

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

FEB 15

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 any 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 ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
Other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 209-223 West Ninth Avenue not for publication
city or town Spokane vicinity _____
State Washington code WA county Spokane code 063 zip code 99204

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/9/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION OFFICE
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 this property is:
- 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:)

[Signature] 3/30/05
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
2	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	1	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:

Tudor Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK, STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other CERAMIC TILE, GLASS, WOOD,
IRON

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property.)

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- 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.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1939

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Rider, Chester F. (Builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.) SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of 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 Engineering Record# _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Spokane City/County Preservation Office

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

UTM References as per TopoZone.com
(Place additional UTM References on a continuation sheet.)

UTM reference grid with 4 columns and 2 rows. Row 1: 11 Zone, 4 688 34 Easting, 527 717 3 Northing, 3 Zone, Easting, Northing. Row 2: Zone, Easting, Northing, 4 Zone, Easting, Northing.

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Yeomans, Principal Planner/Consultant
organization Historic Preservation Planning & Design date 24 June 2004
street & number 501 West 27th Avenue telephone (509) 456-3828
lkyeomans@aol.com
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99203

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Michael P. & Virginia I. Berg
street & number 234 W. Sumner Avenue telephone (509) 838-1616
city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99204

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ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
Spokane County, Washington

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Completed in 1939, the Robinwood Apartments are an excellent example of garden court type of apartment complex. Located on West Ninth Avenue in the Fern Hill Addition on Spokane, Washington's South Hill, the apartment complex comprises of two rectangular-shaped buildings which are sited on a steep slope and overlook a private, terraced courtyard. An eclectic example of a variety of styles, the apartment blocks retain original design features, including overhanging roof eaves with exposed rafter tails, brick veneer wall cladding, false half-timbering with stucco infill, metal casement windows, decorative vertical board mahogany front doors, wrought-iron light fixtures, balustrades and mail boxes, and garages with original vertical wood board doors. The courtyard, which is nestled between the two apartment buildings, is landscaped with a series of black basalt rock and red brick retaining walls, evergreen and deciduous trees, flowering shrubs, flower beds, and pathways lined with red paver bricks. The Robinwood Apartments is well-preserved and retains a high degree of exterior and interior architectural integrity found in the building's original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION

Site

The Robinwood Apartments are sited on the south side of West Ninth Avenue on a north-facing slope on a portion of Lots 9-10-11, Block 1 in the Fern Hill Addition. The parcel is irregularly shaped and measures approximately 125 feet wide and 215 feet deep. Built into a terraced hillside, the apartment complex includes two historic buildings, a non-historic detached garage, a U-shaped paved driveway, and a central courtyard. The two apartment buildings follow a rectangular footprint with a north-south parallel orientation. A private courtyard is located between the two buildings. A paved driveway encircles the buildings and courtyard area, and is accessed from Ninth Avenue on the property's northeast and northwest corner boundaries. Surrounded by an encroaching maze of busy streets, intersections, and contemporary high-rise commercial buildings, the Robinwood Apartments are located in an area dominated by the Sacred Heart Hospital Medical Complex, which includes a collection of hospital buildings, clinics, retreat houses, and parking garages.

The Courtyard

Regarded as a defining focal point of the apartment complex, the secluded courtyard has a north-south orientation. The north end of the courtyard is marked by two brick staircases that are built in a six-foot-high brick retaining wall. From the courtyard, the stairs lead down to a paved sidewalk that runs parallel to the street at Ninth Avenue. The staircases are lit by original wrought-iron carriage-style light fixtures which are anchored to the brick staircase walls. A walkway lined with brick pavers leads south from the top of the stairs into the courtyard. A two-and-one-half-foot-high basalt rock retaining wall separates the courtyard in half along a north-south axis. The courtyard is landscaped with evergreen and deciduous trees, evergreen

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and flowering shrubs, flower beds, and a manicured lawn. The front doors of individual apartment units open into the courtyard. A restful respite from nearby traffic, the private courtyard is hidden from the street and is maintained exclusively for tenants of the Robinwood Apartments.

Detached Garage

Constructed on the same site as an original garage, an existing detached two-car garage is built into the steep hillside in the extreme southeast corner of the property behind the east apartment building. It is made of poured concrete and has a gable front roof that is covered with composition shingles. The front-facing gable peak is clad in T-1-11 siding. Two metal garage doors open from the north façade of the garage. The design of the garage resembles the original concrete-block garage that was built in 1939 when the apartment complex was erected. Due to deterioration beyond repair, the 1939 garage was replaced in 2002 with the existing garage. The 2002 garage is a non-contributing building in the apartment complex.

The Robinwood Apartments

The Robinwood Apartments are composed of two historic buildings that are designed in an eclectic fashion using the Tudor Revival style as the main theme. Following rectangular footprints, both buildings are two stories high with roofs that are covered with composition shingles. The buildings feature different designs but share some of the same construction materials such as veneer face brick, wood false half-timbering, and original metal multi-paned casement windows. The decorative half-timbering is made of wood which is painted dark brown and contrasts sharply with crème-colored stucco infill and red brick wall cladding. The stucco infill is further accentuated with a textured trowel pattern. All of the exterior doors in the buildings are original mahogany wood doors with a vertical board design and original hardware. The buildings are supported by poured concrete foundations and have attached garages that are located on their north elevations. Because the apartment buildings are built on a terraced hillside, the garages are attached to the buildings at their basement level, which is located at grade along Ninth Avenue. The attached garages are duplicate designs of each other and have shed roofs, brick veneer wall cladding on the east and west elevations, and original solid wood sliding doors with a vertical board design.

The East Building

The east building contains four apartment units at address numbers 209, 211, 213, and 215 West Ninth Avenue. According to 2004 Spokane County Tax Assessor information, the building measures approximately 105 wide and 21 feet deep. It has two stories and a medium-pitched gable-on-hip roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. A hip roofed one-story wing is attached to the building on the south elevation, and an identical one-story wing is attached to the building on the north elevation. A two-car garage with a shed roof is attached to the wing at the basement level at the north elevation.

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The main façade of the east building faces west and is defined by symmetrical fenestration patterns, which include four front-door apartment entrances. Each front entrance is distinguished with a single-story enclosure that projects two feet from the wall of the building. The projections enclose a recessed front door, and are capped with a front-facing gable roof and shed roofs. The projecting entrance is clad in false half-timbering, wood corner boards, and stucco infill. Original wrought-iron light fixtures and wrought-iron mail boxes flank the recessed front doors. Each door is made of walnut-finished mahogany and is protected with an original wood-frame screen door which is painted dark brown. Original apartment unit numbers made of metal are attached to each front door.

The façade of the east building is clad in red brick veneer on the first floor and false half-timbering and stucco infill on the second floor. An eight-inch-wide horizontal wood band separates the first floor from the second floor. First-floor windows are multi-paned metal casement units and are accentuated with brick lug sills. The second floor windows are multi-paned metal casement units and are accentuated with non-operable exterior wood shutters. Each shutter is decorative and is made of three vertical wood slats which are intersected by two horizontal wood rails. The vertical wood slats are uniquely accented with decorative tails. The center boards feature rounded ends while the exterior boards feature random cuts which look like the fringe of a scarf.

Adjacent to a paved driveway, the east elevation of the building is dominated by four tall brick chimneys that project from the planar wall of the building. Each chimney has a decorative chimney pot and is flanked on one side by a back door entrance. Some of the entrances have a narrow staircase. Made of wood, the staircases measure a mere two feet wide and descend to the paved driveway. The north elevation of the building faces Ninth Avenue and is dominated by an attached two-car garage with a shed roof.

Recorded in 2004 Spokane County Tax Assessor files, the interior first and second floors of the east building have a combined total of 3990 finished square feet. An unfinished basement contains storage and mechanical rooms. The two end apartments (#209 and #215) each have one bedroom and a bathroom upstairs, and a living room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor. The two center apartments (#211 and #213) each have two bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs, and a living room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor. Each of the four apartments has a fireplace with a glazed ceramic tile and textured plaster surround, and a walnut-finished mahogany mantel. Each apartment is intact with the original 1939 floor plan, solid oak floors, trowel-patterned plaster walls, cove ceilings, brass-and-glass wall sconces, brass-and-glass ceiling light fixtures and chandeliers, built-in mahogany china cabinets in the dining room, glazed ceramic tile window sills, original kitchen cabinets, cupboards, sinks, fixtures and glazed ceramic tile counters and backsplash, and original bathroom glazed ceramic tile wainscoting and porcelain fixtures. The ceilings in the apartments are eight feet high, the woodwork is a combination of mahogany and painted wood, and each apartment has a front door and a back door.

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The West Building

The west building is a two-story structure with gable ends, a medium-pitched roof, and overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails. Gable peaks are embellished with brick corbelling under the eaves and vertical wood board-and-batten. The building houses four apartment units: Apartments #217 and #219 are located on the first floor, and apartments #221 and #223 are located on the second floor. A full basement with a laundry, storage rooms, and mechanical area is located below grade. The façade of the building faces east onto the courtyard and is dominated by a brick staircase that rises from the first floor to the second story. The front entrances of the second-floor apartments are each accessed by a small porch deck which is protected by a wrought-iron balustrade. The front entrances on the first floor are flush with the exterior wall and are located under the second-floor porch decks. The east façade of the west building is clad in red brick veneer on the first floor and white-painted brick veneer on the second floor. The windows are original multi-paned metal casement units.

The south elevation of the building is dominated by an attached two-car garage with a flat roof. The roof is covered with a vinyl membrane and has a parapet wall with two small pent roofs on the south and east elevations of the garage roof. The west elevation of the apartment building abuts a paved driveway. An exterior entrance is located in the center of the elevation and is distinguished with a shed roof that projects over the door. The shed roof has exposed rafter tails and is supported by wood brackets. Two basalt rock retaining walls flank the walkway to the door. The north elevation of the west building is dominated by an attached two-car garage with a shed roof. Because of the apartment's steeply sloped site, the garage is level with the basement of the building.

The interior of the west building holds a first and second-floor combined total of 3,138 finished square feet (Spokane County Tax Assessor, 2004). The first floor has two apartments (#217 and #219) which each have one bedroom *en suite* with a bathroom, a living room, dining room, and kitchen. The two second-floor apartments (#221 and #223) each have one bedroom *en suite* with a bathroom, a living room, dining room, and kitchen. Unlike the east building, the apartments in the west building do not have individual back doors. Instead, they share a common interior stairwell and an exterior back entrance, which is located on the west elevation of the building. Each apartment is finished like the apartments in the east building: Original interior appointments include eight-foot-high ceilings, fireplaces, trowel-patterned plaster walls, cove ceilings, wall sconces and ceiling light fixtures, solid oak hardwood floors, a combination of finished mahogany and painted wood woodwork, glazed ceramic tile window sills, kitchens with painted wood cabinets and cupboards and glazed ceramic tile counter tops and backsplashes, and bathrooms with glazed ceramic tile wainscoting and porcelain fixtures.

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ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

Based on an historic image taken by Libby Studio of Spokane (EWSHS #L87-1.19524.40) in 1940, very few alterations have been made to the Robinwood Apartments. On the exterior, the original metal shingles on the roof were removed due to wide-spread leakage and damage, and were replaced in 1989 with composition shingles which resemble the original metal shingles in size, shape, and color. In an effort to combine three apartments for use as one, an interior doorway was installed on the first floor between apartment #211 and apartment #213 in 1998, and between apartment #211 and apartment #209 in 2003. The doorways were trimmed with walnut-finished mahogany to match the original woodwork.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1939, the Robinwood Apartments are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion "C" as a property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of garden type apartment complex, a rare form in Washington State. The apartment complex is one of the best preserved apartment residences in Spokane. Additionally, the multi-family complex was erected by Chester F. Rider, a noted Spokane builder and real estate developer, who founded, owned, and managed the Rider Housing Corporation. Rider was responsible for the construction of at least six single-family homes and four multi-family apartment complexes on Spokane's South Hill. During its period of significance in 1939, the Robinwood Apartments achieved local importance as one of four apartment complexes that was planned, developed, and built by Rider on the hillside area south of Ninth Avenue, and along Grand Avenue on Spokane's South Hill. The apartments are associated with a pattern of multi-family residential re-settlement on Spokane South Hill during the 1930s-1940s.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Fern Hill Addition

According to a 1910 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map*, the hillside area along West Ninth Avenue by Grand Boulevard was called the Fern Hill Addition and was a mostly undeveloped steep bluff. It was dotted with basalt rock outcroppings and natural rocky terraces. Shrubbery and wild grasses grew among tall stands of fragrant pine, fir, and maple trees on the steep slope. Development at that time was sporadic and included a few homes and one small commercial building on the southwest corner of Ninth and Grand. As Spokane's population increased, suburban settlement spread along Ninth Avenue and up Grand Boulevard, becoming a catalyst for residential and commercial development that occurred across the hillside and on top of the plateau that forms Spokane's "South Hill." Roads were graded, re-graded and paved, pedestrian sidewalks were laid, street lighting was installed, street cars and trolleys began running routes from downtown to South Hill neighborhoods, and homes, churches, schools and commercial buildings were built. At first the area was the location of many large homes of wealthy Spokanites. However, when Sacred Heart Hospital moved from their original location along the river to the south hill around 1910, many of the large homes were converted into apartments. Still other were demolished for newer structures such as the Robinwood Apartments.

Reporting some of this redevelopment was an article in the April 30, 1939 issue of the *Spokesman-Review* which featured an aerial view of the vicinity with the following headline, caption, and article:

NEW APARTMENT DISTRICT ON SOUTH SIDE GROWING RAPIDLY

Spokane's newest apartment house district on the hillside south of Ninth and west of Grand...
is developing rapidly with at least three new apartment houses under way and near completion,

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and ground cleared for others to be erected this summer. The view...shows how the buildings are reaching up the hill almost to Cliff Drive. The district, a scenic spot, ordinarily full of pine trees, wild roses and syringia, is the scene of much activity apart from the actual construction work on the buildings. Loggers are felling big pine trees and cutting them into logs. Workers are constructing driveways to serve the new apartment houses. Then there is the incidental work of running sewers and water mains through the district.

There are two brick-and-stucco buildings [sic..the Robinwood Apartments], two stories high... None of the area had [paved] streets before this present building program got under way. The brick-and-stucco buildings are on the Ninth Avenue frontage and are served from that street. The newer apartments will be served by the drives now under way, although the largest building is too far up the slope to be served directly by a driveway. Steps and terraces will serve there. C. F. Rider, contractor, has been the principal builder.

Apartment house construction and predictions for the construction of future buildings mentioned in the newspaper article proved true. The Robinwood Apartments (209-223 W. Ninth Avenue) were completed in 1939, and the Cliff Apartments (210-230 W. Cliff Dr.) a large multi-building complex in 1940. The last apartment building in the area was erected in 1964 at 126 W. Cliff Drive.¹ Today all of the apartments built along the hillside are sought after, and the Cliff Drive units are especially coveted for their panoramic views.

The Robinwood Apartments

As recorded in Spokane County warranty deed #330625A, Spokane builder, Chester F. Rider, and his wife Hazel Rider, purchased Lot 9, Block 1, in the Fern Hill Addition for \$1,100 on March 4, 1938 from the City of Spokane through a foreclosure sale. In the months following the transaction, Rider purchased Lots 10 and 11, which are located adjacent west of Lot 9.

According to Spokane building permits, Rider began clearing the property's hillside site in March 1938. Water and sewer permits were issued in March, May, June, and September. Spokane building permit #52545, dated March 30, 1938, reported the estimated cost of construction for the east apartment building was \$10,000. The west building, which was built in October after the east building was completed, was also reported to cost \$10,000 (permit #54834). A third building permit was issued in April 1939, apparently replacing the first permit for the west building. The updated permit (#56105) listed the estimated construction cost of the west building at \$16,000—an increase of \$6,000. A private detached frame-construction garage was built behind the east building in September 1938 for \$150. It was replaced seven months later with a concrete block-construction garage that cost \$750. By the end of 1939, construction of

¹ Spokane County Tax Assessor Records & Warranty Deeds. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA

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the Robinwood Apartments was complete. A black-and-white photograph taken in 1940 by Charles Libby (Libby Studio, Spokane) pictured the apartment complex with paved driveways and early landscaping (EWSHS #L87-1.19524.40). According to Spokane city directories, Chester Rider and his wife, Hazel, resided in the east apartment building in 1939 while the west apartment building was being constructed. They named the complex the "Fern Hill Village Apartments" in honor of the Fern Hill Addition in which it was sited.

On January 20, 1939, Rider sold the property to Clyde R. Bergdahl.² Selma Bergdahl, Clyde's mother, managed the apartment complex for the next 37 years. Her children, Robert, Rhea, and Clyde, lived with her in the complex. By 1941, all of the apartments were leased by mostly married couples. They held professional jobs such as president of the Gibson Motor Company, owner/operator of the Pollard Envelope & Supply Company, and manager of Paris Wood Metal Packing Company.³ In 1941, Selma Bergdahl and her family renamed the property, calling it the Robinwood Apartments. According to Spokane County Tax Assessor records and Spokane County leasehold documents, they rented each apartment from \$69.00 to \$86.25 per month in 1947, and for \$275 per month per unit in 1979.

In 1979 Bergdahl family members Roger & Susan Bergdahl, and Bruce & Patricia Bergdahl bought the property for \$150,000. In 1986 they sold it for \$200,000 to Thompson & Brumback, a real estate development company.⁴ The company proposed to demolish the Robinwood Apartments and the adjacent apartment complex, which is located uphill south along Cliff Drive, and planned to build a high-rise office or condominium structure on the site. However, residents of the Sumner Avenue neighborhood, which parallels Cliff Drive, opposed the project. Spearheaded by neighborhood volunteer activist, Virginia Berg, the community gathered support to save the threatened apartment buildings from the wrecking ball. Their grassroots efforts were successful and the proposed project was denied through a City of Spokane Hearing Examiner's decision. To save the property from any future development threats, Virginia Berg and her husband, Spokane ophthalmologist, Dr. Michael Berg, purchased the Robinwood Apartments in 1988. Today, three apartment units in the Robinwood complex are leased to the Berg Appraisal Company for use as office space. In partnership with residential real estate appraiser, Mitchell O'Connor, the Berg Appraisal Company is co-owned and operated by the Berg's son, Randy Berg. The remaining five apartments are leased as residential living space for \$400-\$575 a month per unit.⁵

² Spokane County Warranty Deeds. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

³ Polk, R. L. *Spokane City Directories*. 1939-1941.

⁴ Spokane County Warranty Deeds. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

⁵ Berg, Virginia. Personal interview with Linda Yeomans (nomination consultant/author) in May 2004.

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SIGNIFICANCE

Criterion C

The Robinwood Apartments are a tangible reflection of a pattern of events in Spokane that helped shape the physical, built environment in the hillside area around West Ninth Avenue and Grand Boulevard on the city's South Hill. Architecturally significant, the Robinwood Apartments was one of five large apartment complexes built in the area during the 1930s and 40s. Designed in an eclectic fashion, using the Tudor Revival style as the main theme, the property is an excellent example of popular domestic architecture built during the pre WWII era for multi-family use. The apartment was leased by men and women with professional and para-professional occupations, who most likely took advantage of the Robinwood's location near a large hospital complex and the downtown core. Each apartment unit had access to space in a private, covered garage, which is part of the layout of the apartment complex. The trend toward individual garage spaces is associated with the advent of the automobile and its pandemic popularity, and became an amenity that was offered in upscale Spokane apartment houses built during the 1930s-1940s. The property is also significant as a resource that posses high artistic values, reflecting the work of proficient building contractor and Spokane real estate developer, Chester F. Rider.

Architectural Style

Reflective of their construction date, the Robinwood Apartments boast a mix of architectural styles. Built on a foundation of the Tudor Revival style, the apartments also display elements from the Arts & Crafts era and details from the Art Deco period. Tudor elements include the building's steeply pitched roof, tapered brick chimneys, exterior brick veneer cladding on the first floor, false half-timbering with stucco infill on the second story, multi-paned windows, and original wrought-iron lamp posts, porch lights, and mailboxes. Craftsman-style influence is seen in the building's exposed rafter tails and in the terraced courtyard design, which employs a series of native basalt rock walls. Inside Art Deco light fixtures, hardware and kitchen cabinets, bring a sense of playfulness to the stark historical references of the exterior facades.

Chester Fremont Rider

Chester Fremont Rider was first listed in Spokane in the 1925 *Spokane City Directory* as a salesman who resided in the Parsons Hotel. According to subsequent city directories, Rider was a department manager of the Monroe Street Lumber Company, which was located at North 1126 Monroe. Beginning in 1928, Rider listed himself in city directories as a "building contractor." That year he founded the Rider Housing Corporation and was responsible for the construction of at least six single-family homes and four multi-family apartment complexes, which were built in Spokane.⁶ According to documentation recorded in

⁶ Spokane County Tax Assessor Records & Warranty Deeds. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

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Spokane County Tax Assessor field books, building permits, and warranty deeds, the following properties were built by the Rider Housing Corporation:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| • 2127 S. Lincoln Street | Stevenson, Charles & Irene, House | built in 1935 |
| • 1001-1109 S. Grand Blvd. | Holder Apartments (demolished) | built in 1935 |
| • 2103 E. 17 th Avenue | single-family house | built in 1936 |
| • 939 E. 19 th Avenue | single-family house | built in 1936 |
| • 1701 E. 20 th Avenue | Gibson, Eldon & Isabelle, House | built in 1936 |
| • 1702 E. 20 th Avenue | single-family house | built in 1936 |
| • 1607 E. 16 th Avenue | Stanek-Perrenoud House | built in 1938 |
| • 11003-1107 S. Grand Blvd. | Rider Square Apartments | built in 1938 |
| • 209-223 W. Ninth Avenue | Robinwood Apartments | built in 1939 |
| • 210-230 W. Cliff Drive | Cliff Apartments | built in 1946 |

Except for the Tudor Revival-style Robinwood Apartments, all of the homes and apartment buildings were designed in the Spanish Eclectic tradition. It is not known how many homes or apartment buildings Rider built in Spokane, or if he designed the plans for the buildings, but an August 19, 1935 *Spokesman-Review* article stated that “C. F. Rider... erected many beautiful and unusual homes in Cannon Hill, Manito, and the Lincoln Park sections [of Spokane].” Featuring an example of his work, the article pictured a photograph of the Alta Vista Apartments, 1015 S. Grand, and praised Rider for his creative use of the area’s natural terrain, topography, and basalt rock:

“In laying out the site Mr. Rider has retained the basaltic rock, the native ground formations, and maple trees, most of them about 30 years old... This photograph shows the effective manner in which Mr. Rider has developed his ideas, used in all of the projects, of fitting them into natural settings.”

Spokane city directories listed C. F. Rider through 1941. At this time he and his wife, Hazel Rider, lived in #212 in the Cliff Drive apartments that he built, which are located uphill above the Robinwood Apartments. After 1941, the Riders were no longer listed in any subsequent Spokane city directories or telephone books.

Rider’s 13-year professional career was short-lived in Spokane but his impact on domestic architecture in the area was significant, especially in the homes and apartment buildings he built on the South Hill. According to an April 30, 1939 *Spokesman-Review* newspaper article, Rider was responsible for developing nearly all of the “apartment house district” on the hillside area around West Ninth Avenue and Grand Boulevard. In this vicinity, he built four apartment complexes which contained multiple apartment buildings and garages. These included the Alta Vista Apartments (1015 S. Grand, now demolished), the Rider Square Apartments (1107 S. Grand), the apartment complex at 210-230 W. Cliff Drive, and the Robinwood Apartments.

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**ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
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In summary, the Robinwood Apartments are architecturally significant as an example of a pre WWII era garden court apartment complex. Furthermore the building has a high degree of artistic value as a product of accomplished Spokane builder, Chester F. Rider. The property retains excellent architectural integrity in location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as a multi-family residential apartment complex built in Spokane in 1939.

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**ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
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ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
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“Hillside Ideal for Apartments.” *Spokesman-Review*, 30 April 1939.

“New Apartment House District on South Side Growing Rapidly.” *Spokesman-Review*, 30 April 1939, photo.

Polk, R. L. *Spokane City Directories*. 1925-2004.

Spokane City/County building permits, tax assessor records, warranty deeds.

USGS MAP. Scale 1:24,000 series, Spokane NW, WA, NW/4 Spokane 15' quadrangle, 1974, photo-revised 1986 (Robinwood Apartments: zone 11, 468834 easting, 5277173 northing).

SPOKANE CITY PLAT MAP, 2004. Source: Spokane County Assessor's Records, Spokane, WA.

SITE PLAN/FLOOR PLAN, 2004. Source: Spokane County Assessor's Records, Spokane, WA.

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PHOTOGRAPHS *(Except for Photo No. 1, all photographs were taken in April-May 2004 by nomination author/consultant Linda Yeomans)*

- Photo 1: East and west buildings: north and east elevations, view taken from Ninth Avenue, looking southwest; photo taken in 1940 (Libby Studio) just after construction completed.
- Photo 2: East building and courtyard: west façade of east building and view of courtyard, looking north from southern boundary of property.
- Photo 3: East building: west façade, view looking southeast from courtyard.
- Photo 4: East building: second-story window on west façade.
- Photo 5: East building: east elevation at rear of building, which is adjacent to driveway.
- Photo 6: West building: east façade.
- Photo 7: West building: south elevation (gable end) and partial view of west elevation (behind trees).
- Photo 8: West building: exterior entrance on west elevation at rear of building.
- Photo 9: Non-contributing garage: west elevation (side) and north façade (doors).
- Photo 10: East building: cove ceiling, troweled plaster wall finish, and original wall sconce detail, first floor, representative of all apartment units.
- Photo 11: East building: original kitchen design, materials, and finish on east wall, representative of all kitchens in apartment units.
- Photo 12: North elevation of east and west buildings and walkway from the sidewalk along Ninth Avenue (looking south).
- Photo 13: East building:
- Photo 14: West Building

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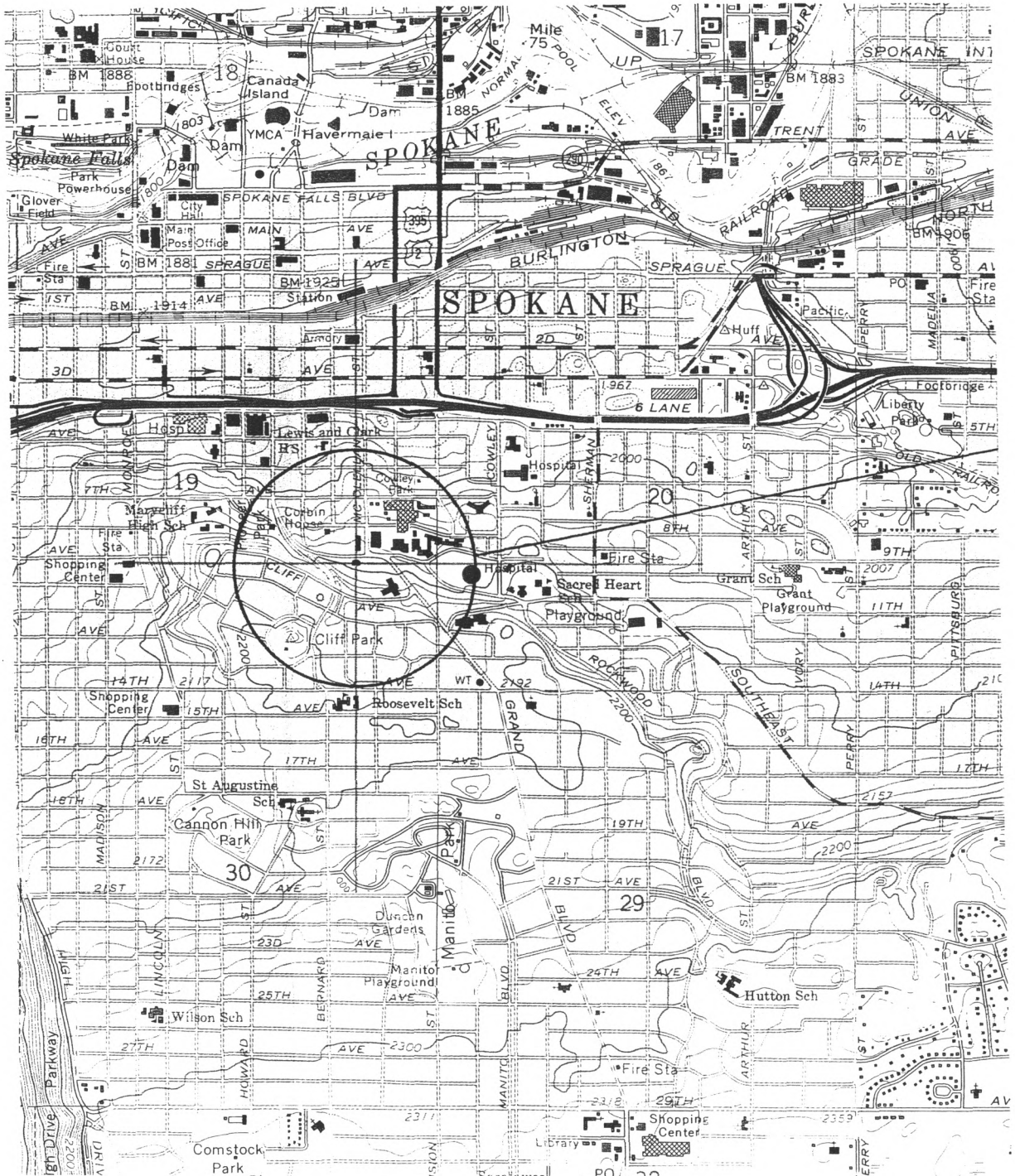
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USGS MAP, Spokane NW, WA, NW/4 Spokane 15' quadrangle, 1974 (revised 1986).



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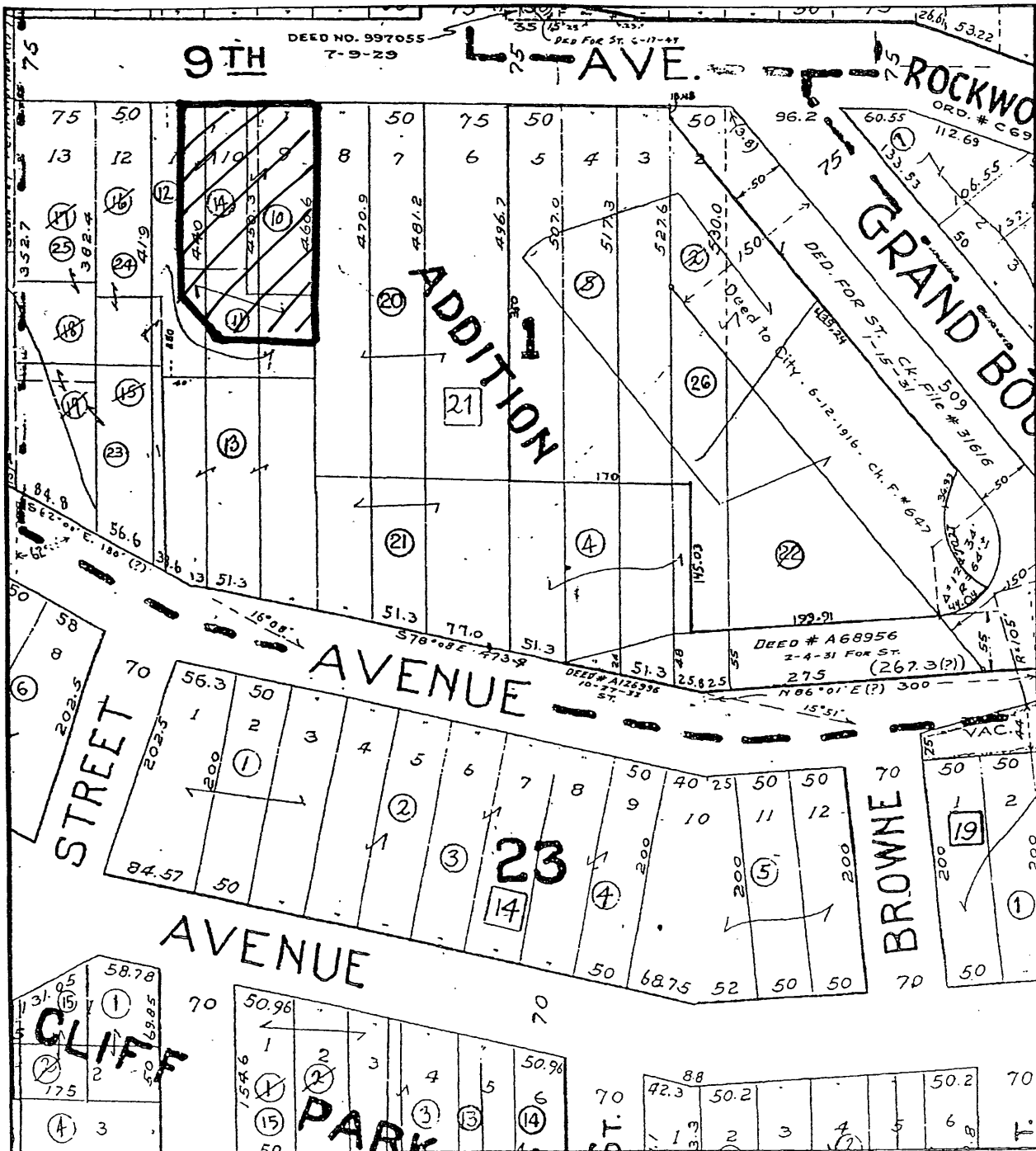
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SPOKANE CITY PLAT MAP, 2004 (source: Spokane County Assessor's Records).



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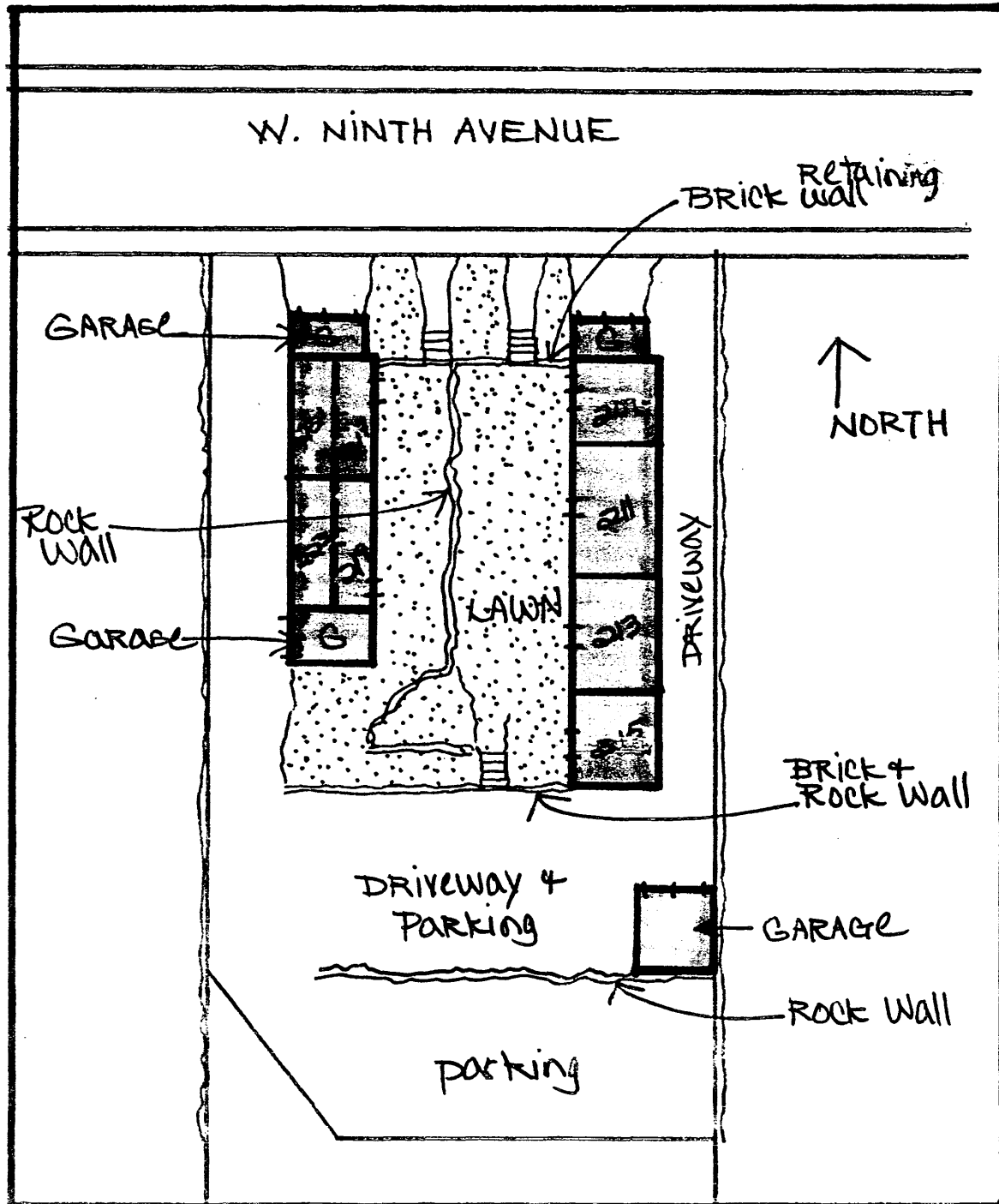
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SITE PLAN & FLOOR PLAN, 2004 (source: Spokane County Assessor's Records).

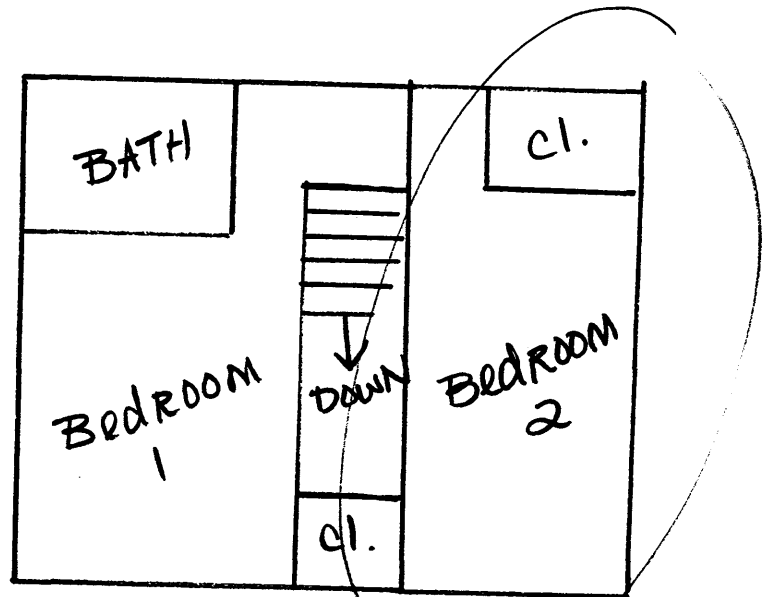
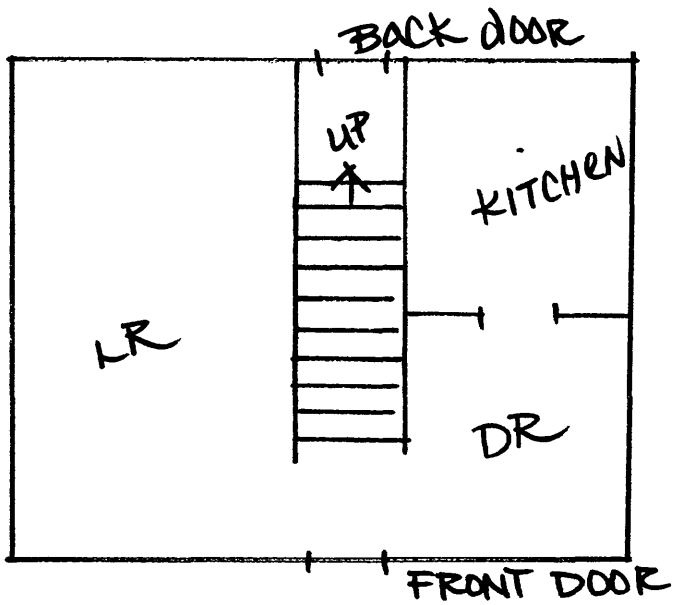


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FLOOR PLAN, 2004 (not drawn to scale).



Floor plan for Apartments #209 and #215—each have 1 bedroom upstairs.
Floor plan for Apartments #211 and #213—each have 2 bedrooms upstairs.



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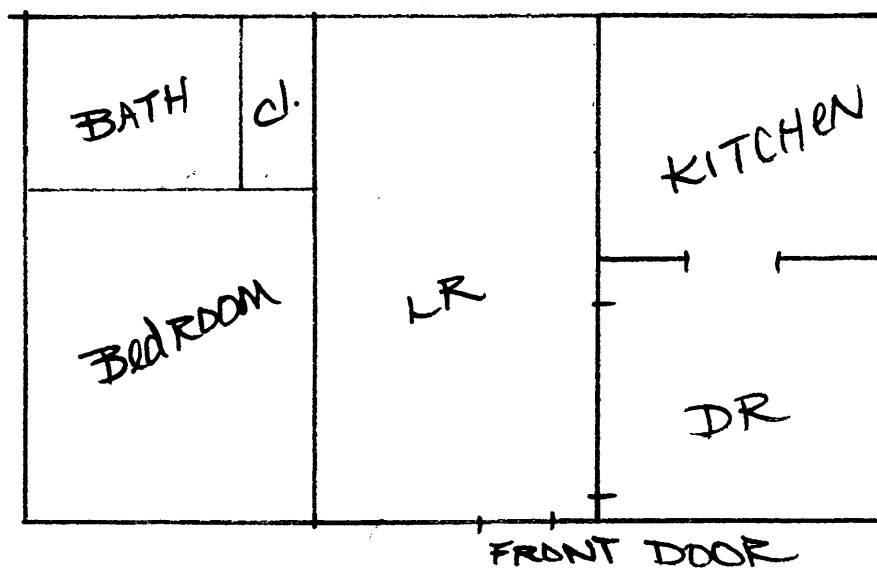
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FLOOR PLAN, 2004 (not drawn to scale).



Floor plan for Apartments #219 and #217 (ground floor) and #223 and #221 (second floor).

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Photo 1 East and west buildings: north and east elevations, view taken from Ninth Avenue, looking southwest, photo taken in 1940 just after construction completed.



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**ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
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Photo 2 East building and courtyard: west façade of east building and view of courtyard, looking north from southern boundary of property.



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Photo 3

East building: west façade, view looking southeast from courtyard.



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Photo 4

East building: second-story window on west façade.



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Photo 5

East building: east elevation at rear of building, which is adjacent to driveway.



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Photo 6

West building: east façade.



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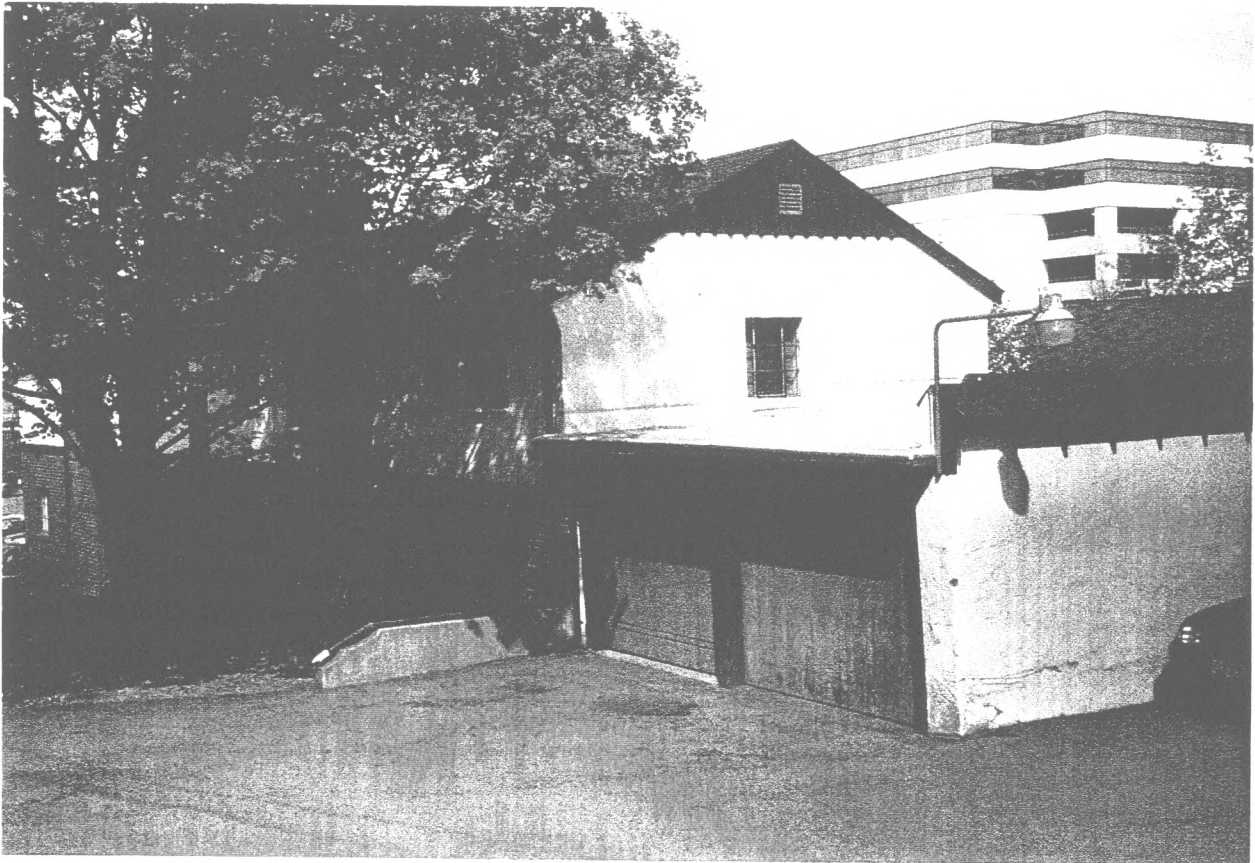
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Photo 7

West building: south elevation (gable end) and partial view of west elevation (behind trees).



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Photo 8

West building: exterior entrance on west elevation at rear of building.



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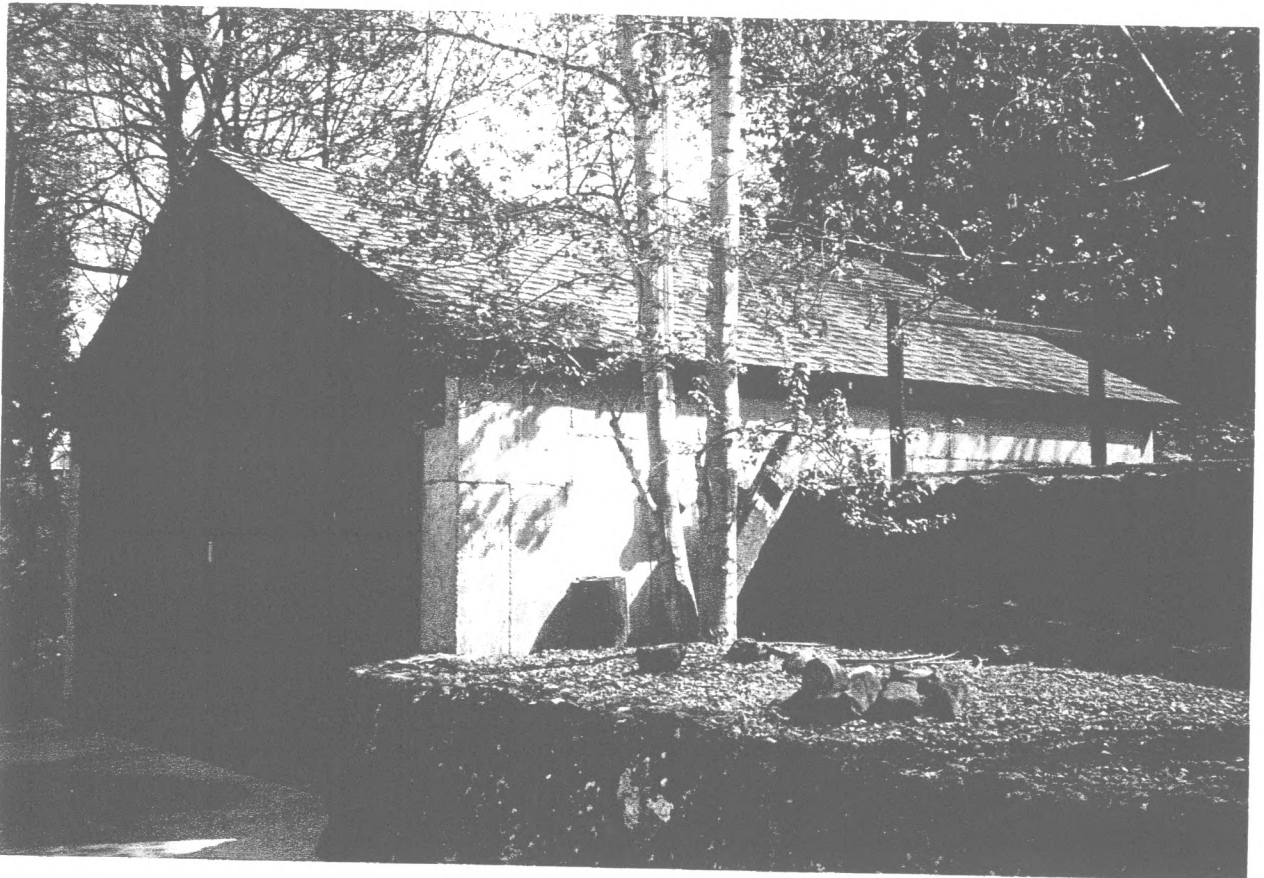
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Photo 9

Non-historic, non-contributing garage: west elevation (side) and north façade (doors).



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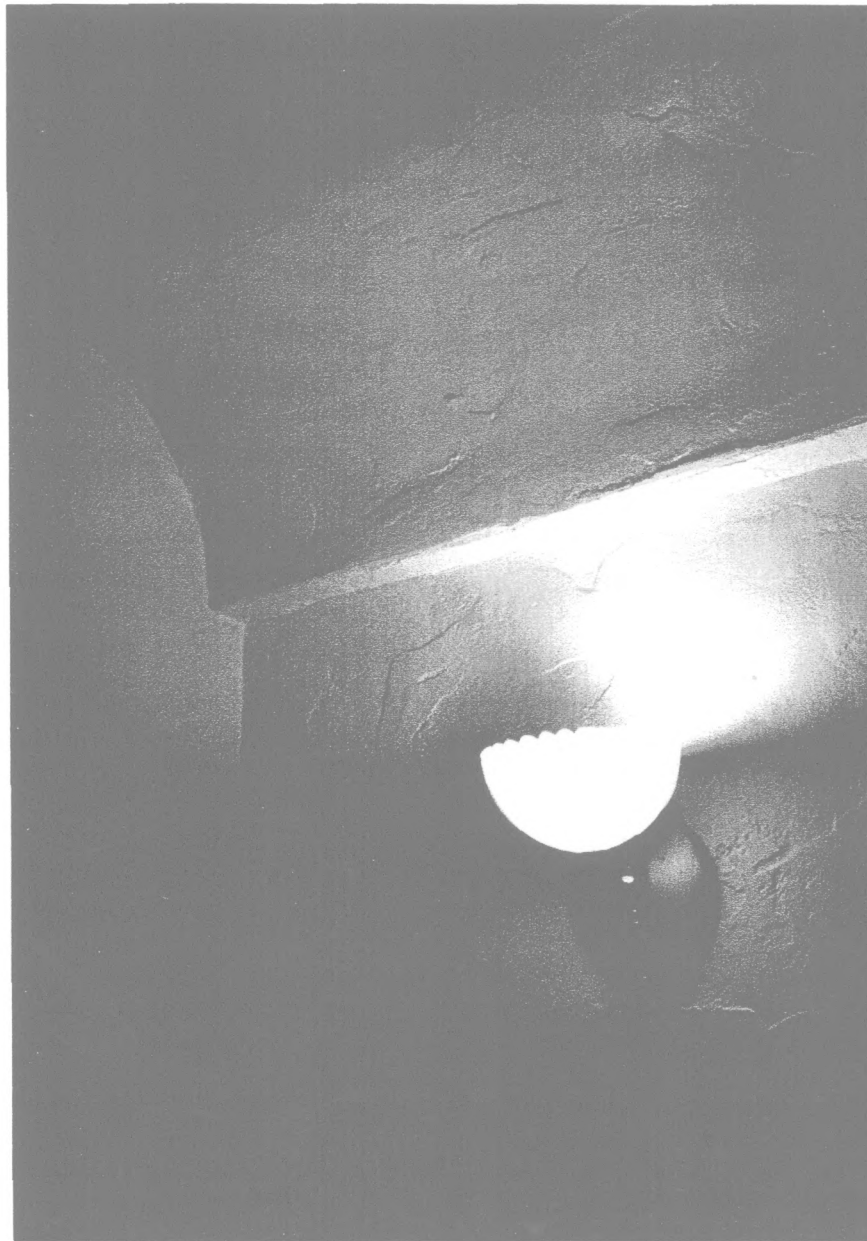
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**ROBINWOOD APARTMENTS
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Photo 10

East building: cove ceiling, troweled plaster wall finish, and original wall sconce detail, first floor, representative of all apartment units.



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Photo 11

East building: original kitchen design, materials, and finish on east wall, representative of all kitchens in apartment units.



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Photo 12

North elevation of east and west buildings and the walkway from the sidewalk along West Ninth Avenue (looking south).

