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PITTSBURGH TERMINAL WAREHOUSE AND TRANSFER COMPANY ONE STEP AWAY FROM
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Unanimous Recommendation Now On Way to National Register for Final Approval

The Pittsburgh Terminal Warehouse complex inched one step closer to national recognition when its application, prepared by Skelly and Loy, Inc., was unanimously approved at the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board Meeting in Harrisburg on February 5, 2013. One especially exuberant board member praised it as *“an amazing resource in great shape.”* The board’s recommendation will be sent to the Keeper of the National Register, who will make the final determination on whether to list the complex.

Built between 1904 and 1906, the Pittsburgh Terminal Warehouse was constructed as a complex of three brick buildings with funding from some of Pittsburgh’s leading industrialists, including George Westinghouse; George Laughlin, Jr., of Jones & Laughlin Steel; financier James I. Buchanan; and Captain James A. Henderson. Their great interest was driven by the need for unified warehouse and office space accessible by all modes of transportation and shipment, and within close proximity to the downtown central business district.

Boasting one million square feet, it was the largest, and one of the busiest, warehouse complexes between New York and Chicago. According to a 1915 newspaper article, *“the great Terminal Warehouse and Transfer Company plant...has been studied for its marvelous design and efficient service by warehouse companies from all sections of the United States.”* The amount of freight passing in and out of the complex was impressive: in one year the complex *“used more than 19,000 freight cars in handling materials.”* The cold storage system *“cared for nearly 23,000,000 pounds of commodities, and in the same period, between 350,000,000 and 400,000,000 pounds of general merchandise were handled.”*

Today, the Pittsburgh Terminal Warehouse complex is better known as [River Walk Corporate Centre](#) and is home to approximately 80 businesses and nonprofit organizations. Interestingly enough, one of the newest tenants is [City Center Self Storage](#), which leverages many of the building’s original design characteristics for its [Pittsburgh self storage business](#), including the natural climate control and its proximity to downtown Pittsburgh.

Eligibility for the inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places was based not only on its commercial importance, but also because it is an exemplary model of Renaissance Revival architecture. *“Charles Bickel, the architect of the complex’s buildings, deftly layered classical motifs and finely-wrought brick details to elevate the appearance of the complex above more mundane warehouse examples that commonly featured utilitarian windows and simple corbelled cornices,”* according to Laura Ricketts, Architectural Historian at [Skelly and Loy](#), and preparer of the National Register application. In addition, *“The introduction of the element of Terminal Way as the unifying central spine of the composition and the roughly symmetrical handling of the building sections on either side of Terminal Way demonstrated the architect’s mastery of a complex sloping site and demanding building program with the added benefit of a dramatic entrance.”*

“We are very excited to be associated with this wonderful property. It stands today for what it stood for when first constructed...a monument to Pittsburgh’s historical significance as a center of industry, architecture, and engineering prowess,” said Laura.

About River Walk Corporate Centre

Situated in the historic South Side, the [River Walk Corporate Centre](#) offers the prestige of a downtown address at very competitive lease terms. Over 65 tenants now reside in the historic River Walk Centre, including medical and educational technology, software developers, printers, photographers, public relations, sales and marketing specialists, non-profit organizations, digital media, office, light manufacturing, and general warehousing concerns, including [Pittsburgh self storage business, City Center Self Storage](#). Join the many smart companies who have taken advantage of all that River Walk has to offer.

About Skelly and Loy

[SKELLY AND LOY](#), celebrating its 44th year in business, is a mid-sized engineering-environmental consulting firm with 6 Mid-Atlantic offices and is among the top engineering and environmental firms in the nation. The firm provides expert mining, geologic, engineering, environmental, waste management, water resources, and cultural resources services to private and public sector clients throughout the U.S. and abroad.