more commonly accepted after WWII. Instead, abstract designs containing both natural and man-made materials resulted in a diluted form of the International Style, which Peter C. Papademetriou describes as “Contemporary” appeared in the 1940s. These buildings were hybrids that embodied both conservative and progressive trends, without fully abandoning eclectic or fully embracing avant-garde characteristics. Often these buildings were designed by architects trained and well versed in eclectic architecture attempting to remain on the cusp of the second wave of modernism.⁴⁶ This resulted in transitional buildings that Howard Barnstone identified as “Out-of-Phase.”⁴⁷

Since downtown department stores were constantly looking for new and improved ways to attract customers, it is not surprising that many retailers built or remodeled their buildings during this period.⁴⁸ Department stores led the building boom in downtown Houston in the 1940s and 1950s, which included an addition and a new façade for Battelstein's executed in a Contemporary design. While responding to the needs of the client, Joseph Finger and George Rustay carried out a rather unique conversion of an early 20th century building. Upon completion in 1950, the transitional design partially embraced elements of the International Style shown in the flat roof, horizontal ribbon windows, and unified wall cladding in which decorative ornament was largely absent.⁴⁹ Additionally, the building's curved, inset second floor balcony were elements of a high-fashion retail look. These types of architectural expressions also appeared in Alfred C. Finn's resurfacing of The Fashion at 917 Main Street (1947).⁵⁰ The building similarly features horizontal ribbons of windows and inset balconies. These outdoor terrace spaces “extended” the sales floors. Other similar buildings in Houston include St. Rose of Lima church and School (Donald Barthelme &

⁴³ Erik Slotboom, *Houston Freeways: A Historical and Visual Journey* (Cincinnati: C.J. Krehbiel, 2003), 19.

⁴⁴ *Midcentury Marvels*, 228.

⁴⁵ Jan Blakeslee, “White Flight to the Suburbs: A Demographic Approach,” *Focus: Institute for Research on Poverty Newsletter* 3, no. 2. (Winter 1978-79).

⁴⁶ Peter C. Papademetriou, “Doldrums in the 'Forties: Houston Building Design in Transition,” *Texas Architect* (November/December 1979): 28-35; Judith H. Robinson and Stephanie S. Foell, *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration Office of the Chief Architect Center for Historic Buildings, 2003), 12.

⁴⁷ For more on this term see Howard Barnstone, Unpublished manuscript on “Architecture Out of Phase,” c. 1984; Stephen Fox, “...And in the Rest of Texas, Too,” *Cite*, Issue 7, Fall 1984, 15; Stephen Fox, “Transformation: Corporate Imagery in Tall Buildings,” *Texas Architect*, May-June 1986, 24.

⁴⁸ Jim Parsons and David Bush, *Houston Deco: Modernistic Architecture of the Texas Coast* (Albany: Big Sky Press, 2008), 17-21.

⁴⁹ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 616-621.

⁵⁰ *Houston Architectural Guide*, 53.

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Associates, 1947), Congregation Adath Emeth (Irving K. Klein, 1946-1948), and Kaphan's (Claude E. Hooten & H. A. Turner, 1949-1950) and the Melrose Building (Lloyd & Morgan, 1952).⁵¹

The Melrose Building, also known as Houston's first International Style skyscraper, serves as an important comparison for Battelstein's. Built a few years after Battelstein's, the design of the Melrose Building contains more distinctive International Style elements seen in the asymmetrical frame, cast concrete cantilevered sunshades, window walls, aluminum ribbon windows, and limited ornament.⁵² While still transitional, the Melrose Building more clearly represents the second wave of modernism.

Finger & Rustay

From 1910 through the 1940s, Joseph Finger was Houston's foremost architect. Among his most notable buildings is Houston City Hall (1939, NRHP 1990), which represents a shift from the popular revival styles of the 1920s to a more Modern and streamlined style, a style which Finger & Rustay implemented for Battelstein's at 812 Main Street. In addition to City Hall and his Jewish institutional buildings, examples of his work include Jefferson Davis Hospital (1937, demolished), Houston Municipal Airport Terminal (1940, NRHP 2019), and numerous grocery stores for the Weingarten family chain.⁵³ After he suffered a stroke in 1940, Finger's health began to decline. Finger hired George Rustay in 1944 as a new architectural partner. As Finger's health continued to decline, Rustay took on more of the firm's work, including the project at Battelstein's.⁵⁴ Finger & Rustay also designed Beth Yeshurun Synagogue at 3501 Southmore Avenue (1949, now Lucian L. Lockhart Elementary School), and the Harris County Courthouse (1953), which was under construction at the time of Finger's death.⁵⁵ After Finger's death, Rustay continued his work in Houston, including the 1962 Federal Office Building and U.S. Courthouse (now the Bob Casey Federal Building) at 515 Rusk Avenue (Staub, Rather & Howze; Rustay & Martin; Harvin C. Moore) and the 1970 Texas Heart Institute Building (Caudill Rowlett Scott; Rustay, Martin & Vale; Staub, Rather & Howze).⁵⁶

Tellepsen Construction Company

Battelstein's at 812 Main Street was built by Tellepsen Construction Company. The Tellepsen Construction Company (TCC) is a Houston-based construction company that has been family owned and operated for four generations. Tellepsen Builders was founded by Tom Tellepsen in 1909 and built their first offices in 1921. Tellepsen Builders incorporated as Tellepsen Construction Company in 1929. Tom Tellepsen's son, Howard Tellepsen, became president of TCC in 1940. Howard Tellepsen was succeeded by his son, Howard Tellepsen, Jr. Today, the company is still operated by Tellepsen, Jr. and his four sons: Tadd, Tellef, Trent, and Trevor. Tellepsen projects include Miller Outdoor Theater (1922), Rice University Chemistry Building (1923), Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church (1927, NRHP 1984), Episcopal Church of the Redeemer (1932), Houston Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant (1950), Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral (1952), and the Melrose Building (1952, NRHP 2014).⁵⁷

⁵¹ "Doldrums in the 'Forties," 34.

⁵² Grace Cynkar, Anna Mod, and Gregory Smith, "Melrose Building, Houston, Harris County" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2014, 10; Hannah Curry-Shearouse, Catherine Gabb, and Anna Mod, "Houston Post, Houston, Harris County," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2018, 7, 11-14, 16-17.

⁵³ Anna Mod, "Texas State Hotel," National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 2008, 17; Josh Levine, "Joseph Finger: The Man Behind Houston's Iconic Architecture," *Houston History* 10, no. 3.

⁵⁴ "Houston's Iconic Architecture."

⁵⁵ "Houston's Iconic Architecture;" *Houston Architectural Guide*, 284.

⁵⁶ *Houston Architectural Guide*, 29 and 223.

⁵⁷ "Tellepsen Builders," Wikipedia, accessed January 30, 2019. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tellepsen>.

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Summary

Battelstein's, a prominent Houston department store, was founded by a Lithuanian immigrant Philip "Pop" Battelstein in 1897. Battelstein's at 812 Main Street in downtown Houston opened in 1924 and throughout the subsequent decades underwent alterations and additions to meet increasing retail demand in Houston. The current iteration completed in 1950, was designed by prolific Houston architects Joseph Finger and George Rustay. The ten-story Modern high-rise was hailed as a "shining example of accomplishment" and dates to the last episode of new retail construction in downtown Houston. Battelstein's continued to prosper in the 1960s and 1970s, opening new stores in the early twentieth century garden suburb River Oaks and the post-World War II suburban Sharpstown neighborhood, as well as the new suburban Northwest and Almeda Malls. As Houston's population relocated to the suburbs, the fate of the downtown Battelstein's store, and other major retailers with downtown stores, became increasingly uncertain. In 1967, Battelstein's was acquired by Manhattan Industries Inc., a national chain that retained the original name. In 1979, Battelstein's contemplated either closing or relocating the downtown operation, and by 1980 had sold the building at 812 Main Street to Bealls. Battelstein's is nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce as one of the top local department stores serving downtown Houston for 43 years. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level of significance. The building represents a conservative approach to modern design and serves as a transitional example of the work of architects Joseph Finger and George Rustay. The period of significance is 1950-1967.

Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

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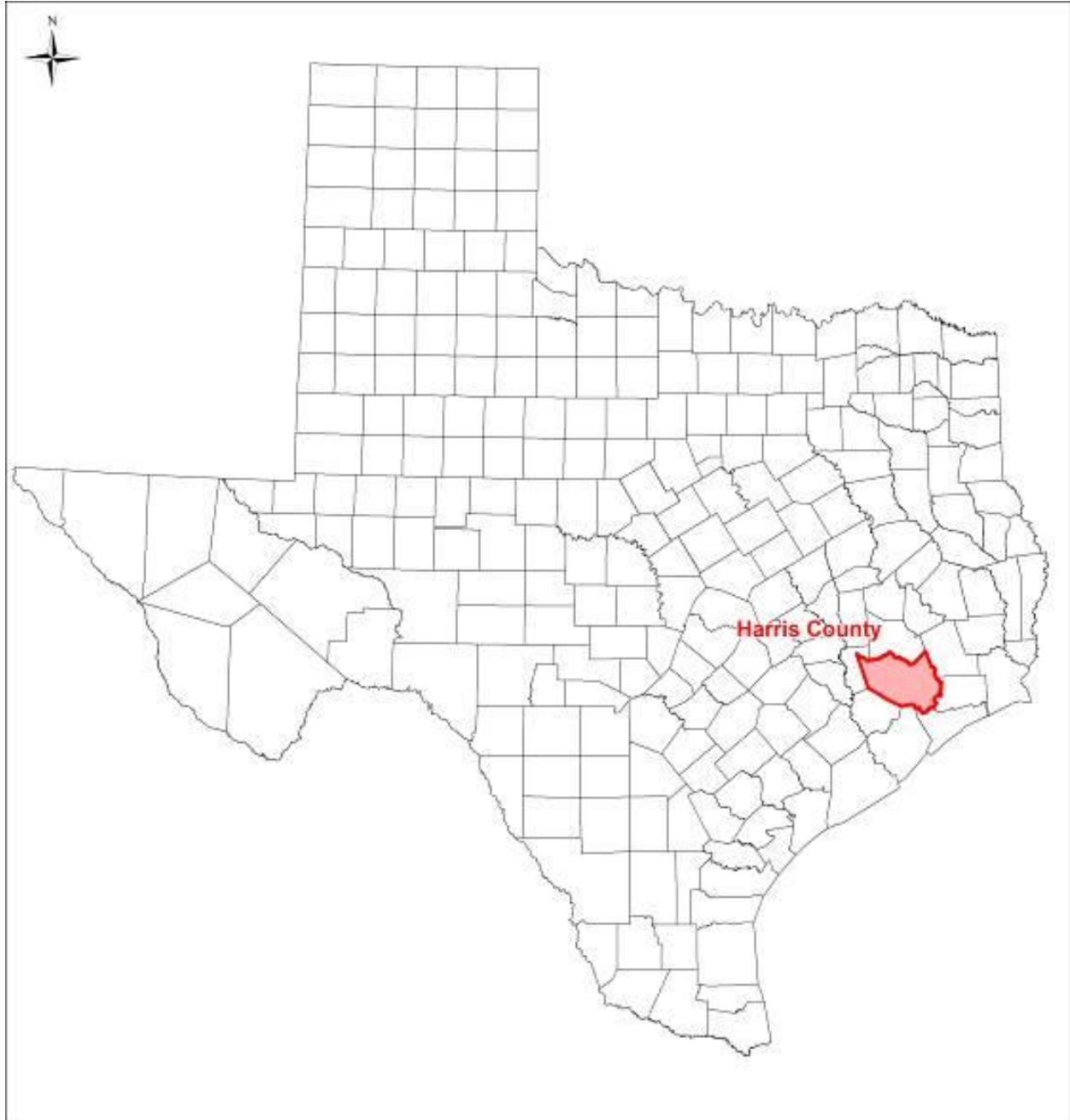
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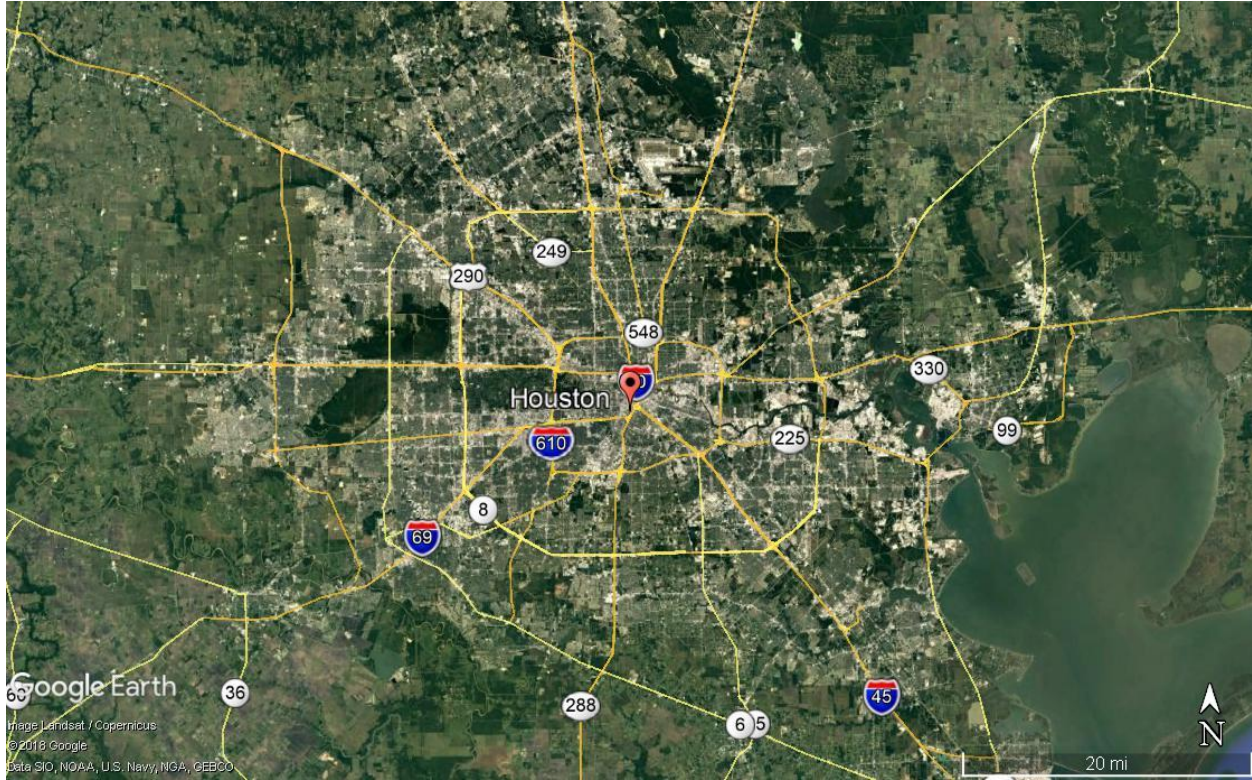
Map 1
Harris County, Texas



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Map 2

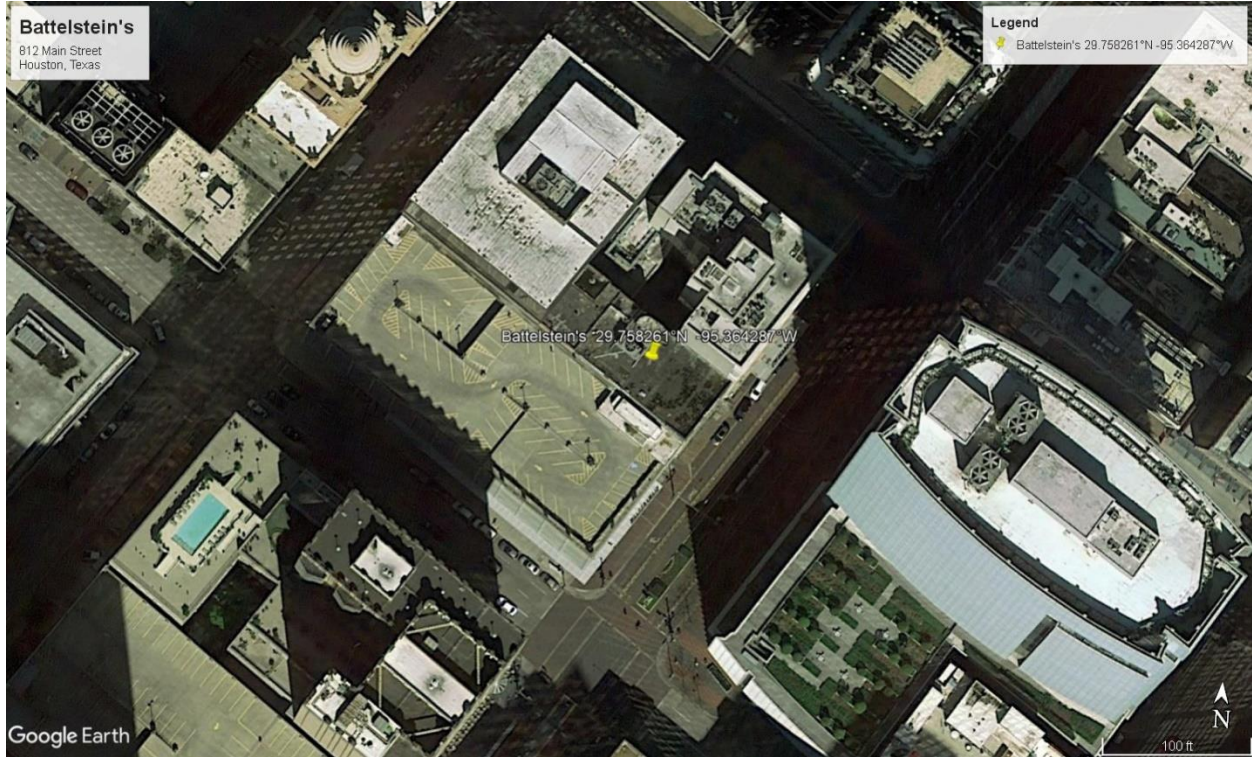
Houston, Harris County, Texas



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Map 3

Google Earth Map, Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas, accessed May 22, 2019.

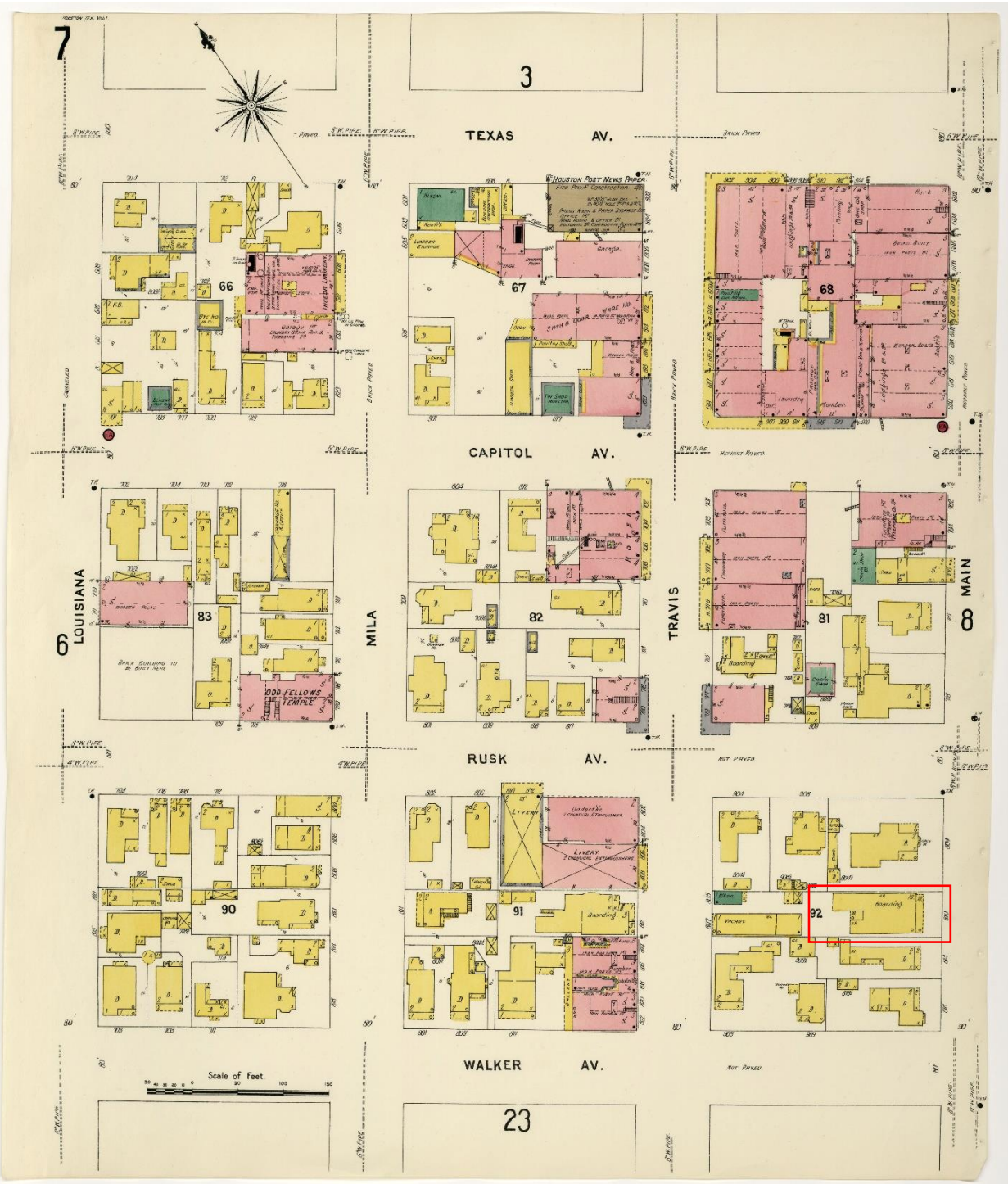


Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Map 4

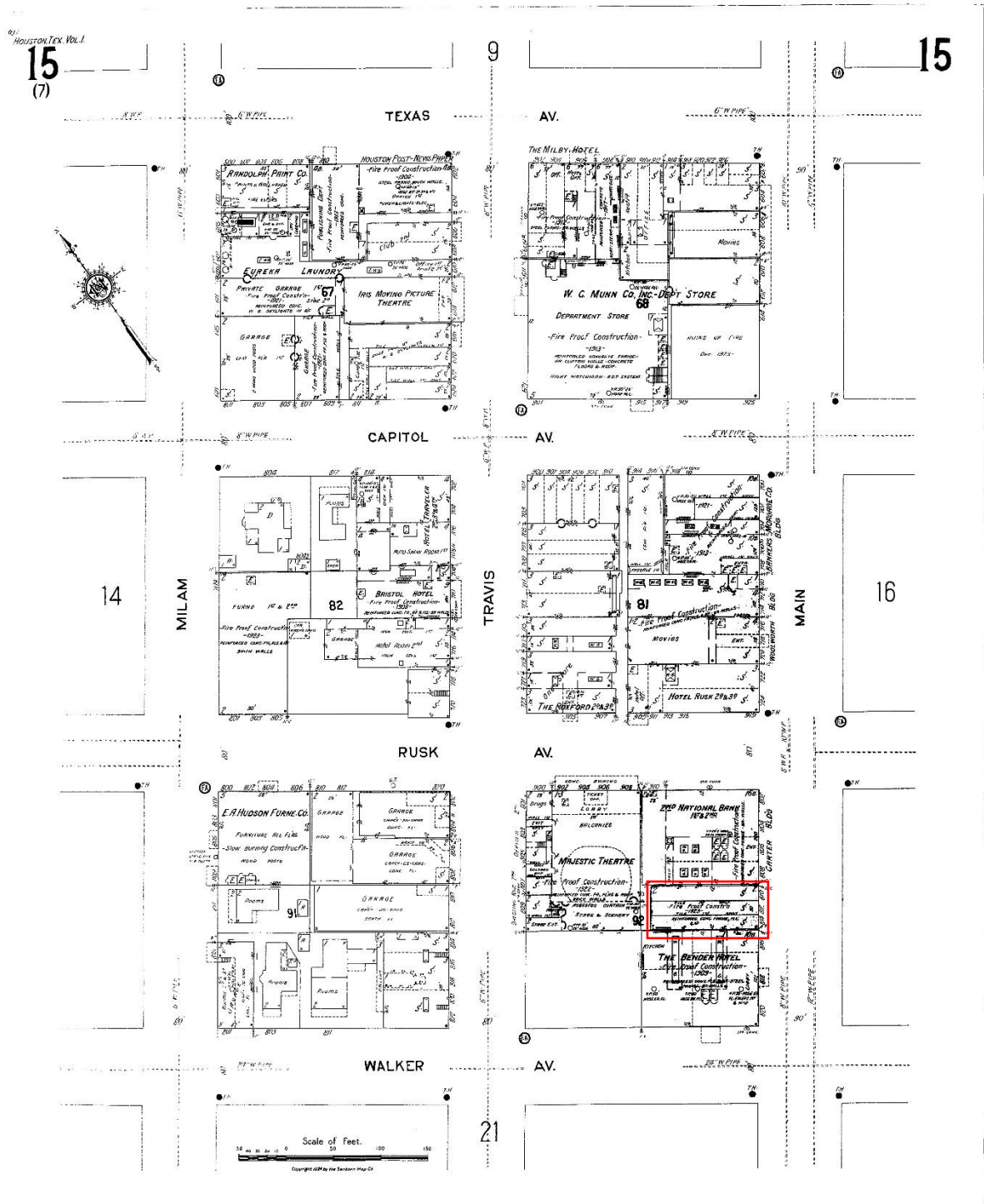
1907 Sanborn Map, Volume 1, Sheet 7

Courtesy of University of Texas at Austin, Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps – Texas (1877-1922)



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Map 5
1924-1950 Sanborn Map, Volume 1, Sheet 15
Courtesy of ProQuest: Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867 – 1970



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Map 6
1924-Feb. 1951 Sanborn Map, Volume 1, Sheet 15
Courtesy of ProQuest: Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867 – 1970

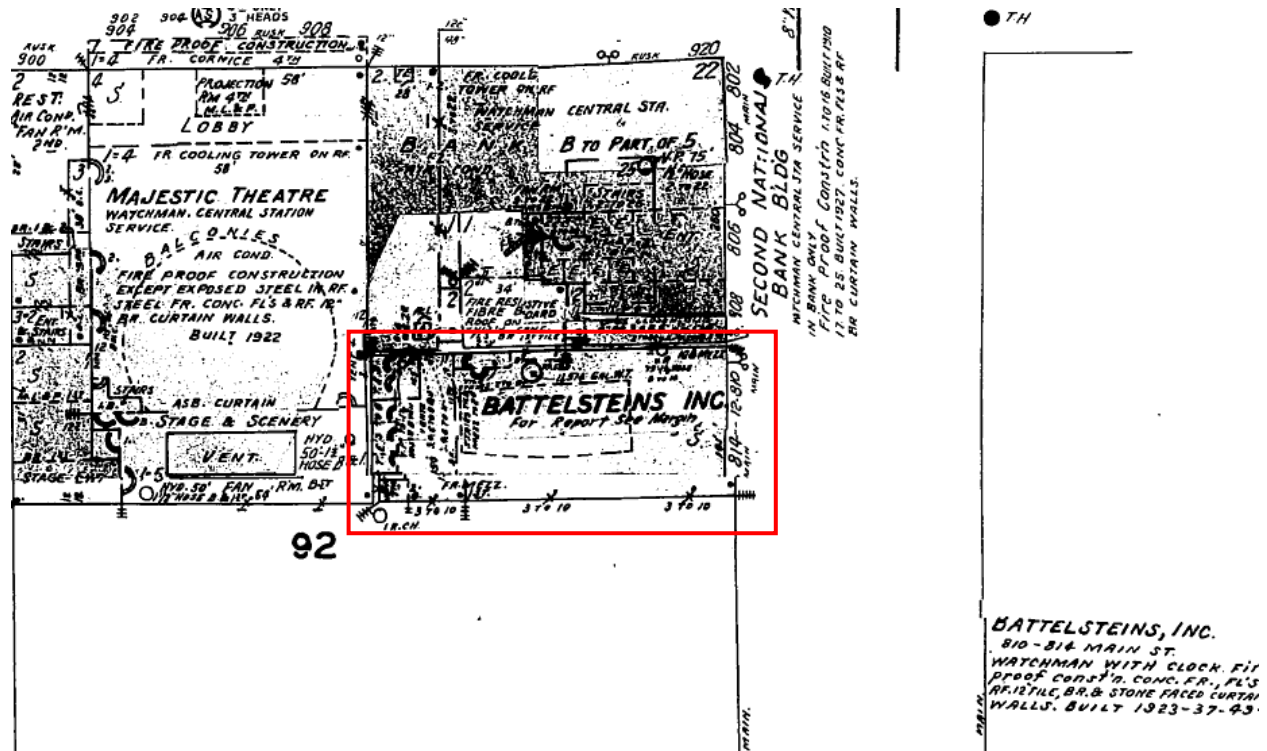


Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Map 7

1924-Feb. 1951 Sanborn Map, Volume 1, Sheet 15

Courtesy of ProQuest: Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867 – 1970



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 1

Early Battelstein's building in foreground, date unknown
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Digital Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 2

Early Battelstein's building beyond Second National Bank, date unknown
Courtesy of *Houston Chronicle* online



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 3
Battelstein's advertisement in the 1948 City of Houston Directory
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, microfiche

CLOTHING 73



NOW ... more than ever

Quality Counts

Put your trust in one of the South's Fastest Growing

FINE STORES!



- MEN'S CLOTHING
 - MEN'S FURNISHINGS
 - NETTLETON SHOES
 - KNOX HATS

- WOMEN'S APPAREL
 - WOMEN'S ACCESSORIES
 - WOMEN'S LINGERIE
 - WOMEN'S SPORTSWEAR
 - WOMEN'S MILLINERY

- TIM'S STORE FOR BOYS

Battelstein's

812 MAIN CAP. 9181

HOUSTON CITY DIRECTORY

Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 4

Battelstein's advertisement in the 1949 City of Houston Directory
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, microfiche

CLOTHING

10 Complete Floors

Reflecting Good Fashion
IN ONE OF THE SOUTH'S FASTEST GROWING STORES

FOR MEN Fashion Park, Botany "500," GGG,
Hollywood Clothing
Netleton Shoes
Knox Hats
Complete Collection of Men's Furnishings

FOR WOMEN . . . Fashions by Milgrim, Sophie of Saks, Ben Reig,
Fox Brownie, Samuel Kasa, Anna Miller, Etc.
Complete Collection of Sportswear
Complete Collection of Accessories
I. Miller Shoe Salon

FOR BOYS Home of Tim's Club

812 MAIN
TEL. CA. 9181

Battelstein's

MORNING & EVENING DIRECTORY CO.

Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 5

“Houston. Downtown street scene, Main street looking north from Walker Ave. Shows Walgreen's, Battelsteins, South Coast Life Insurance, Gulf Building, Rice Hotel. Bonds store on other side of street,” 1959

Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Photographic Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 6

“Fire at Battelstein’s, eighth floor,” February 1966

Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Photographic Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 7

Renovated second floor of Battelstein's, May 1955
Courtesy of *Houston Chronicle* online



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 8

Renovated first floor of Battelstein's, October 1960
Courtesy of *Houston Chronicle* online



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 9

“Models wearing Teen fashions, Battelstein’s, Houston, TX,” June 1958
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Photographic Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 10

“Fashion photograph: models at Battelstein’s. Houston, TX,” 5th floor, December 1961
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Photographic Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 11

“Fashion photograph: models at Battelstein’s. Houston, TX,” 5th floor, December 1961
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Photographic Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 12

“Dress designer at Battelstein’s,” January 1966

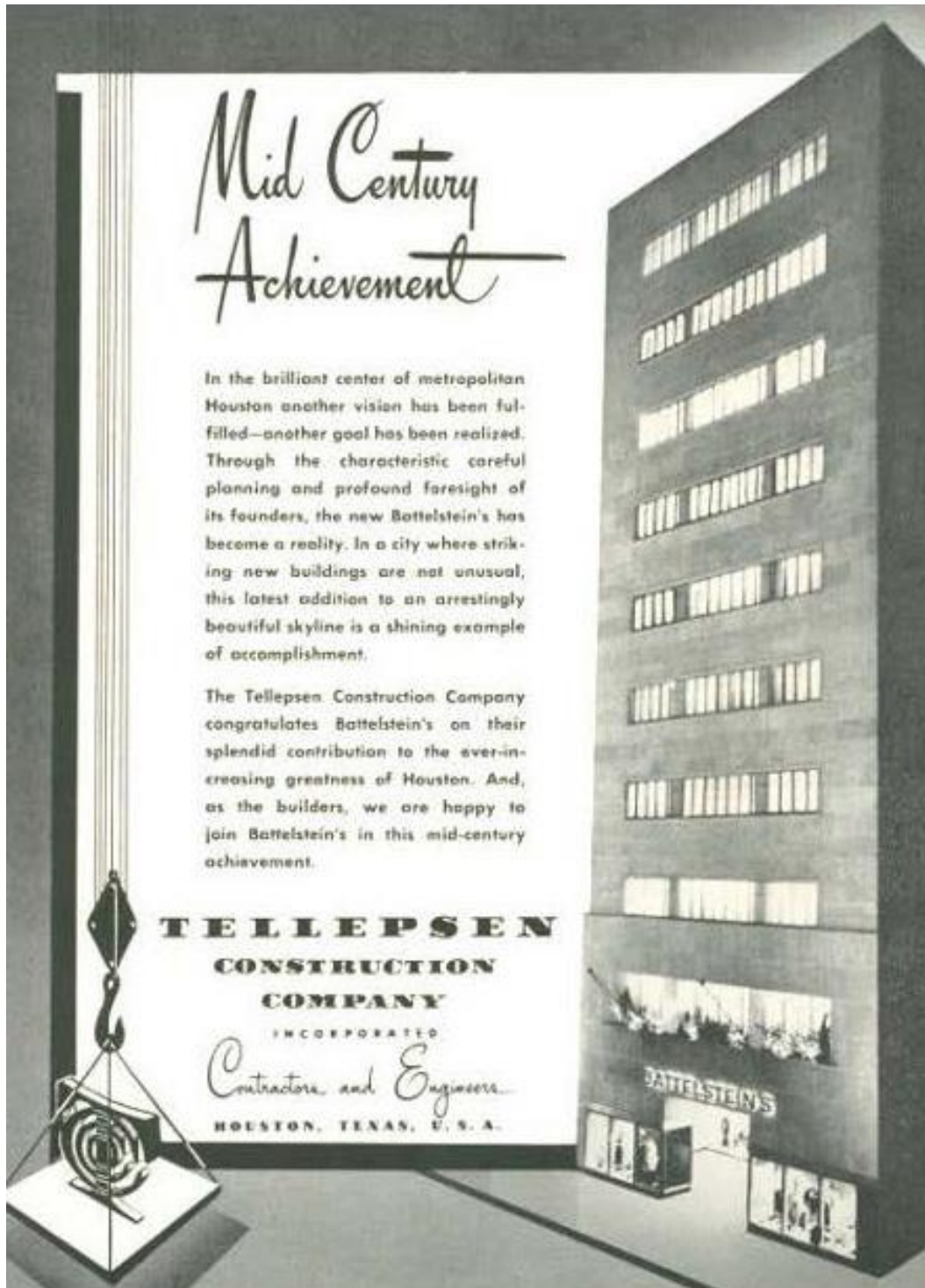
Courtesy of Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Photographic Archives



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 13

Tellepsen Construction Company advertisement, date and source unknown
Courtesy of Archive.org



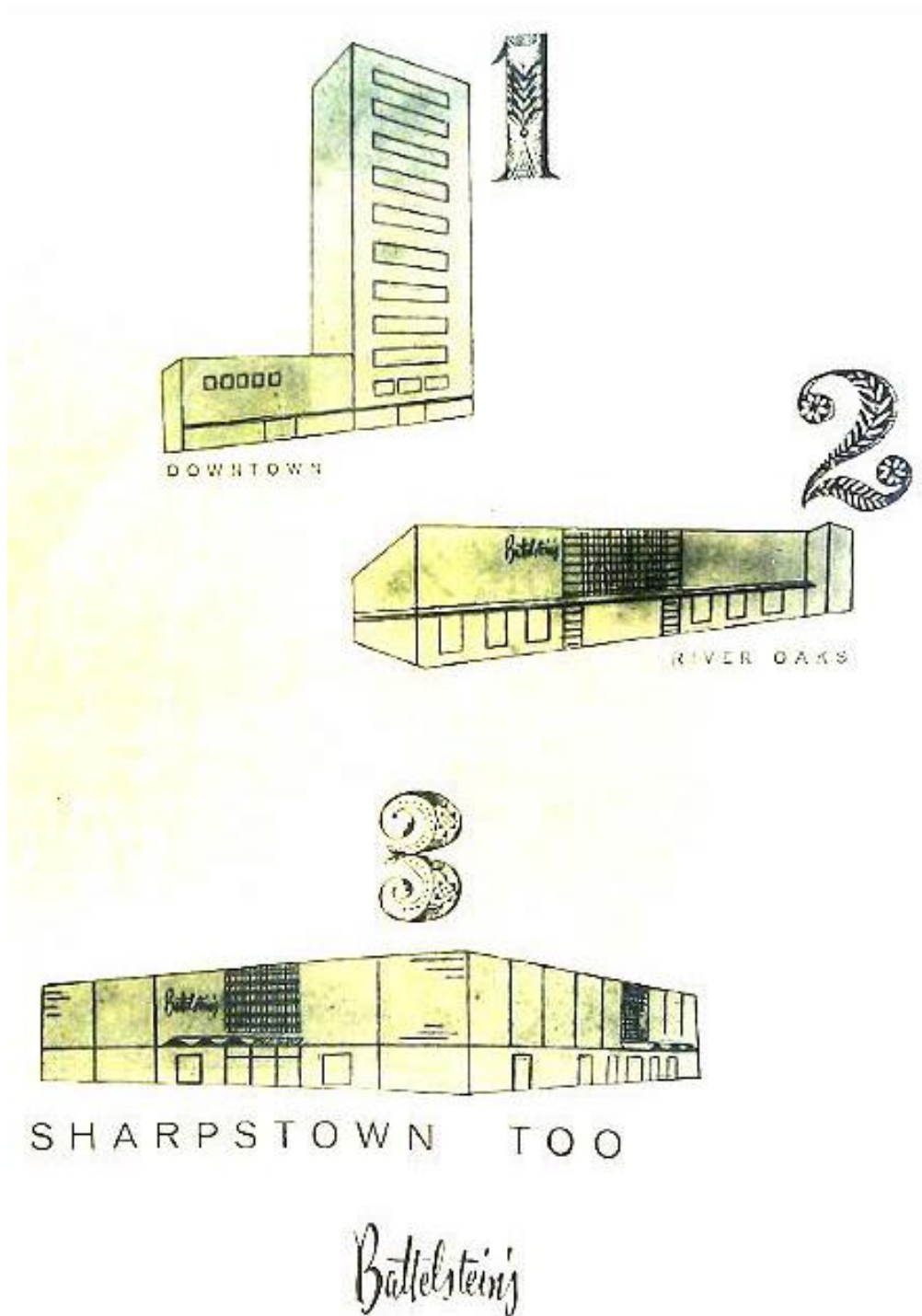
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 14
Battelstein's advertisement, 1961, source unknown
Courtesy of Archive.org



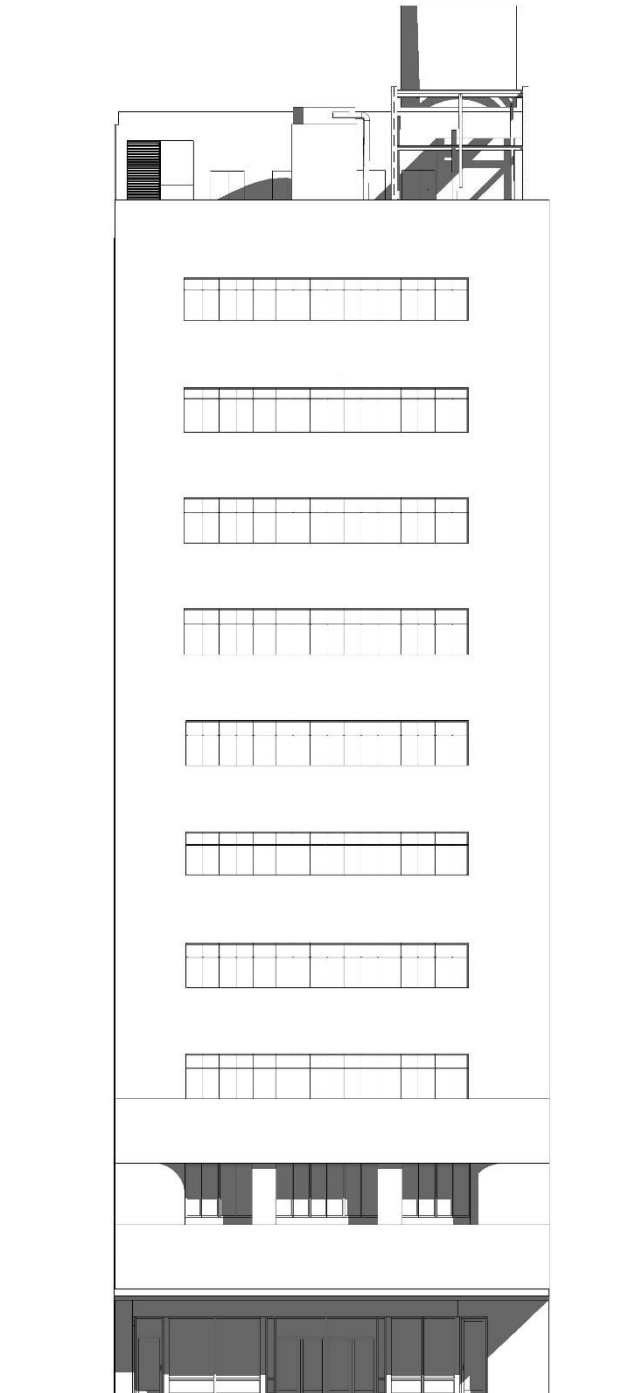
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 15
Battelstein's advertisement, 1962, source unknown
Courtesy of Archive.org



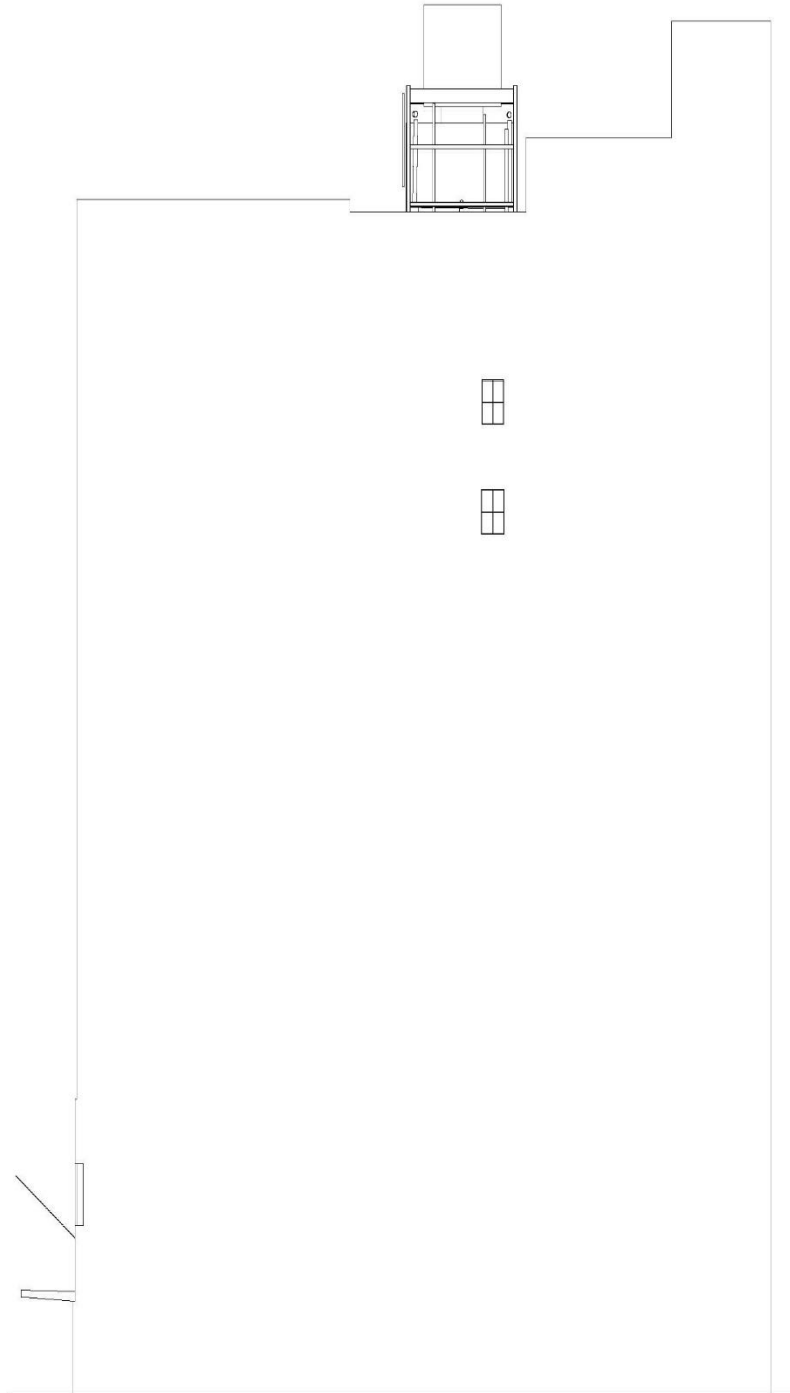
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 16
East façade



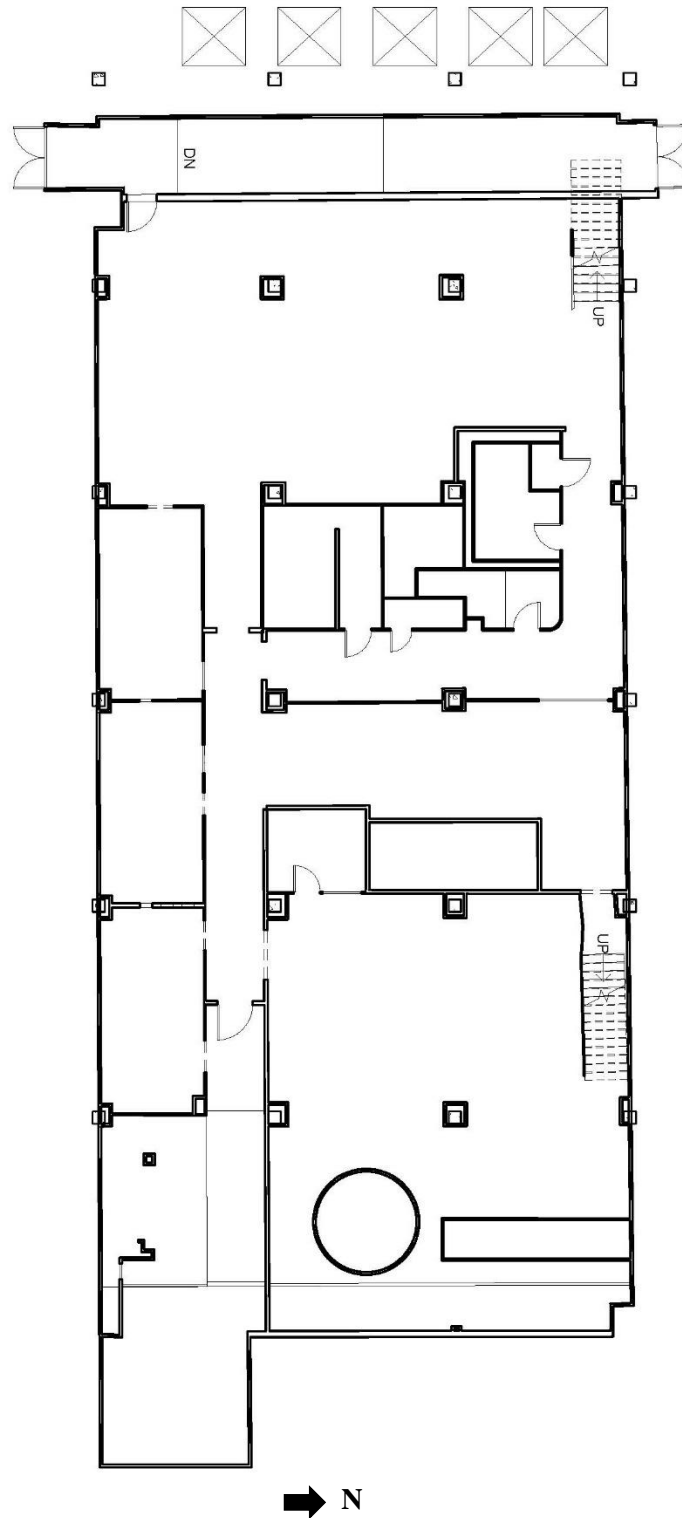
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 17
North (side) elevation



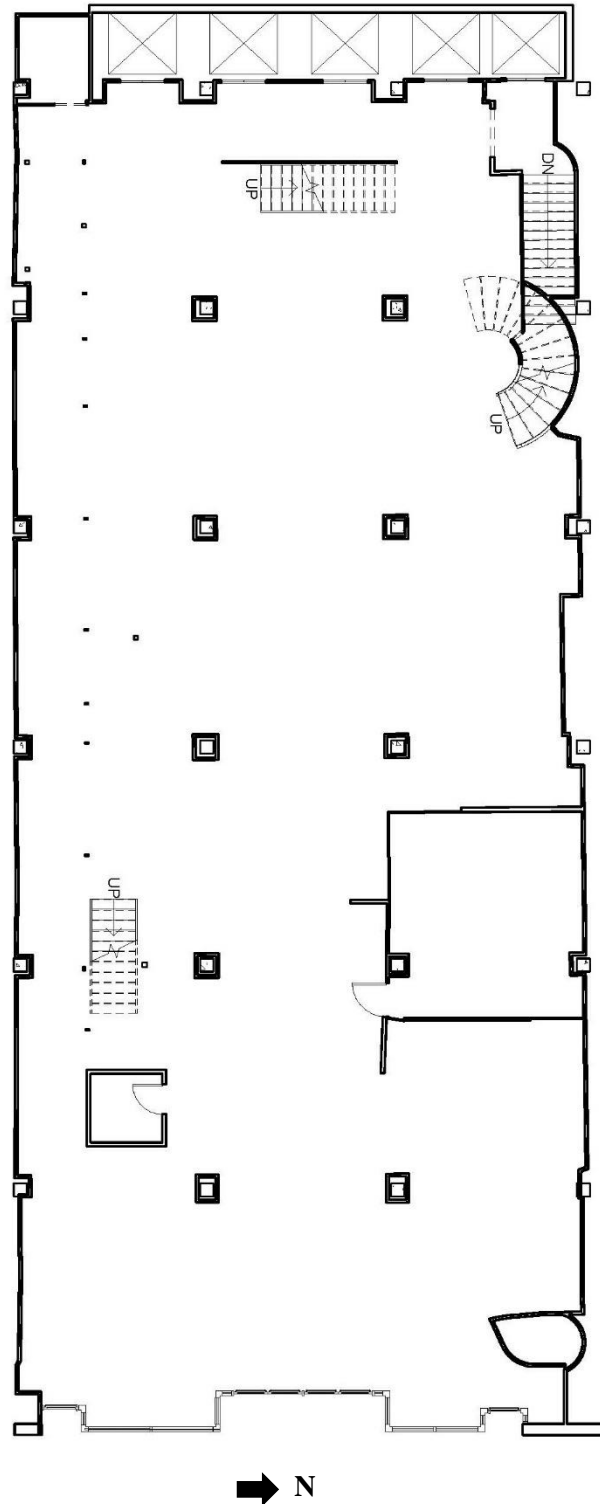
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 18
Basement



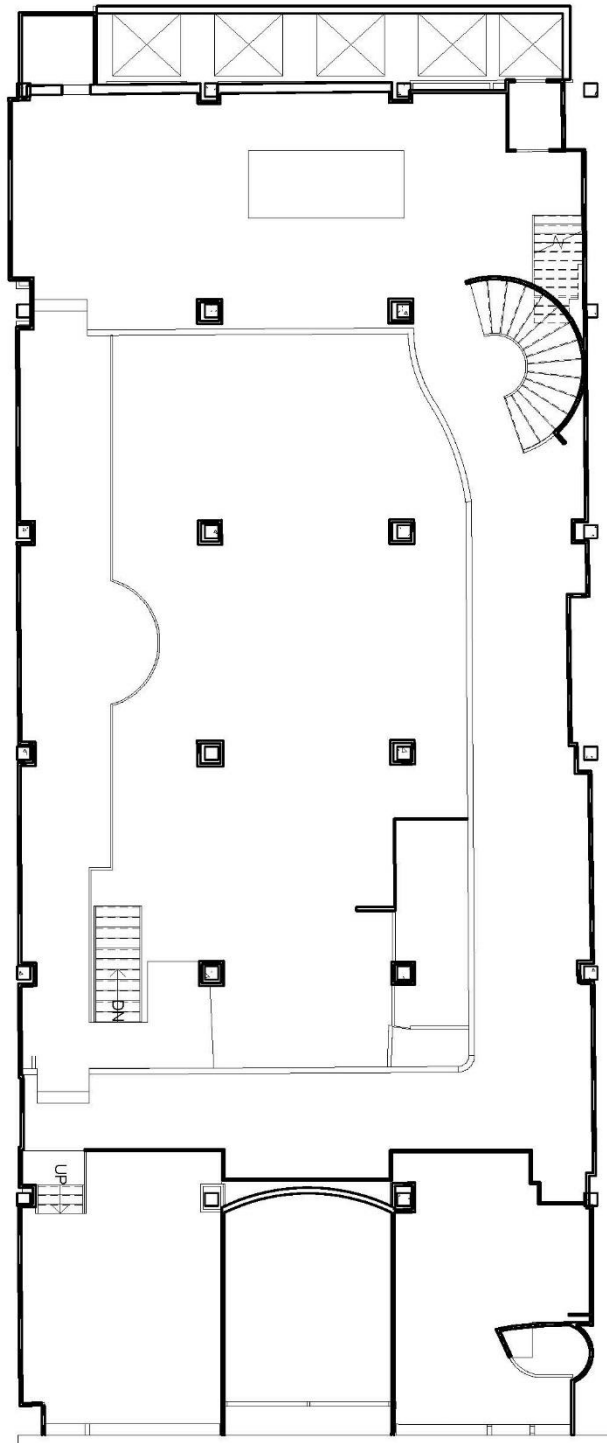
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 19
1st floor



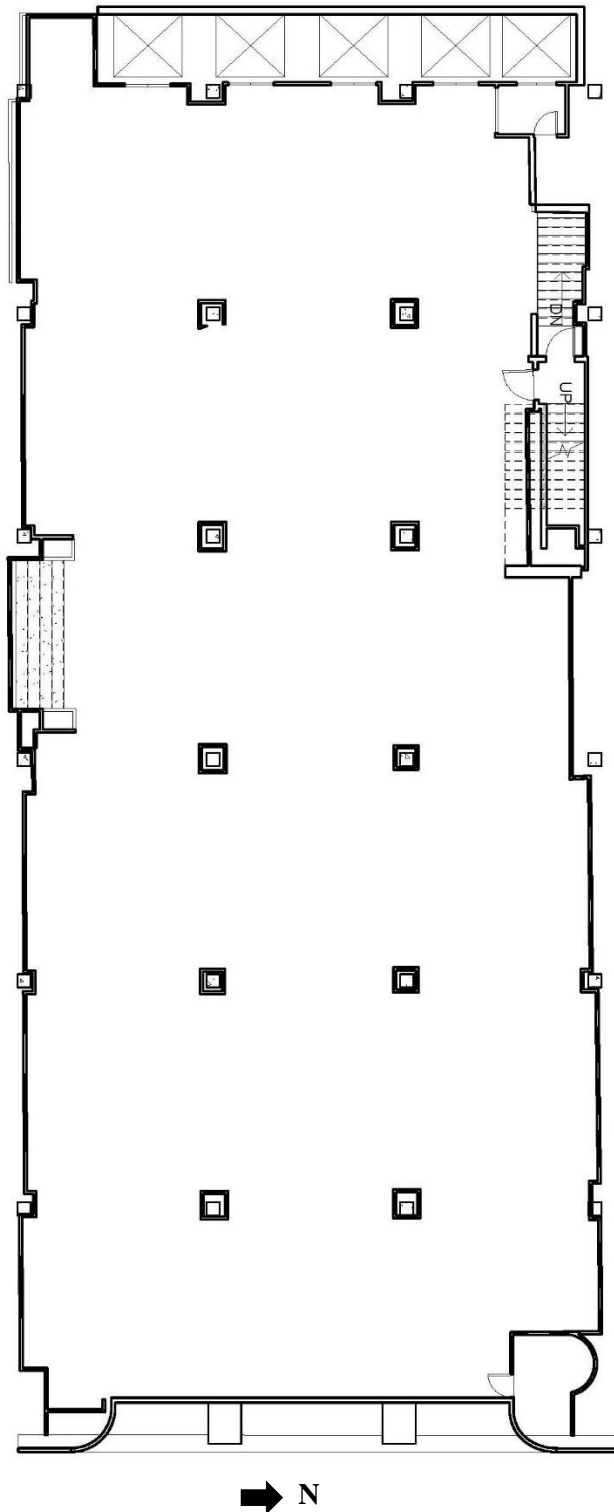
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 20
Mezzanine



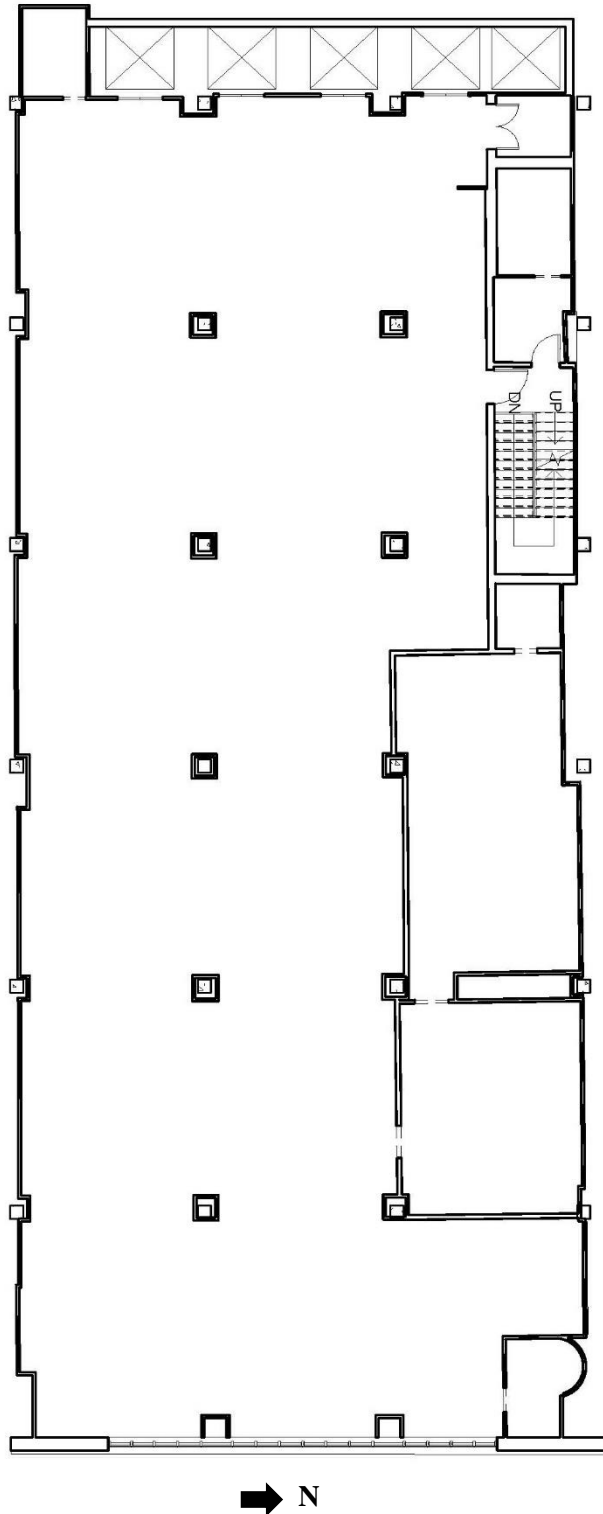
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 21
2nd floor



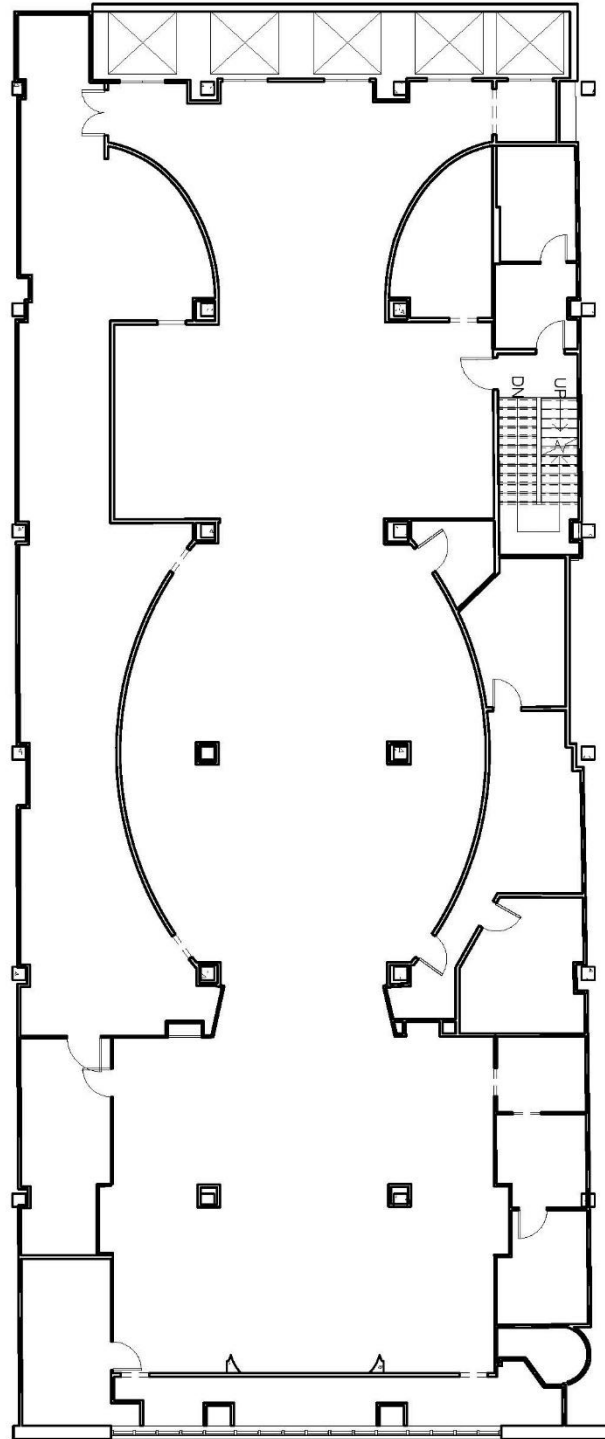
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 22
3rd floor



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

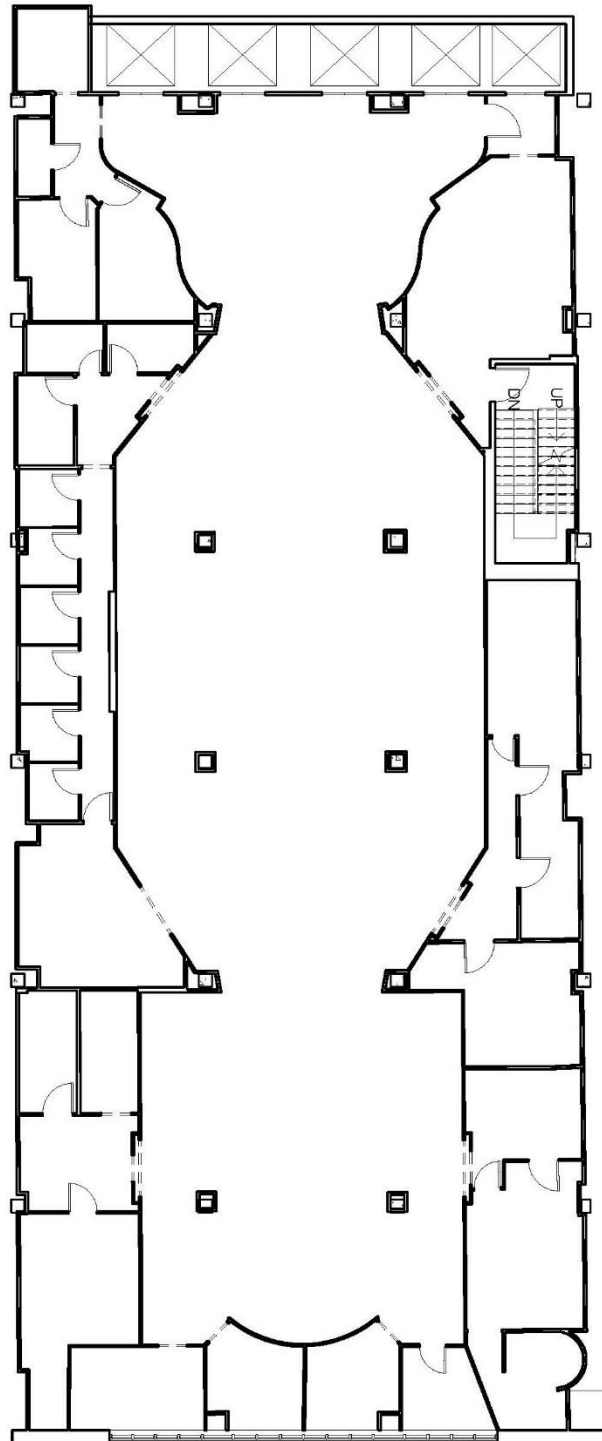
Figure 23
4th floor



➔ N

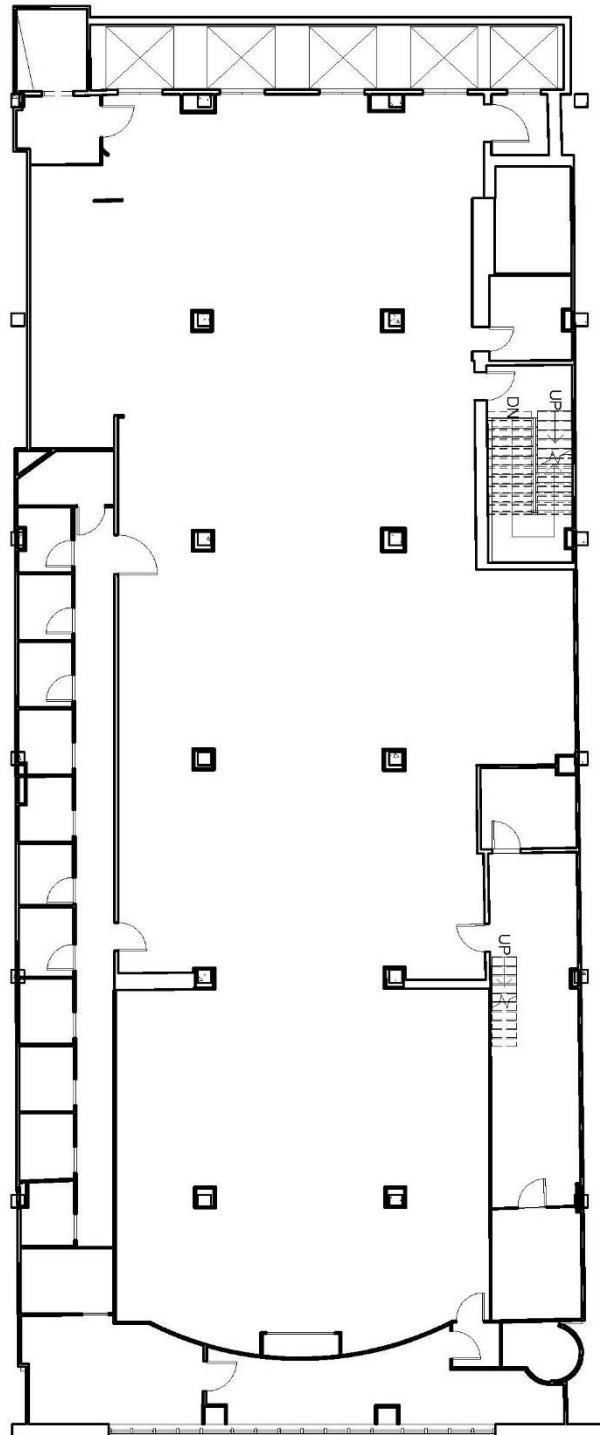
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 24
5th floor



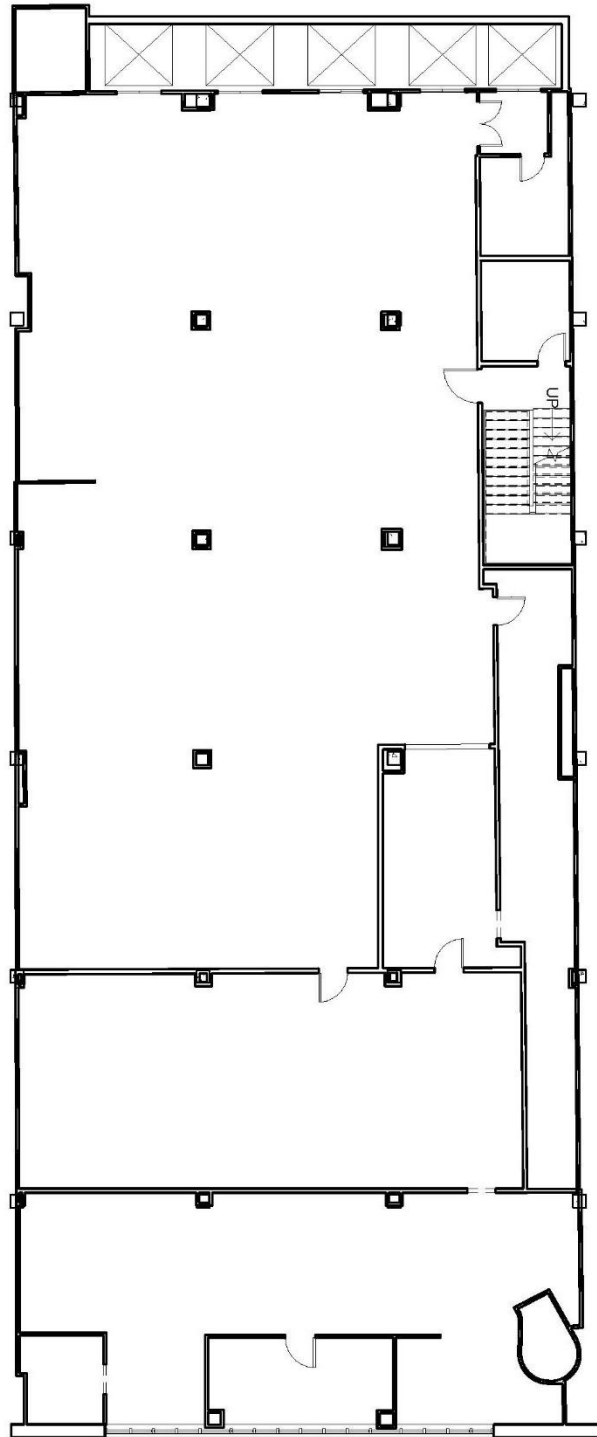
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 25
6th floor



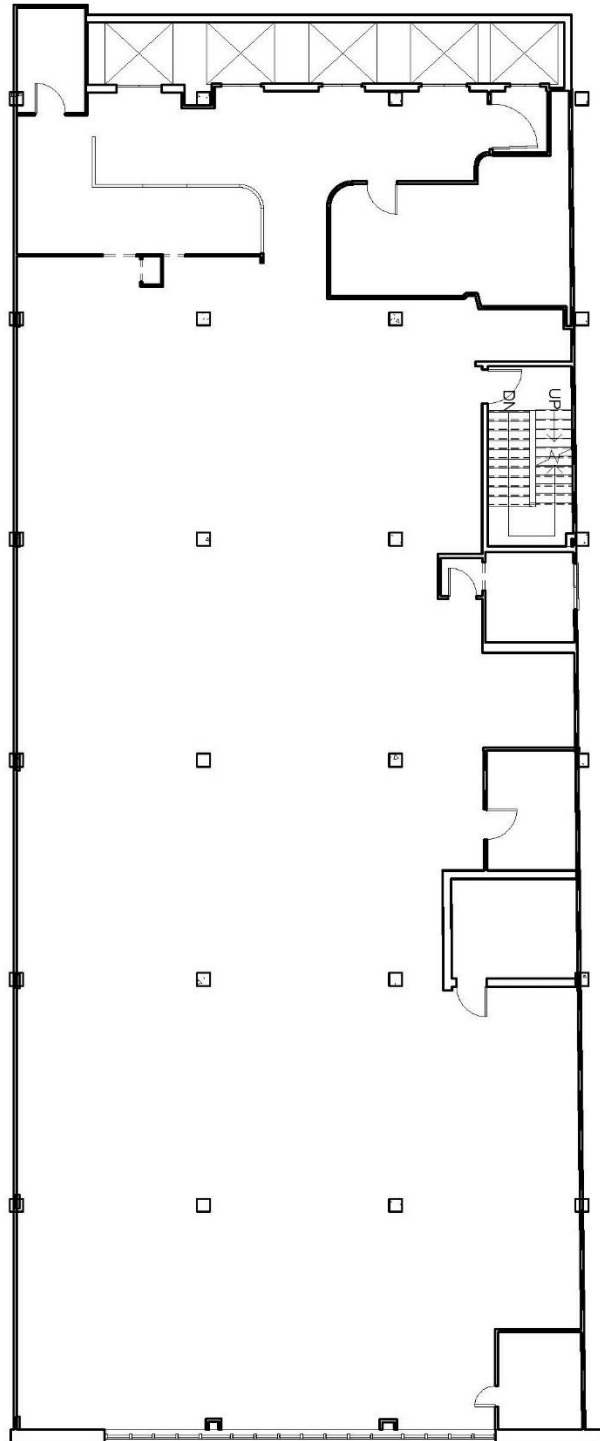
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 26
7th floor



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

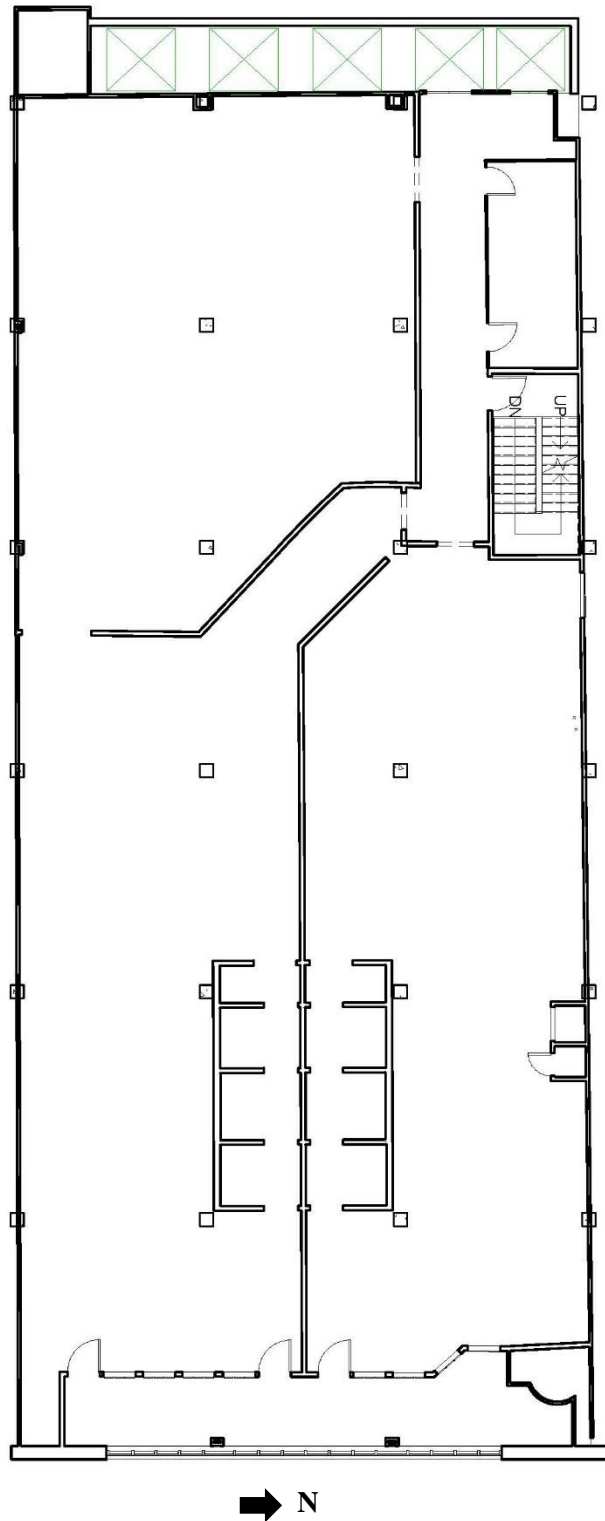
Figure 27
8th floor



➔ N

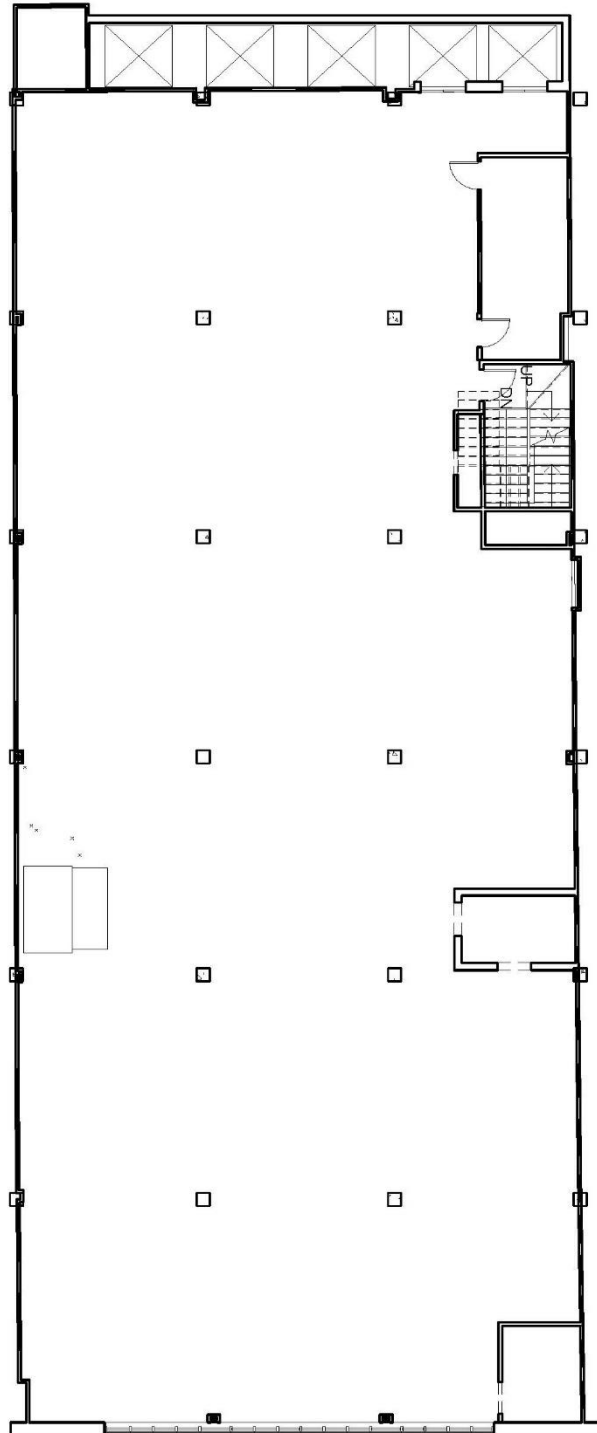
Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 28
9th floor



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

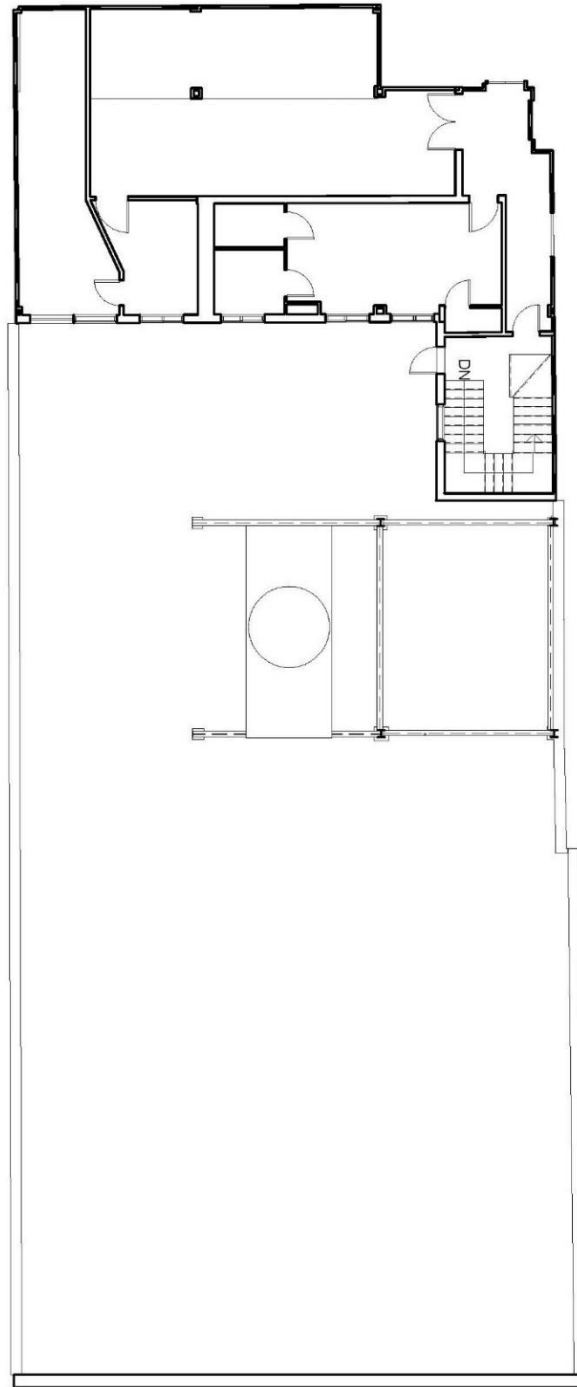
Figure 29
10th floor



➔ N

Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Figure 30
Penthouses



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 1

East façade facing Main Street, view northwest



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 2

East façade facing Main Street, view southwest



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 3

East façade facing Main Street, detail of inset second floor balcony and ribbons of windows, view west



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 4

First floor, original mezzanine beyond and at right, view west



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 5

First floor, original mezzanine beyond and at left, view east



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 6

Mezzanine with original supports and grooved plaster, ribbed frame formwork construction, view southwest



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 7

Third floor, possible children's fashions, view east



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 8

Fourth floor, possible men's fashions, view east



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 9

Fifth floor, ladies' fashions, view east



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 10

Seventh floor, transition to administrative space, view east



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 11

First floor, detail of original aluminum frieze with crimped aluminum spandrel at location of historic entry, original light cove at ceiling, view west



Battelstein's, Houston, Harris County, Texas

Photo 12

First floor, detail of original chamfered pilaster with polished granite at location of historic entry, view southwest

