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**CHICAGO-**

Preservation Futures regrets to announce that the National Park Service has rejected a nomination to list the James R. Thompson Center to the National Register of Historic Places due to the objection of the building's current owner, Prime Group.

The notification of owner objection was delivered concurrently with the information that the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places determined the building to be eligible for listing on the National Register.

Completed in 1985 by the Chicago-based firm Murphy/Jahn (now JAHN), led by Helmut Jahn, FAIA (1920-2021) the James R. Thompson Center's design borrows themes from past architectural styles and combines them with high-tech structural expression to embody ideals such as government transparency and civic participation. The building is widely considered by architecture critics, historic preservationists, and planning professionals to be the greatest example of Post-Modern architecture in Chicago.

The nomination was authored by Preservation Futures and AJ LaTrace, commissioned by Landmarks Illinois, and supported by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Mark Realty and Elaine Rosen. The nomination's first draft was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office in December of 2020, when the building was still under the ownership of the State of Illinois.

In December 2021, the State announced that it had reached a deal with Prime Group to sell the building, with the development firm intending to overhaul the structure. In July 2022, Google announced that it would buy the James R. Thompson Center and transform it into a second Chicago headquarters, working with JAHN as architect. While renovations have yet to begin on the iconic structure, they are expected to be completed in 2026.

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. While listing on the National Register does not explicitly prevent a building from being altered or demolished, listing on the National Register makes available a 20% Federal income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic, income producing buildings, as well as other Federal and State financial incentives.

"A listing on the National Register of Historic Places comes with more incentives than disadvantages" states Elizabeth Blasius, architectural historian, and partner at Preservation Futures. "It is unfortunate that in both public and private hands, owners of the James R. Thompson Center were not supportive of the nomination."

If added to the National Register, the James R. Thompson Center would have joined a sparse number of works that represent the Post-Modern style, including the Portland Public Service Building by Michael Graves (built 1982, listed 2011) and other early examples, including an addition to the Mutual Savings Bank Building of San Francisco by Charles W. Moore (built 1964, listed 2014) and Nils Erling Hansen's Norwegian Seamen's Church in New Orleans (built 1968, listed 2020).

“Listing on the National Register would have provided context for the importance of the design of the Thompson Center within history and culture,” states architect Jonathan Solomon, partner at Preservation Futures. “While we support the building’s reuse, we would regret losing its clearly unique and valuable features.”

The endeavor to list the James R. Thompson Center on the National Register of Historic Places was a collaborative effort by a dedicated coalition, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Landmarks Illinois, Preservation Chicago, Docomomo US and Docomomo US/Chicago. The nomination includes interviews by architectural journalists and scholars, including Adam Nathaniel Furman, Alexandra Lange, and Kevin Harrington. Prior to his untimely death in 2021, Helmut Jahn provided Preservation Futures with access to drawings and photographs of the building and participated in a new interview.

The final version of the National Register Nomination has been made available to the public via [this link](#).