

State of California & The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary #  
HRI #  
Trinomial  
NRHP Status Code

Other  
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Listings

Page 1 of 8 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building

P1. Other Identifier: \_\_\_\_\_

\*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☐ Unrestricted

\*a. County Fresno and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Fresno South, CA Date \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_; R \_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_ of Sec \_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_ B.M.

c. Address 2049 Broadway City Fresno Zip 93721

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)

APN 459-296-03

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

The property located at 2049 Broadway, originally known as the Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building, is located within a trapezoidal parcel on the southwest corner of Broadway and E Voorman Avenue. The subject property consists of a three-story commercial/industrial building, which takes up the whole of its parcel, with its primary elevation facing east towards Broadway; it sits at street level. This building was constructed in 1920 of brick. The brick is clad with stucco. It has a trapezoidal plan. The roof is flat with a surrounding parapet. Original multi-paned steel windows remain on the third story of the primary (east) elevation and on the second and third stories of the side (north) elevation. The remaining windows are non-original and consist of large metal-framed fixed windows or small metal sliding and single-hung windows. (See Continuation Sheet)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP6 1-3 story commercial building; HP8 Industrial building

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



\*P4. Resources Present: ☒ Building  
☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐  
Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #) March 20, 2019

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: ☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric  
☐ Both

1920, Original Building Permit Record

\*P7. Owner and Address: Steven Michael & Kelly R. Hardison  
P.O. Box 11503  
Fresno, CA 93773

\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address) Laura Groves van Onna  
Historic Preservation Specialist  
City of Fresno

\*P9. Date Recorded: May 7, 2019

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe)  
Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

Evaluation of 2049 Broadway for the City of Fresno Local Register of Historic Resources

\*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☐ Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record  
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record  
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List): \_\_\_\_\_

# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building \*NRHP Status Code 5S3

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B1. Historic Name: The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company

B2. Common Name: \_\_\_\_\_

B3. Original Use: Commercial/Industrial

B4. Present Use: Commercial/Industrial/Residential

\*B5. Architectural Style: None

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

According to the original building permit record, this industrial building was constructed in 1920. A one-story caretaker's studio was constructed within the rear portion of the rooftop of the building in 1940.

\*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: Unknown

b. Builder: Unknown

\*B10. Significance: Theme Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial and Industrial Development Area Lowell Neighborhood

Period of Significance 1920-1956 Property Type Industrial – Industrial Loft Applicable Criteria Local Register

Criteria i and iii (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope.

Also address integrity.)

The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building is located on Block 2 in the Central Addition, which was surveyed and platted in 1887. It is located in what is now known as the Lowell Neighborhood. According to the original building permit record, this commercial/industrial building was constructed in 1920. A one-story caretaker's studio was constructed within the rear portion of the rooftop of the building in 1940.

The subject property was originally constructed for the Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company, founded by W.L. Bixler and his son L.B. Bixler in 1914. William Lincoln Bixler was born on February 23, 1865 in Pennsylvania, married, and arrived in California in 1893. His wife Grace H. Bixler was born c. 1875 in Ohio, where their son L.B. was born as well c. 1889. W.L. passed away at the age of 68 on April 11, 1933. At the time of his death, L.B. was serving as president of the Fresno Cleaners' and Dyers' Association and continued to manage the business they had established. He continued to advertise for the business which operated until at least 1956, marketing to Fresno residents as well as those of communities such as Del Ray, Parlier, and Reedley. (See Continuation Sheet)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) \_\_\_\_\_

\*B12. References:

Building Permit Records

City and County Directories

*The Fresno Bee*

Fresno County Assessor

Fresno County Recorder

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

Survey Forms for 2049 Broadway Prepared February 2008 by

Andrea Galvin & Jennifer Krintz

SurveyLA, "Industrial Development, 1850-1980," 2011, rev. 2018

U.S. Census Records

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: Laura Groves van Onna

Historic Preservation Specialist, City of Fresno

\*Date of Evaluation: May 7, 2019

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building

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**\*P3a. Description Continued:** The primary (east) elevation is organized symmetrically. The façade has three bays divided by pilasters, with a storefront entry on the first story for each bay. The pilasters are clad with ceramic tile along the first story. The storefronts are enclosed and obscured by stucco, wood paneling, and metal security bars; each storefront entry is covered by a metal security door. The second and third stories within the central bay each consist of two sets of paired windows. The second and third stories within each side bay consist of a group of three windows.

The rear portion of the third floor has a sheltered, but open-air patio; it is partially covered by a wood-framed awning. A one-story caretaker's studio was constructed within the rear portion of the rooftop of the building in 1940. It was constructed of wood frame, is clad with vertical wood paneling, has a low-pitched roof, and consists of large fixed windows along its facades. A sliding glass door centrally located along its north façade provides access to the roof. A portion of the third floor is open to this rooftop addition, thereby creating a double-height ceiling for natural light to filter down. In addition to the windows along the elevations of the building, another source of natural light is a pitched, steel-framed skylight with chicken wire glass.

Apparent alterations include replacement windows, painted and stuccoed brick, and a small rooftop addition.

**\*B10. Significance Continued:** Following a period of vacancy, the building located at 2049 Broadway was adaptively reused for the Broadway Fair Appliance and Furniture Company by 1969. John Garofoli and Vic Antonino, the owners of the company leased the space at 2049 Broadway from property owner Ewell Peden. Peden was a licensed general building contractor in Fresno, primarily for residential properties; by 1970, he had placed himself in the running for political office in the 32nd Assembly District but ultimately withdrew. Photos of Garofoli and Antonino were frequently featured in a plethora of advertisements promoting Broadway Fair, in addition to a rendering of the building located at 2049 Broadway with its recognizable three-story, three-bay facade.

City and county directories reveal that Roy Maxwell (Max) and Vivian Hardison were operating their printing and publishing business, Mid-Cal Publishers, at 2049 Broadway no later than 1979. That same year, Hardison applied for a change of occupancy at the building from Commercial to R-3 (Residential). The Hardison family began living on the third floor of the building and operating their business out of the storefront on north end of the primary (east) elevation on the first floor. Mid-Cal Publishers was periodically noted for their reprinting of historically significant works that had gone out of print such as the 1891 Atlas of Fresno County, the Historical Atlas Map of Sonoma County, "Pioneer Days in California" by John Carr, and "The Years Between" by Brooks D. Gist. Steve Hardison, son of Max and Vivian Hardison, currently operates the printing and publishing business. Prior to taking over the family business, he was a National Pole Vault Champion in the early to mid-1970s and qualified for the 1976 U.S.A. Olympic Trials.

Most of the commercial development within the Lowell Neighborhood is located along or adjacent to E Divisadero Street. And, most of these properties were constructed between 1930 and 1960 – making the subject property, constructed in 1920, one of the earliest commercial buildings constructed in what was and still remains a predominantly residential neighborhood. The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building located at 2049 Broadway provided a service to this surrounding neighborhood, city, and region – offering pick-up and delivery as well. The building consisted of commercial and industrial uses, as it facilitated interaction with customers and cleaning operations.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building

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**\*B10. Significance Continued:** Its commercial influence is illustrated in the building's design through its storefronts along the first story of the primary (east) elevation, and its industrial influence is illustrated by the brick construction and the fenestration of multi-paned steel windows along the upper stories. The building is also located one block east of H Street, historically known as an industrial corridor, and it may have contributed to the influence in design.

The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building identifies most with the Industrial – Industrial Loft property type. Character-defining features include brick construction, at least three stories in height with vertical emphasis, storefronts along the first story, multi-paned steel windows along the upper stories, and generally open floor plans on the upper stories. The intention of this property type design was to create a factory environment that would provide lighting, ventilation, and protection from fire and vibration within a limited amount of space. The Industrial – Industrial Loft property type was developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and was predominant in construction between 1900 and 1960.

The current property owners intend to rehabilitate the property while retaining and restoring the historic character of the commercial/industrial building, with the assistance of the California Historical Building Code and with the opportunity to receive potential relief from City of Fresno property development standards.

### Eligibility

The subject property located at 2049 Broadway was previously evaluated in 2008 through the "North Park Area Historic Context and Property Survey" prepared by Galvin Preservation Associates Inc. for the City of Fresno. The property did not appear to be eligible for National, California, or Local Register listing through this survey evaluation.

Upon further research, the property located at 2049 Broadway, originally known as the Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building, is eligible for listing in the City of Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources. The property is greater than 50 years of age and possesses integrity of location, design, feeling, and association (FMC 12-1607). Additionally, it is significant under Local Register Criterion i because it is associated with early 20th century commercial and industrial development in the Lowell Neighborhood in Fresno and Criterion iii because it has distinction as an Industrial – Industrial Loft property type.



## CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building

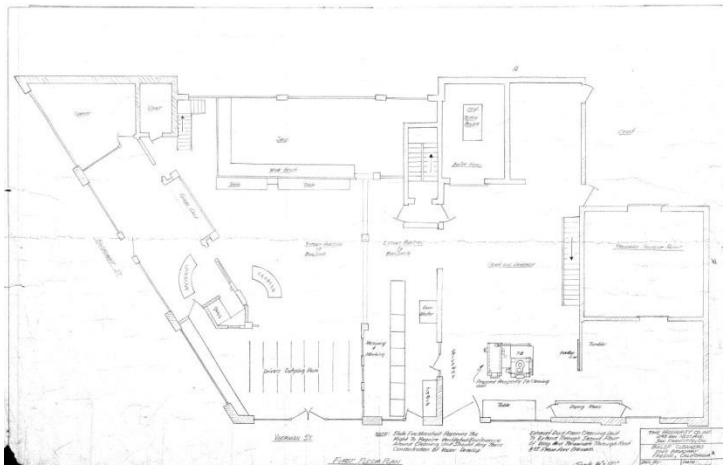
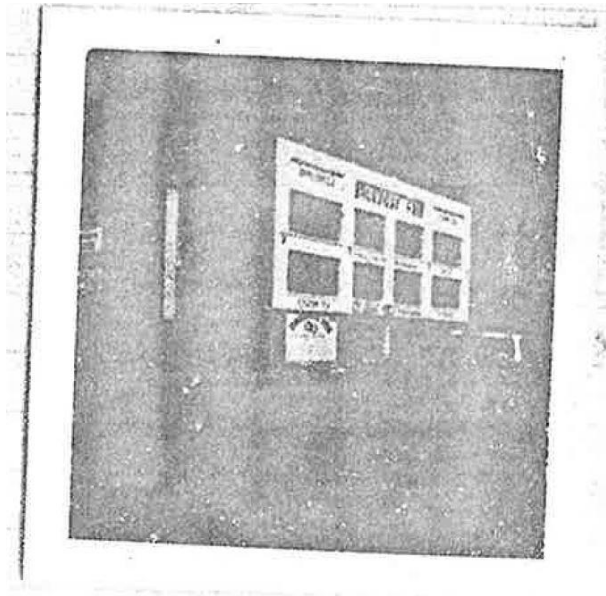
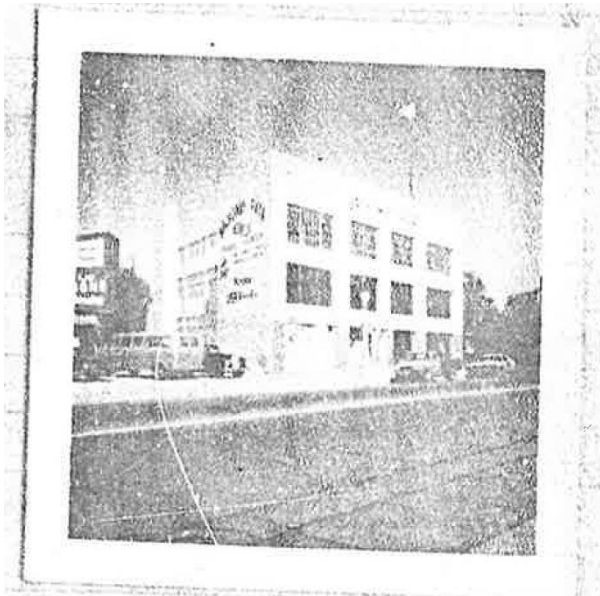
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## CONTINUATION SHEET

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Property Name: The Bixler Vapor Dry Cleaning Company Building  
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**STEVE HARDISON** of Fresno City College clears 14 feet en route to a meet record jump of 15.6. He is the defending state junior college vaulting champion.