

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100000557

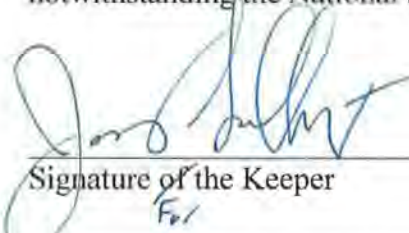
Date Listed: 9/7/2017

Property Name: Darragh Building

County: Pulaski

State: AR

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper
FD

9-7-2017

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 5: Resource Count

The Resource Count is hereby amended to add 1 noncontributing building.

The warehouse building, although recently attached to the Darragh Building, is considered a noncontributing resource. It does not reflect the significance of the nominated building.

The Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Darragh Building
Other names/site number: DARCO Building, ADROC Building, PU10047
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 1403 East Sixth Street
City or town: Little Rock State: Arkansas County: Pulaski
Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

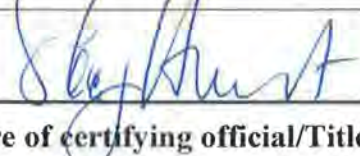
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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 level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A B X C D

 <hr/> Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Arkansas Historic Preservation Program</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	<u>7-18-17</u> <hr/> Date
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> <hr/> <p>Signature of commenting official: Date</p> <hr/> <p>Title : State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	
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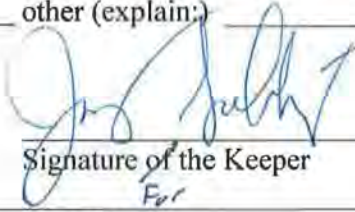
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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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
For

9-7-2017
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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne: Modernistic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE, GLASS, METAL:

Aluminum

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has

Summary Paragraph

The Darragh Building, also known as the DARCO Building, was designed by Noland Blass, Jr., of the Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch, & Blass firm in 1958 for the Darragh Company. It was constructed utilizing post and beam construction techniques, replacing the need for heavy-load bearing walls with steel and glass. The Darragh Building was designed for commercial and warehouse use and is located just east of downtown Little Rock at 1403 East Sixth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, within a primarily warehouse and light industrial district. The Darragh Building has several significant features which include: floor-to-ceiling glass walls and windows, extended floor and roof slabs that emphasize the building's horizontal lines, a roof with no slope, a small atrium, floating front steps, and exterior and interior concrete infill panels decorated with a stretched octagon and diamond three-dimensional pattern. The nomination includes the office building and the warehouse to the south, since they were connected during a recent 2016 renovation.

Narrative Description

The Darragh Building is located to the south of East 6th Street between Shall Avenue and Thomas Street. The building is located in a mostly industrial area of town, with various commercial and warehouse structures surrounding the site. A short spur of no longer used railroad track crosses East 6th Street just to the northwest of this structure. The northwestern section of the property is devoted to a rectangular parking lot and a sidewalk separates the parking lot from the front entry stairway.

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The office portion of the Darragh Building is rectangular in plan and is raised above the surrounding ground level on a recessed platform, allowing the building to appear to float above the surrounding ground plane. The entire structure is surrounded by a floating open concrete walkway with a matching roof overhang, which both shields the walkway from precipitation as well as provides shading for the various floor to ceiling windows around the perimeter of the building. The roof is flat, with only a small pop-up section that covers a small atrium directly to the east of the interior entry foyer. Also, a skylight pierces the roof slab, along the central axis of the building to provide limited natural light to the interior restrooms of the structure.

The warehouse portion of the Darragh Building is also raised above the surrounding ground on a cast-concrete foundation. The building's walls are comprised of cast-concrete panels with a stone aggregate finish. Roll-up doors are located on the west end of the warehouse, and the locations of former roll-up doors are located on the south side of the warehouse. The warehouse has a flat roof. Most of the interior is one large space with a small break room carved out of the east end of the warehouse.

The entire office part of the structure is supported on twenty-four columns arranged in a grid pattern of four columns by six columns. The sixteen exterior columns of the grid coincide with the exterior walls of the structure.

The structural columns of the office part of the building also create a rhythm of bays along each façade. Along the western and eastern facades, the four support columns, one at each corner and two equally spaced in-between, create three intermediate bays. The typical bay layout, seen on all four facades, includes a five-part design with floor to ceiling, single-pane window panels in the outermost bays and a three-bay concrete panel with exterior repetitive patterning of alternating extruded and incised diamond shapes. The exterior concrete panels are composed of rectangular concrete units laid in a common linear pattern to create a larger pattern of diamonds across all of the facades due to the incised and extruded diamond patterns on the front of each concrete unit.

Window usage in the office portion of the building is restrained around the building's exterior perimeter. Other than the Darragh Building's entry storefront and a non-historic wooden infill with windows at the building's southeast corner, all windows are similar sizes and are full height and rhythmic across the façade, as are the columns and concrete infill panels. All of the windows are stationary, single-pane panels in metal frames, except for those found in the eastern bay of the southern façade.

West (Front) Façade

The building's front entry façade faces west onto the western parking lot. The north and south bays of the western-facing façade are composed of the typical bay pattern of enclosed columns to the north and south, and a central wide concrete wall panel flanked by a tall window panel to either side. The central entry bay replaces the basic wall panel of the rest of the façade with three transparent bays, which includes a central glass door in a metal frame with a custom

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diamond-shaped push/pull bar across the door. The central door is flanked by additional tall window panels, two to either side.

The front entry is reached by a wide, concrete tread stairway that appears to be floating above a larger square concrete pad at the ground level. The stair treads are supported by hidden concrete stringers underneath. This floating stair adds to the illusion that the entire building seems to float off the surrounding ground plane.

The west side of the warehouse has three large garage-door openings with solid roll-up doors. A flat awning spans most of the façade, providing shelter for the openings. In between the southern two doors is a metal entrance door that is approached by a set of concrete steps with steel railings. To the south of the warehouse, at its east end, is an extension of the former loading dock. It is fenestrated by a single, single-pane window at its northern end followed by a plate-glass door with rectangular single-pane transom and large plate-glass sidelight to its south. Near the south end of the loading dock is another plate-glass window.

North (Side) Façade

The north façade faces onto East 6th Street and is composed of five typical bays of central diamond-patterned wall panels flanked by tall window panels in-between the concrete wrapped structural columns.

The north side of the warehouse is devoid of fenestration although a large metal louvered vent is located near the top of the façade, approximately half way along its length.

East (Rear) Façade

The rear facade faces onto a rear parking area adjacent to an access street for business to the southeast of the Darragh Building. The rear façade of the office building is composed of three typical bays of central diamond-patterned wall panels flanked by tall window panels in-between the concrete wrapped structural columns.

The east side of the warehouse is comprised of the former open loading dock, which was enclosed in 2016 to create additional office space. Beginning at the north end of the loading dock, where it meets the office building, it is fenestrated with a single-pane, plate-glass window. Near the north end of the loading dock, a plate-glass entrance door is present with a single-pane rectangular transom. On either side of the door are single-pane sidelights, and the southern sidelight is about three times the size of the northern sidelight. Proceeding south, the rest of the former loading dock is fenestrated by three evenly-spaced pairs of plate-glass windows with a single plate-glass window near the south end of the façade.

South (Side) Façade

The south façade is composed of six bays, with the five bays to the west repeating the typical bay pattern of a diamond-patterned wall panel flanked by tall window panels in-between the

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structural columns. The eastern most bay of the south façade is infilled with five non-historic wooden-framed panels. The four eastern panels are repetition of the tall window panels seen on the rest of the façade, except for the wooden frames rather than metal frames. The western panel includes a standard wooden door with a short single-pane, stationary window above.

The original construction plans for the Darragh Building show an extended loading platform at the southwest corner of the structure. The eastern bay along the south façade was originally designed with a central door surrounded with window panels, mimicking the front entry. The concrete platform and roofing structure for the loading bay is not attached to the main Darragh Building. Instead the metal roof of the loading dock is set above the flat concrete roof of the Darragh Building and the concrete of the loading dock simply abuts the raised concrete platform of the Darragh Building.

The south side of the warehouse is devoid of fenestration, although there are two large metal panels that are likely the former locations of loading doors. The south side of the loading dock, which is now enclosed, is also devoid of fenestration.

Interior

The structural columns of the Darragh Building define the interior plan of the office building. An inner set of utility spaces take up the three inner-most grid spaces. The utility spaces are wrapped by a standard hallway that is further wrapped by a set of office and meeting spaces that are either one, two or three grid spaces wide. The interior floor plan is laid out such that all occupied spaces are oriented along the exterior walls to utilize as many windows and natural light as possible.

Directly inside the entry doors along the west façade, there is a shallow entry lobby delineated to the east by an interior wall that recreated the exterior concrete panels, including the repetitive diamond pattern. This wall has the diamond pattern on both sides and also serves as the western wall of the atrium space. The other walls of the atrium are defined by floor to ceiling glass panels in aluminum frames. The eastern wall of glass panels includes a sliding door that allows access from the central conference room into the atrium space. The conference room also features a small kitchenette at its east end. The rest of the interior included a reception space to the southwest, followed by offices for the General Manager, Sales Director, Purchasing and Sales Managers along the southern edge of the building. The southeast corner of the structure included open space for sales meetings and various shipping activities. The northeast corner included small spaces for laboratories, a workroom, and a large space for the bookkeeping staff.

Interior materials are indicative of the time period in which the building was designed and constructed: aluminum-framed windows, plaster walls, ceramic tile, carpet, stained-wood veneer doors, and stained-wood trim. The utilitarian spaces such as the restrooms, vault, kitchenette, and conference room are located in the center of the building and are accessible to the perimeter offices by a corridor that wraps around the interior utility spaces. The interior corridor walls utilize transom windows to allow natural light to flow into the corridors. Skylights were also positioned over the inner restroom spaces to allow natural light into these otherwise completely

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windowless spaces. Also, in order to keep the interior ceiling space clean, open, and airy, the Darragh Building's mechanical distribution system was located below the floor slab in the raised crawl space.

The interior of the warehouse still retains its large open feel that it would have had originally, although a small portion at the east end has been converted into a separate break room for the current company's employees. In addition, the loading dock area still retains its open feel, and cubicles divide it into employee work area.

Integrity

The existing building is in good condition considering its age and has had very little updates over the life of the building. The exterior of the building has had security bars added to the windows, which are removable. Some of the exterior concrete walls and stairs have spalling concrete on them but are otherwise intact. Rebar is exposed in places around the exterior of the Darragh Building due to weathering of the concrete.

The entire interior is intact although the restrooms have undergone significant wear and tear, and lack of upkeep, when compared to the rest of the building. The original skylights into the restrooms have been enclosed, apparently due to water leakage issues. The Darragh Building's atrium has some evidence of historic water damage, leaking, and lack of draining also. At some point in the history of the building, the roof opening over the atrium was covered with a skylight structure of sorts. Additionally, the rear loading bay at the southwest corner of the structure was replaced with wood-framed windows and a single door at some point after the initial construction of the building.

The largest change to the building occurred in 2016 when the building was renovated. During the renovation, the former loading dock on the east side of the warehouse was enclosed, connecting the warehouse to the south to the office building. Although the two are now connected, creating one building, the connection is minimal, encompassing only the depth of the loading dock. As a result, the vast majority of the exterior of the office building is visible. Also, the bay of the office building that was connected had been previously modified. The original office building as well as the warehouse still retain the majority of their original designs, and the qualities that make the Darragh Building significant are still visible.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1958 - 1959

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Architect: Noland Blass, Jr.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Darragh Company Building is a Mid-Century Modern building designed by Noland Blass, Jr., of the Little Rock architectural firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch, & Blass in 1958. It was constructed utilizing post and beam construction techniques, replacing the need for heavy-load bearing walls with steel, concrete and glass. The Darragh Building was designed for commercial use for the Darragh Company and is located just east of Downtown Little Rock at 1403 East Sixth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, within a primarily warehouse and industrial district. The Darragh Building is approximately 4000 square feet. Significant features of the structure include: floor-to-ceiling glass walls and windows, extended floor and roof slabs that emphasize the building's horizontal lines, a roof with no slope, a building-surrounded interior atrium, floating steps leading to the building's front entrance, and exterior and interior concrete infill panels decorated with a stretched octagon and diamond three-dimensional pattern. The Darragh Company Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of modernist architecture in Little Rock, Arkansas, designed by Nolan Blass, Jr, with **local significance**.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Elaboration

The Darragh Building is a prime example of modernist architecture designed and built during the mid-20th century. The building was designed by Noland Blass, Jr., of the Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch & Blass architecture firm in 1958, and it exemplifies multiple aspects of the mid-century modern movement. Blass was hired by the Erhart, Eichenbaum, and Rauch firm immediately following the Second World War and was made a partner in 1956. The firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch & Blass provided full building design services and housed both the architects and engineers that worked on their projects. The structure originally served as the corporate office headquarters for the Darragh Company. The Darragh Company has provided materials and equipment for construction projects around the state of Arkansas since 1906, including the cement used in the construction of the Arkansas State Capitol Building.

Mid-Century Modern Architecture

The modernism of the late 1940s through the early 1960s was a time of sleek, functional forms combined with newly developed materials. The post-war period saw a radical change in the architectural profession, with modernism becoming a powerful force in the architectural profession. The early revolutionary modernism of the 1920s and 1930s had given way to a more developed celebration of modernism that was applied to all types of forms in all kinds of

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locations.¹ The new aesthetic and design framework of simple planes, open spaces and universal principles spread from Germany to the United States in the period between World War I and World War II.² Architects, such as Arkansas native Noland Blass, Jr., who started their studies in the United States before the outbreak of World War II and many soldiers who would continue their education after World War II were given a world tour of many of the great centers of historic and modern architecture in Europe, compliments of the War Department. These first-hand experiences with modern and historic architectural forms, although under stressful and often horrible circumstances, still had an impact on returning soldiers who would become the next generation of great designers and architects across the United States.

The new Modernist style was, at its root, a revolt against the historicizing stylistic revivals of the past. The proponents of Modernism espoused new commonality between use and form. Modernism was also seen to dispose of the cultural baggage of the previous historicizing styles. This led to its label as an “International Style” with a set of design principles and a simplified aesthetic that was void of any national or cultural association.³ This also meant that a Modernist design could theoretically be located anywhere in the world and serve any function while still being an artistic object. This new aesthetic was achieved by combining glass with metal structural systems and other new materials to create open interior spaces that could be divided in an endless variety of ways to fit a variety of functions.

Noland Blass, Jr.: An Arkansan Mid-Century Modern Architect

Noland Blass, Jr., was born to Noland and Isabel Blass on May 28, 1920.⁴ During his childhood, Noland Blass, Jr., often spent time at the department store his father ran. Blass, Jr.’s, grandfather, Gus Blass, founded the Gus Blass Department Store on Main Street in downtown Little Rock in 1871.⁵ By the early 20th century, the Gus Blass Department Store was a commercial force in downtown Little Rock. Gus Blass continued to guide the company that bore his name until his death in 1919. Afterwards, control of the store fell to Julian Blass, Gus Blass’s son. Julian headed the company until his death in 1939. In 1939, Noland Blass, Sr., brother to Julian, became store president and remained in that post until his retirement in 1950.⁶ In a profile of his life in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* in 1991, Noland Blass, Jr., stated that “our father always used to work late and we would always go in the candy department and steal candy.”⁷ He graduated High School from the Little Rock school system and then attended Cornell University at Ithaca, New York. He graduated from Cornell University in 1941 with a bachelor’s degree in Architecture. While a senior at Cornell, Blass received a gold medal award

¹ *Clean Lines, Open Spaces: A View of Mid-Century Modern Architecture*, Prod. Mark Wilcken, AETN, 2012.

² McAlester, Virginia and A. Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1994), 469-470.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ “Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock,” *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

⁵ LeMaster, *Corner of the Tapestry*, 113.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Ellen F. Kreth, “High Profile: Noland Blass, Jr.,” *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, November 17, 1991. special section.

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for his senior architectural thesis.⁸ After completing college, Blass volunteered for the Army and served in Germany and the Philippines during the height of World War II. In 1946, he was discharged at the age 26 as a Major.⁹

After returning to Little Rock in 1946, Blass was hired as a designer-draftsman by the architectural firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum and Rauch.¹⁰ Noland Blass, Jr., continued to practice at the same firm throughout his career, eventually rising to leadership of Blass Chilcote Carter Gaskin Bogart & Norcross.¹¹ The firm continues to exist today as GHN: Architects + Engineers. Blass, Jr., expanded the firm's focus to large-scale projects that incorporated many designers, architect, engineers and even other firms. As the principle designing architect and leader of the firm, Blass, Jr., created an architectural legacy across central Arkansas.

Blass's career was varied and he worked on projects throughout central Arkansas, including award winning projects at Horace-Mann Junior High and Oaklawn Jockey Club. He also designed the Arkansas State Justice Building, Arkansas Supreme Court Rotunda, Temple B'nai Israel in Little Rock and several projects at the University of Arkansas for Medical Science (UAMS). His favorite project was his early brutalist design for the Worthen Bank and Trust building that was completed in 1969.¹² He was also a prominent figure in urban planning and development in Little Rock through his work on an east-west expressway project, a river-front park proposal, multi-use arena proposal, hotel-convention center complex and historic restoration and preservation projects in the historic districts near downtown Little Rock.¹³ Blass was also very active in the civic arena in Little Rock and served as the President of the Arkansas Arts Center and President of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Society as well as being a member of various boards and committees across the city.¹⁴

He continued to practice architecture until 1991, when he officially retired. However, he continued to work on various personal architectural and artistic projects until his death in 1998.¹⁵ Throughout his career, Blass, Jr., learned and practiced with modernistic forms and his building designs ranged from the early brutalism of the Worthen Bank and Trust Building, now the Bank of America Building in downtown Little Rock, to the sculptural forms of the 1976 glass rotunda, built to house the chambers of the Arkansas Supreme Court.

⁸ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ "Noland Blass, Jr.," *Levi Letter*, n 1, 1983, p 3.

¹¹ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

¹² Ellen F. Kreth, "High Profile: Noland Blass, Jr.," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, November 17, 1991, special section.

¹³ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

¹⁴ Ellen F. Kreth, "High Profile: Noland Blass, Jr.," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, November 17, 1991, special section.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

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The Darragh Family and Company

In 1906, the Darragh Company was founded by Frederick Kramer Darragh and his two brothers, Thomas A. and Finley Darragh, in Little Rock, Arkansas. Frederick Kramer Darragh was named for his grandfather, Frederick Kramer who was born in Halle, Russia, in December of 1829. Frederick Kramer immigrated to the United States in 1848 where he married Adaline Margaret Reichardt in 1857. The couple would eventually have six children; Louisa (Frederick Kramer Darragh's mother), Mattie, Emma, Charles, Fred and Henry. Frederick Kramer eventually moved to Little Rock, where he served on the Little Rock School Board from 1869 until 1894. During his service on the local school board, he also became the Little Rock School Board's first president. During his years in Little Rock, Frederick Kramer became an important civic leader, serving as the president of the Masonic Mutual Relief Association, helping to found the Mount Holly Cemetery Association, becoming a founding member of Temple B'Nai Israel, and eventually serving as the president of the Bank of Commerce. He was also elected mayor of Little Rock, serving from 1873 until 1875. In 1895, a newly completed Little Rock elementary school was named the Kramer School in his honor.¹⁶

Frederick Kramer's daughter Louise Kramer married Thomas Jefferson Darragh in 1878. Thomas J. Darragh was the son of John and Sarah Darragh who had immigrated to the United States from Ireland or Scotland to Pennsylvania sometime before the Civil War.¹⁷ Thomas J. Darragh moved to Little Rock after the Civil War, where he met and married Louise Kramer. Louise was actually Thomas J. Darragh's second wife, his first wife Jennie F. Darragh having died in 1877 possibly due to complications from the birth of their surviving child, Finley John Darragh.¹⁸ Thomas J. and Louise would have three additional children, Frederick Kramer Darragh, Thomas Armstrong Darragh and James A. Darragh, who unfortunately died at the age of only two years. In 1884, Thomas J. Darragh founded the Little Rock Street Railway Company with three other local business men.¹⁹ This street railway company relied on railcars pulled by mules or horses along four miles of track that was laid throughout the downtown area of Little Rock.²⁰ This company was eventually transformed and absorbed into other electric and steam city railway companies and it appears that Thomas J. Darragh was out of the business by the turn of the century.

In 1906, the Darragh Company of Little Rock was founded by Thomas J. Darragh's three sons; Frederick Kramer Darragh, Thomas A. Darragh and Finley Darragh.²¹ The Darragh Company

¹⁶ Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1994), 25.

¹⁷ United States Census Rolls, 1890-1920.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ "Little Rock Street Railway System: Pulaski County, Arkansas," *Arkansas Ties...*, retrieved August 15, 2016, www.arkansties.com/Pulaski/Structures6/LittleRockStreetRailwaySystem.htm.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ "About," *Darragh Company*, retrieved from <http://www.darraghcompany.com/about/>.

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started as a warehouse for hire for local businesses specializing in feed, grain, and poultry. After realizing in 1907 that they had a surplus of space in their warehouses, the leaders of the Darragh Company began to broker Portland cement and lime for use in the ongoing construction of the Arkansas State Capitol.²² The company continued to provide cement for the Arkansas Capitol project until its completion in 1915.²³ The Darragh Company continued to pursue dual business opportunities and interests in agriculture and construction supplies. In 1915, an advertisement for the company in the local Little Rock City Directory read as follows: "Darragh Company. Receivers and shippers of hay and grain. Dealers in lime, cement, plaster, sewer pipe, etc. Office and warehouse foot E. Sixth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas."

By 1915, the company seems to have been thriving, with Frederick Kramer Darragh commissioning a new house from the locally renowned architect Charles L. Thompson. Thompson created the most influential architectural firm in Arkansas during the earliest decades of the 20th Century. Thompson's firm designed more than two thousand buildings, ranging from personal residences to churches, commercial buildings, and courthouses. The firm mastered a vast array of architectural styles and was well-known for combining different architectural styles, becoming forerunners in the field of architecture eclecticism.²⁴ The house designed for Frederick Kramer Darragh in 1915, located on Broadway Street in Little Rock was completed in 1916 (NR Listed 12.22.1982). Mr. Darragh and his wife, Valeria, lived there with their family from 1916 to 1930, when they built a house in the Edgehill neighborhood of Little Rock.²⁵

Frederick Kramer Darragh and his wife Valerie S. had three children. The eldest son, Frederick Kramer Darragh, Jr., was born in Little Rock on November 13, 1916.²⁶ He was educated in Tennessee and at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business, where he was a graduate in 1938. Frederick K. Darragh, Jr., became a renowned pilot during WWII, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service ferrying supplies from India to China. After the war, Darragh, Jr., returned to help manage the family agribusiness.²⁷ He also used his wealth and local influence to assist political and reform efforts that work for social justice, education and peaceful world relations. He would become the first white businessman to join the Urban League in 1947 and was one of only a very few business leaders to openly call for the desegregation of Little Rock's school district.²⁸ Darragh, Jr., also continually supported libraries

²² Hammel, Tom. "A Capitol Investment." *Contractor Supply Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.contractorsupplymagazine.com/pages/Current-Issue---Cover-story-A-Capitol-Investment.php>.

²³ Rachel Silva, "Sandwiching in History: Darragh House, 2412 S. Broadway," Historic Site Tour, 3 April 2009, Files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

²⁴ Charles Witsell Jr., "Charles Louis Thompson (1868-1959)." *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System. 30 March 2015, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

²⁵ Rachel Silva, "Sandwiching in History: Darragh House, 2412 S. Broadway," Historic Site Tour, 3 April 2009, Files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

²⁶ Bob Razer, "Fred K. Darragh (1916-2003)," *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System, 30 March 2015, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Darragh Building

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throughout the state. After WWII, Darragh, Jr., continued to fly various planes and even made a solo, around-the-world flight in 1962, a trip that took 68 days. In 1999, Darragh, Jr., was inducted into the Arkansas Aviation Hall of Fame.²⁹

The Darragh Company continues to operate from East Sixth Street in Little Rock, in a newly constructed building to the west of the office constructed in 1958 for the company. The Darragh Company has continued to expand and now has offices in Hot Springs, Lowell, Fort Smith, Texarkana, and Jonesboro. The Darragh Company also owns Arkansas Rebar in Benton, Arkansas.³⁰ The company sold its agriculture and feed mill related operations during the 1990s and now focuses exclusively on building materials for commercial construction projects. The Company acquired six Tool Central locations throughout Arkansas in 2011 and became a supplier for power tools, hand tools, fasteners, and accessories.³¹

The Darragh Building

The Darragh family and Noland Blass, Jr. were a part of the civic community of Little Rock through the decades of the mid-20th century. This is one possible explanation for why Noland Blass, Jr. was selected by the Darragh Company to design a new corporate office headquarters for the prosperous company. This office, which still exists and is now called the Darragh Building, is a prime example of the Modernistic Style of architecture, popular during a period that began in the 1930s and lasted through the 1960s.

The Darragh Building, constructed in 1958 and located in Little Rock's warehouse district east of Downtown Little Rock, originally served as the corporate office headquarters for the Darragh Company. The neighborhood surrounding the Darragh Building has been used for a variety of manufacturing and agricultural purposes throughout the previous 120 years. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of the area show that the Little Rock Ice Company factory was located near the corner of Sixth Street and Thomas Street in 1897. The Thomas Manufacturing Company Cotton Press Factory was located across Thomas Street to the east. The Darragh Company is seen near its current location for the first time in a Sanborn Map from 1913. At that time, the Darragh Company Grain Elevator, a hay warehouse, and a flour and grain warehouse were located on the site of the present Darragh Building. The Hayes-Shofner Grain Company warehouse was located across the street on the north side of Sixth Street and the Thomas-Fordyce Manufacturing Cotton Gin and related machinery was located east of Thomas Street and west of the railroad tracks that cross Sixth Street. Throughout the early and mid-20th century, the area continued to be dominated by industrial and agricultural warehouses. The Darragh Company's focus on agricultural and construction supply fit in with the dominant industry of the area.

The Darragh Building is a small scale example of the Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch & Blass firm's incorporation of the principles of the International Style and specifically tenants of New Formalism and Populist Modernism. Other Modernistic projects produced around the same time

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ "About," *Darragh Company*, retrieved from <http://www.darraghcompany.com/about/>.

³¹ *Ibid.*

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as the Darragh Building by the firm include St. Vincent's Hospital, The Acme Building, both in Little Rock; the Lawrence County Courthouse (NR Listed 9.28.2015) in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas, and the Arkansas State Supreme Court Building, also in Little Rock. The building is based on a simple structural grid utilizing concrete wrapped steel columns and concrete floor and roof slabs. The rectilinear glass and concrete forms of the Darragh Building sandwiched between the two elevated concrete slabs, with a five foot overhang, express the simplicity common to the Modern architectural designs during the mid-20th century.

The Darragh Building's exterior is dominated by the horizontal lines of the building's extended floor and roof slabs, its flat roof slab, and the building's floating steps on the front of the building. The building is rectangular in plan and is raised above the surrounding ground level on a recessed platform, allowing the building to appear to float above the surrounding ground plane. The exterior wall of the Darragh Building features large concrete infill panels that are decorated with three-dimensional diamond patterning that is indicative of the artistic additions found throughout much of Noland Blass, Jr.'s work. This can also be read as a design that celebrates ornamentation, in its use of the repeated diamond pattern, and plays with the expectation of structure and support in the floating concrete slabs and panels of the exterior and interior. This playfulness of design and structure is counter to the simplicity and lack of ornamentation of other mid-century Modern buildings found in Central Arkansas. The use of repetitive patterning and innovative structures can be seen in other structures designed by Noland Blass, Jr., including the Worthen Bank Building, now known as the Bank of America Building in downtown Little Rock, as well as the circular structure of the Supreme Court chambers on the capitol grounds in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The Darragh Building's interior floor plan is laid out such that all occupied spaces are oriented along the exterior walls to utilize as many windows and as much natural light as possible. Interior materials are indicative of the time period in which the building was designed and constructed: aluminum-framed windows, plaster walls, ceramic tile, carpet, and stained-wood veneer doors. The utilitarian spaces such as the restrooms, vault, kitchenette, and conference room are located in the center of the building and are accessible from the perimeter offices by a corridor that wraps around the interior utility spaces. The interior corridor walls utilize transom windows to allow natural light to flow into the corridors. Skylights were also positioned over the inner restroom spaces to allow natural light into these otherwise completely windowless spaces. The conference room walls also utilize full-height glass panels. Clearly the theme of natural lighting is prevalent throughout the design of this building.

The diamond pattern seen on all four facades is repeated throughout the site, including in the front door push/pull bar and the painted parking lot divisions. The diamond symbol is still an integral part of the Darragh Company's logo and is a historic symbol of the State of Arkansas.

Statement of Significance

The Darragh Building, constructed circa 1958 and located in Little Rock's warehouse district east of Downtown Little Rock, originally served as the corporate office headquarters for the Darragh Company. The building is based on a simple structural grid utilizing concrete wrapped

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steel columns and concrete floor and roof slabs. The rectilinear glass and concrete forms of the Darragh Building sandwiched between the two elevated concrete slabs, with a five-foot overhang, express the simplicity common to the Modern architectural designs during the mid-20th century. The Darragh Company Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of modernist architecture in Little Rock, Arkansas, designed by Noland Blass, Jr., with **local significance**.

Darragh Building
Name of Property

Pulaski, Arkansas
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Gane, John F., AIA, ed. *American Architects Directory, 3rd Edition*. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1970.

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“Noland Blass, Jr.” *Levi Letter*. n 1. 1983.

“Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock.” *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. July 23, 1998. 6B.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. Darragh Company Building, Little Rock, Arkansas. Ecologic Environmental Services, Inc. (2016).

Razer, Bob. “Fred K. Darragh (1916-2003).” *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System. 30 March 2015. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

Silva, Rachel. “Sandwiching in History: Darragh House, 2412 S. Broadway.” Historic Site Tour, 3 April 2009. Files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

United States Census Rolls, 1890-1930.

Witsell, Charles Jr. “Charles Louis Thompson (1868-1959).” *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System. 30 March 2015. <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

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 Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): PU10047

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.134 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 15 | Easting: 568202 | Northing: 3844653 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Parcel #34L0170100200

Darragh Building
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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Darragh Building and currently owned by the property's owner.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Matt Bell, Partner

organization: Sustainable Properties, LLC

name/title: Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator (Edited By)

organization: Department of Arkansas Heritage, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

street & number: 1100 North Street

city or town: Little Rock state: Arkansas zip code: 72201

e-mail: ralph.wilcox@arkansas.gov

telephone: 501.324.9787

date: May 10, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Darragh Building
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County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Darragh Building

City or Vicinity: Little Rock

County: Pulaski State: Arkansas

Photographer: Ralph S. Wilcox

Date Photographed: May 5, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 22: West façade of the office portion of the building, looking east.
- 2 of 22: West façade of the office portion of the building and the north and west façades of the warehouse portion of the building, looking southeast.
- 3 of 22: South and west façades of the warehouse portion of the building, looking northeast.
- 4 of 22: South façade of the warehouse portion of the building and the west façade of the former loading dock, looking northeast.
- 5 of 22: South façade of the former loading dock and the warehouse portion of the building, looking northwest.
- 6 of 22: South and east façades of the former loading dock, looking northwest.
- 7 of 22: East façade of the junction of the office portion of the building and the former loading dock, looking west.
- 8 of 22: East façade of the office portion of the building and the former loading dock, looking southwest.
- 9 of 22: North façade of the office portion of the building, looking southwest.
- 10 of 22: DARCO sign to the north of the building, looking east.
- 11 of 22: North and west façades of the office portion of the building, looking southeast.

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- 12 of 22: North façades of the office portion of the building and the warehouse, looking southeast.
- 13 of 22: Lobby of the office portion of the building, looking south.
- 14 of 22: North hallway of the office portion of the building, looking west.
- 15 of 22: Kitchen area in the office portion of the building, looking northeast.
- 16 of 22: Conference room in the office portion of the building, looking east.
- 17 of 22: Conference room in the office portion of the building, looking west.
- 18 of 22: Interior view of the connector between the office portion of the building and the warehouse, looking west.
- 19 of 22: Interior view of the former loading dock, looking south.
- 20 of 22: Interior view of the former loading dock, looking north.
- 21 of 22: Interior view of the employee break room in the warehouse portion of the building, looking north.
- 22 of 22: Interior view of the warehouse portion of the building, looking west.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Darragh Building, Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas



Google earth

feet
km



UTM

NAD1983

Zone: 15 S

Easting: 568202

Northing: 3915803

Darragh Building, Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas



Google earth



UTM

NAD1983

Zone: 15 S

Easting: 568202

Northing: 3844653



entegrity
1403 E. 6th St.





entegnty
1403 E 6th St











entegrity
energy integrity

1403 E 6th St

005 TEW



enbapn
1423 E. 66th St



A long, single-story building with a white facade featuring a repeating diamond pattern. The building has a flat roof and a series of tall, narrow windows. It is situated on a grassy area next to a paved road.

A large, leafy tree with green foliage and some white flowers, located on the left side of the image.

A large, leafy tree with green foliage, located on the right side of the image.

A wooden utility pole with power lines, located on the right side of the image.

A white car parked on the left side of the image.

A white car parked on the right side of the image.

A diamond-shaped sign on a post, located in the middle of the image.

An orange traffic cone on the grass, located on the right side of the image.

An orange traffic cone on the grass, located on the right side of the image.



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TRUCK
ROUTE















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entegrity

Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

entegrity
Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

entegrity
Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

Model No. ENLED-PPH-1000-40W-0
Watt: 40W
Wavelength: 4000K
Beam: 360°

National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Darragh Building

Multiple Name: _____

State & County: ARKANSAS, Pulaski

Date Received: 8/7/2017 Date of Pending List: 1/11/2017 Date of 16th Day: 1/26/2017 Date of 45th Day: 9/21/2017 Date of Weekly List: _____

Reference number: SG100000557

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept Return Reject 9/7/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The resubmission somewhat addresses the return comments. The nomination does not really address the effect of the attachment to the warehouse, but at least acknowledges the existence of the warehouse. While not idea, and probably not SOI Standards-worthy, the nature of the attachment does not greatly detract from the ability of the Darragh building to convey its importance as an example of a Modernist office building. An SLR will be issued to clarify that the warehouse is a noncontributing resource.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

723 West Markham Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1334

Phone: (501) 371-4790 Fax: (501) 399-3435

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION REVIEW

Name and Address of property:

Darragh Building, 1403 E 6th Street, Little Rock, AR 72202

Name of Owner:

Sustainable Properties LLC

Project Sponsor:

Ralph Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator, AHPP

CLG Name:

City of Little Rock, Arkansas

Date of Public Hearing by CLG:

November 14, 2016

Applicable Criteria:

Criterion A (Historic Events)


Criterion B (Important Person)

Criterion C (Architecture)

Criterion D (Archaeological)

The Little Rock Historic District Commission hereby supports the above stated property for nomination.

Attest:



Chair



Secretary/Staff

11-14-2016
Date

11-14-2016
Date



THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS
HERITAGE

Asa Hutchinson
Governor

Stacy Hurst
Director



December 7, 2016

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural
Heritage Commission

Arkansas State Archives

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.
Washington D.C. 20005

RE: Darragh Building – Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Darragh Building to the National Register of Historic Places. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Callie Williams of my staff at (501) 324-9789. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stacy Hurst
State Historic Preservation Officer

SH:clw

Enclosures



1100 North Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

(501) 324-9880
fax: (501) 324-9184
tdd: 711

e-mail:

info@arkansaspreservation.org

website:

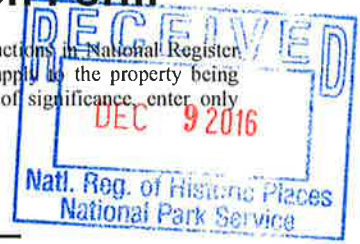
www.arkansaspreservation.com

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

56-557

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: Darragh Building
Other names/site number: DARCO Building, ADROC Building, PU10047
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 1403 East Sixth Street
City or town: Little Rock State: Arkansas County: Pulaski
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 X 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 level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
 A B X C D

Returned

		<u>11-29-16</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
<u>Arkansas Historic Preservation Program</u>		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Darragh Building
Name of Property

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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

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

Returned

Darragh Building
Name of Property

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

Returned

Darragh Building
Name of Property

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne: Modernistic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE, GLASS, METAL:

Aluminum

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has

Summary Paragraph

The Darragh Building, also known as the DARCO Building, was designed by Noland Blass, Jr. of the Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch, & Blass firm in 1958 for the Darragh Company. It was constructed utilizing post and beam construction techniques, replacing the need for heavy-load bearing walls with steel and glass. The Darragh Building was designed for commercial use and is located just east of downtown Little Rock at 1403 East Sixth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, within a primarily warehouse district. The Darragh Building has an approximately 4000 square feet area in plan. Significant features of the structure include: floor-to-ceiling glass walls and windows, extended floor and roof slabs that emphasize the building's horizontal lines, a roof with no slope, a small atrium, floating front steps, and exterior and interior concrete infill panels decorated with a stretched octagon and diamond three-dimensional pattern.

Narrative Description

The Darragh Building is located to the south of East 6th Street between Shall Avenue and Thomas Street. The building is located in a mostly industrial area of town, with various commercial and warehouse structures surrounding the site. A short spur of no longer used railroad track crosses East 6th Street just to the northwest of this structure. The western section of the property is devoted to a rectangular parking lot and a sidewalk separates the parking lot from the front entry stairway.

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The Darragh Building is rectangular in plan and is raised above the surrounding ground level on a recessed platform, allowing the building to appear to float above the surrounding ground plane. The entire structure is surrounded by a floating open concrete walkway with a matching roof overhang, which both shields the walkway from precipitation as well as provides shading for the various floor to ceiling windows around the perimeter of the building. The roof is flat, with only a small pop-up section that covers a small atrium directly to the east of the interior entry foyer. Also, a skylight pierces the roof slab, along the central axis of the building to provide limited natural light to the interior restrooms of the structure.

The entire structure is supported on twenty-four columns arranged in a grid pattern of four columns by six columns. The sixteen exterior columns of the grid coincide with the exterior walls of the structure.

The structural columns also create a rhythm of bays along each façade. Along the western and eastern facades, the four support columns, one at each corner and two equally spaced in-between, create three intermediate bays. The typical bay layout, seen on all four facades, includes a five-part design with floor to ceiling, single-pane window panels in the outermost bays and a three-bay concrete panel with exterior repetitive patterning of alternating extruded and incised diamond shapes. The exterior concrete panels are composed of rectangular concrete units laid in a common linear pattern to create a larger pattern of diamonds across all of the facades due to the incised and extruded diamond patterns on the front of each concrete unit.

Window usage in the building is restrained around the building's exterior perimeter. Other than the Darragh Building's entry storefront and a non-historic wooden infill with windows at the building's southeast corner, all windows are similar sizes and are full height and rhythmic across the façade, as are the columns and concrete infill panels. All of the windows are stationary, single-pane panels in metal frames, except for those found in the eastern bay of the southern façade.

West (Front) Façade

The building's front entry façade faces west onto the western parking lot. The north and south bays of the western-facing façade are composed of the typical bay pattern of enclosed columns to the north and south, and a central wide concrete wall panel flanked by a tall window panel to either side. The central entry bay replaces the basic wall panel of the rest of the façade with three transparent bays, which includes a central glass door in a metal frame with a custom diamond-shaped push/pull bar across the door. The central door is flanked by additional tall window panels, two to either side.

The front entry is reached by a wide, concrete tread stairway that appears to be floating above a larger square concrete pad at the ground level. The stair treads are supported by hidden concrete stringers underneath. This floating stair adds to the illusion that the entire building seems to float off the surrounding ground plane.

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North (Side) Façade

The north façade faces onto East 6th Street and is composed of five typical bays of central diamond-patterned wall panels flanked by tall window panels in-between the concrete wrapped structural columns.

East (Rear) Façade

The rear facade faces onto a rear parking area adjacent to an access street for business to the southeast of the Darragh Building. The rear façade is composed of three typical bays of central diamond-patterned wall panels flanked by tall window panels in-between the concrete wrapped structural columns.

South (Side) Façade

The south façade is composed of six bays, with the five bays to the west repeating the typical bay pattern of a diamond-patterned wall panel flanked by tall window panels in-between the structural columns. The eastern most bay of the south façade is infilled with five non-historic wooden-framed panels. The four eastern panels are repetition of the tall window panels seen on the rest of the façade, except for the wooden frames rather than metal frames. The western panel includes a standard wooden door with a short single-pane, stationary window above.

The original construction plans for the Darragh Building show an extended loading platform at the southwest corner of the structure. The eastern bay along the south façade was originally designed with a central door surrounded with window panels, mimicking the front entry. The concrete platform and roofing structure for the loading bay is not attached to the main Darragh Building. Instead the metal roof of the loading dock is set above the flat concrete roof of the Darragh Building and the concrete of the loading dock simply abuts the raised concrete platform of the Darragh Building.

Interior

The structural columns of the Darragh Building define the interior plan of the building. An inner set of utility spaces take up the three inner-most grid spaces. The utility spaces are wrapped by a standard hallway that is further wrapped by a set of office and meeting spaces that are either one, two or three grid spaces wide. The interior floor plan is laid out such that all occupied spaces are oriented along the exterior walls to utilize as many windows and natural light as possible.

Directly inside the entry doors along the west façade, there is a shallow entry lobby delineated to the east by an interior wall that recreated the exterior concrete panels, including the repetitive diamond pattern. This wall has the diamond pattern on both sides and also serves as the western wall of the atrium space. The other walls of the atrium are defined by floor to ceiling glass panels in aluminum frames. The eastern wall of glass panels includes a sliding door that allows access from the central conference room into the atrium space. The conference room also

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features a small kitchenette at its east end. The rest of the interior included a reception space to the southwest, followed by offices for the General Manager, Sales Director, Purchasing and Sales Managers along the southern edge of the building. The southeast corner of the structure included open space for sales meetings and various shipping activities. The northeast corner included small spaces for laboratories, a workroom, and a large space for the bookkeeping staff.

Interior materials are indicative of the time period in which the building was designed and constructed: aluminum-framed windows, plaster walls, ceramic tile, carpet, stained-wood veneer doors, and stained-wood trim. The utilitarian spaces such as the restrooms, vault, kitchenette, and conference room are located in the center of the building and are accessible to the perimeter offices by a corridor that wraps around the interior utility spaces. The interior corridor walls utilize transom windows to allow natural light to flow into the corridors. Skylights were also positioned over the inner restroom spaces to allow natural light into these otherwise completely windowless spaces. Also, in order to keep the interior ceiling space clean, open, and airy, the Darragh Building's mechanical distribution system was located below the floor slab in the raised crawl space.

Integrity

The existing building is in good condition considering its age and has had very little updates over the life of the building. The exterior of the building has had security bars added to the windows, which are removable. Some of the exterior concrete walls and stairs have spalling concrete on them but are otherwise intact. Rebar is exposed in places around the exterior of the Darragh Building due to weathering of the concrete.

The entire interior is intact although the restrooms have undergone significant wear and tear, and lack of upkeep, when compared to the rest of the building. The original skylights into the restrooms have been enclosed, apparently due to water leakage issues. The Darragh Building's atrium has some evidence of historic water damage, leaking, and lack of draining also. At some point in the history of the building, the roof opening over the atrium was covered with a skylight structure of sorts. Additionally, the rear loading bay at the southwest corner of the structure was replaced with wood-framed windows and a single door at some point after the initial construction of the building.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1958 - 1959

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Noland Blass, Jr.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Darragh Company Building is a Mid-Century Modern building designed by Noland Blass, Jr. of the Little Rock architectural firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch, & Blass in 1958. It was constructed utilizing post and beam construction techniques, replacing the need for heavy-load bearing walls with steel, concrete and glass. The Darragh Building was designed for commercial use for the Darragh Company and is located just east of Downtown Little Rock at 1403 East Sixth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, within a primarily warehouse and industrial district. The Darragh Building is approximately 4000 square feet. Significant features of the structure include: floor-to-ceiling glass walls and windows, extended floor and roof slabs that emphasize the building's horizontal lines, a roof with no slope, a building-surrounded interior atrium, floating steps leading to the building's front entrance, and exterior and interior concrete infill panels decorated with a stretched octagon and diamond three-dimensional pattern. The Darragh Company Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of modernist architecture in Little Rock, Arkansas, designed by Nolan Blass, Jr, with **local significance**.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Elaboration

The Darragh Building is a prime example of modernist architecture designed and built during the mid-20th century. The building was designed by Noland Blass, Jr. of the Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch & Blass architecture firm in 1958, and it exemplifies multiple aspects of the mid-century modern movement. Blass was hired by the Erhart, Eichenbaum, and Rauch firm immediately following the Second World War and was made a partner in 1956. The firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch & Blass provided full building design services and housed both the architects and engineers that worked on their projects. The structure originally served as the corporate office headquarters for the Darragh Company. The Darragh Company has provided materials and equipment for construction projects around the state of Arkansas since 1906, including the cement used in the construction of the Arkansas State Capitol Building.

Mid-Century Modern Architecture

The modernism of the late 1940s through the early 1960s was a time of sleek, functional forms combined with newly developed materials. The post-war period saw a radical change in the architectural profession, with modernism becoming a powerful force in the architectural profession. The early revolutionary modernism of the 1920s and 1930s had given way to a more developed celebration of modernism that was applied to all types of forms in all kinds of

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locations.¹ The new aesthetic and design framework of simple planes, open spaces and universal principles spread from Germany to the United States in the period between World War I and World War II.² Architects, such as Arkansas native Noland Blass, Jr., who started their studies in the United States before the outbreak of World War II and many soldiers who would continue their education after World War II were given a world tour of many of the great centers of historic and modern architecture in Europe, compliments of the War Department. These first-hand experiences with modern and historic architectural forms, although under stressful and often horrible circumstances, still had an impact on returning soldiers who would become the next generation of great designers and architects across the United States.

The new Modernist style was, at its root, a revolt against the historicizing stylistic revivals of the past. The proponents of Modernism espoused new commonality between use and form. Modernism was also seen to dispose of the cultural baggage of the previous historicizing styles. This led to its label as an "International Style" with a set of design principles and a simplified aesthetic that was void of any national or cultural association.³ This also meant that a Modernist design could theoretically be located anywhere in the world and serve any function while still being an artistic object. This new aesthetic was achieved by combining glass with metal structural systems and other new materials to create open interior spaces that could be divided in an endless variety of ways to fit a variety of functions.

Noland Blass, Jr.: An Arkansan Mid-Century Modern Architect

Noland Blass, Jr. was born to Noland and Isabel Blass on May 28, 1920.⁴ During his childhood, Noland Blass, Jr. often spent time at the department store his father ran. Blass, Jr.'s grandfather, Gus Blass, founded the Gus Blass Department Store on Main Street in downtown Little Rock in 1871.⁵ By the early 20th century, the Gus Blass Department Store was a commercial force in downtown Little Rock. Gus Blass continued to guide the company that bore his name until his death in 1919. Afterwards, control of the store fell to Julian Blass, Gus Blass's son. Julian headed the company until his death in 1939. In 1939, Noland Blass, Sr., brother to Julian, became store president and remained in that post until his retirement in 1950.⁶ In a profile of his life in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* in 1991, Noland Blass, Jr. stated that "our father always used to work late and we would always go in the candy department and steal candy."⁷ He graduated High School from the Little Rock school system and then attended Cornell University at Ithaca, New York. He graduated from Cornell University in 1941 with a bachelor's degree in Architecture. While a senior at Cornell, Blass received a gold medal award for his senior

¹ *Clean Lines, Open Spaces: A View of Mid-Century Modern Architecture*, Prod. Mark Wilcken, AETN, 2012.

² McAlester, Virginia and A. Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Knopf, 1994), 469-470.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

⁵ LeMaster, *Corner of the Tapestry*, 113.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Ellen F. Kreth, "High Profile: Noland Blass, Jr.," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, November 17, 1991. special section.

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architectural thesis.⁸ After completing college, Blass volunteered for the Army and served in Germany and the Philippines during the height of World War II. In 1946, he was discharged at the age 26 as a Major.⁹

After returning to Little Rock in 1946, Blass was hired as a designer-draftsman by the architectural firm of Erhart, Eichenbaum and Rauch.¹⁰ Noland Blass, Jr. continued to practice at the same firm throughout his career, eventually rising to leadership of Blass Chilcote Carter Gaskin Bogart & Norcross.¹¹ The firm continues to exist today as GHN: Architects + Engineers. Blass, Jr. expanded the firm's focus to large-scale projects that incorporated many designers, architect, engineers and even other firms. As the principle designing architect and leader of the firm, Blass, Jr. created an architectural legacy across central Arkansas.

Blass's career was varied and he worked on projects throughout central Arkansas, including award winning projects at Horace-Mann Junior High and Oaklawn Jockey Club. He also designed the Arkansas State Justice Building, Arkansas Supreme Court Rotunda, Temple B'nai Israel in Little Rock and several projects at the University of Arkansas for Medical Science (UAMS). His favorite project was his early brutalist design for the Worthen Bank and Trust building that was completed in 1969.¹² He was also a prominent figure in urban planning and development in Little Rock through his work on an east-west expressway project, a river-front park proposal, multi-use arena proposal, hotel-convention center complex and historic restoration and preservation projects in the historic districts near downtown Little Rock.¹³ Blass was also very active in the civic arena in Little Rock and served as the President of the Arkansas Arts Center and President of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra Society as well as being a member of various boards and committees across the city.¹⁴

He continued to practice architecture until 1991, when he officially retired. However, he continued to work on various personal architectural and artistic projects until his death in 1998.¹⁵ Throughout his career, Blass, Jr. learned and practiced with modernistic forms and his building designs ranged from the early brutalism of the Worthen Bank and Trust Building, now the Bank of America Building in downtown Little Rock, to the sculptural forms of the 1976 glass rotunda, built to house the chambers of the Arkansas Supreme Court.

⁸ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ "Noland Blass, Jr.," *Levi Letter*, n 1, 1983, p 3.

¹¹ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

¹² Ellen F. Kreth, "High Profile: Noland Blass, Jr.," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, November 17, 1991, special section.

¹³ "Noland Blass, Jr., of Little Rock," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, July 23, 1998, 6B.

¹⁴ Ellen F. Kreth, "High Profile: Noland Blass, Jr.," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, November 17, 1991, special section.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

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The Darragh Family and Company

In 1906, the Darragh Company was founded by Frederick Kramer Darragh and his two brothers, Thomas A. and Finley Darragh, in Little Rock, Arkansas. Frederick Kramer Darragh was named for his grandfather, Frederick Kramer who was born in Halle, Russia, in December of 1829. Frederick Kramer immigrated to the United States in 1848 where he married Adaline Margaret Reichardt in 1857. The couple would eventually have six children; Louisa (Frederick Kramer Darragh's mother), Mattie, Emma, Charles, Fred and Henry. Frederick Kramer eventually moved to Little Rock, where he served on the Little Rock School Board from 1869 until 1894. During his service on the local school board, he also became the Little Rock School Board's first president. During his years in Little Rock, Frederick Kramer became an important civic leader, serving as the president of the Masonic Mutual Relief Association, helping to found the Mount Holly Cemetery Association, becoming a founding member of Temple B'Nai Israel, and eventually serving as the president of the Bank of Commerce. He was also elected mayor of Little Rock, serving from 1873 until 1875. In 1895, a newly completed Little Rock elementary school was named the Kramer School in his honor.¹⁶

Frederick Kramer's daughter Louise Kramer married Thomas Jefferson Darragh in 1878. Thomas J. Darragh was the son of John and Sarah Darragh who had immigrated to the United States from Ireland or Scotland to Pennsylvania sometime before the Civil War.¹⁷ Thomas J. Darragh moved to Little Rock after the Civil War, where he met and married Louise Kramer. Louise was actually Thomas J. Darragh's second wife, his first wife Jennie F. Darragh having died in 1877 possibly due to complications from the birth of their surviving child, Finley John Darragh.¹⁸ Thomas J. and Louise would have three additional children, Frederick Kramer Darragh, Thomas Armstrong Darragh and James A. Darragh, who unfortunately died at the age of only two years. In 1884, Thomas J. Darragh founded the Little Rock Street Railway Company with three other local business men.¹⁹ This street railway company relied on railcars pulled by mules or horses along four miles of track that was laid throughout the downtown area of Little Rock.²⁰ This company was eventually transformed and absorbed into other electric and steam city railway companies and it appears that Thomas J. Darragh was out of the business by the turn of the century.

In 1906, the Darragh Company of Little Rock was founded by Thomas J. Darragh's three sons; Frederick Kramer Darragh, Thomas A. Darragh and Finley Darragh.²¹ The Darragh Company

¹⁶ Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1994), 25.

¹⁷ United States Census Rolls, 1890-1920.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ "Little Rock Street Railway System: Pulaski County, Arkansas," *Arkansas Ties...*, retrieved August 15, 2016, www.arkansasties.com/Pulaski/Structures6/LittleRockStreetRailwaySystem.htm.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ "About," *Darragh Company*, retrieved from <http://www.darraghcompany.com/about/>.

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started as a warehouse for hire for local businesses specializing in feed, grain, and poultry. After realizing in 1907 that they had a surplus of space in their warehouses, the leaders of the Darragh Company began to broker Portland cement and lime for use in the ongoing construction of the Arkansas State Capitol.²² The company continued to provide cement for the Arkansas Capitol project until its completion in 1915.²³ The Darragh Company continued to pursue dual business opportunities and interests in agriculture and construction supplies. In 1915, an advertisement for the company in the local Little Rock City Directory read as follows: “Darragh Company. Receivers and shippers of hay and grain. Dealers in lime, cement, plaster, sewer pipe, ect. Office and warehouse foot E. Sixth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.”

By 1915, the company seems to have been thriving, with Frederick Kramer Darragh commissioning a new house from the locally renowned architect Charles L. Thompson. Thompson created the most influential architectural firm in Arkansas during the earliest decades of the 20th Century. Thompson’s firm designed more than two thousand buildings, ranging from personal residences to churches, commercial buildings, and courthouses. The firm mastered a vast array of architectural styles and was well-known for combining different architectural styles, becoming forerunners in the field of architecture eclecticism.²⁴ The house designed for Frederick Kramer Darragh in 1915, located on Broadway Street in Little Rock was completed in 1916 (NR Listed 12.22.1982). Mr. Darragh and his wife, Valeria, lived there with their family from 1916 to 1930, when they built a house in the Edgehill neighborhood of Little Rock.²⁵

Frederick Kramer Darragh and his wife Valeria S. had three children. The eldest son, Frederick Kramer Darragh, Jr., was born in Little Rock on November 13, 1916.²⁶ He was educated in Tennessee and at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business, where he was a graduate in 1938. Frederick K. Darragh, Jr., became a renowned pilot during WWII, earning the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service ferrying supplies from India to China. After the war, Darragh, Jr., returned to help manage the family agribusiness.²⁷ He also used his wealth and local influence to assist political and reform efforts that work for social justice, education and peaceful world relations. He would become the first white businessman to join the Urban League in 1947 and was one of only a very few business leaders to openly call for the desegregation of Little Rock’s school district.²⁸ Darragh, Jr., also continually supported libraries

²² Hammel, Tom. “A Capitol Investment.” *Contractor Supply Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.contractorsupplymagazine.com/pages/Current-Issue---Cover-story-A-Capitol-Investment.php>.

²³ Rachel Silva, “Sandwiching in History: Darragh House, 2412 S. Broadway,” Historic Site Tour, 3 April 2009, Files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

²⁴ Charles Witsell Jr., “Charles Louis Thompson (1868-1959).” *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System. 30 March 2015, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

²⁵ Rachel Silva, “Sandwiching in History: Darragh House, 2412 S. Broadway,” Historic Site Tour, 3 April 2009, Files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

²⁶ Bob Razer, “Fred K. Darragh (1916-2003),” *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History & Culture*. Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, Central Arkansas Library System, 30 March 2015, <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net>.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

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throughout the state. After WWII, Darragh, Jr., continued to fly various planes and even made a solo, around-the-world flight in 1962, a trip that took 68 days. In 1999, Darragh, Jr., was inducted into the Arkansas Aviation Hall of Fame.²⁹

The Darragh Company continues to operate from East Sixth Street in Little Rock, in a newly constructed building to the west of the office constructed in 1958 for the company. The Darragh Company has continued to expand and now has offices in Hot Springs, Lowell, Fort Smith, Texarkana, and Jonesboro. The Darragh Company also owns Arkansas Rebar in Benton, Arkansas.³⁰ The company sold its agriculture and feed mill related operations during the 1990s and now focuses exclusively on building materials for commercial construction projects. The Company acquired six Tool Central locations throughout Arkansas in 2011 and became a supplier for power tools, hand tools, fasteners, and accessories.³¹

The Darragh Building

The Darragh family and Noland Blass, Jr. were a part of the civic community of Little Rock through the decades of the mid-20th century. This is one possible explanation for why Noland Blass, Jr. was selected by the Darragh Company to design a new corporate office headquarters for the prosperous company. This office, which still exists and is now called the Darragh Building, is a prime example of the Modernistic Style of architecture, popular during a period that began in the 1930s and lasted through the 1960s.

The Darragh Building, constructed in 1958 and located in Little Rock's warehouse district east of Downtown Little Rock, originally served as the corporate office headquarters for the Darragh Company. The neighborhood surrounding the Darragh Building has been used for a variety of manufacturing and agricultural purposes throughout the previous 120 years. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of the area show that the Little Rock Ice Company factory was located near the corner of Sixth Street and Thomas Street in 1897. The Thomas Manufacturing Company Cotton Press Factory was located across Thomas Street to the east. The Darragh Company is seen near its current location for the first time in a Sanborn Map from 1913. At that time, the Darragh Company Grain Elevator, a hay warehouse, and a flour and grain warehouse were located on the site of the present Darragh Building. The Hayes-Shofner Grain Company warehouse was located across the street on the north side of Sixth Street and the Thomas-Fordyce Manufacturing Cotton Gin and related machinery was located east of Thomas Street and west of the railroad tracks that cross Sixth Street. Throughout the early and mid-20th century, the area continued to be dominated by industrial and agricultural warehouses. The Darragh Company's focus on agricultural and construction supply fit in with the dominant industry of the area.

The Darragh Building is a small scale example of the Erhart, Eichenbaum, Rauch & Blass firm's incorporation of the principles of the International Style and specifically tenants of New Formalism and Populist Modernism. Other Modernistic projects produced around the same time

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ "About," *Darragh Company*, retrieved from <http://www.darraghcompany.com/about/>.

³¹ *Ibid.*

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as the Darragh Building by the firm include St. Vincent's Hospital, The Acme Building, both in Little Rock; the Lawrence County Courthouse (NR Listed 9.28.2015) in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas, and the Arkansas State Supreme Court Building, also in Little Rock. The building is based on a simple structural grid utilizing concrete wrapped steel columns and concrete floor and roof slabs. The rectilinear glass and concrete forms of the Darragh Building sandwiched between the two elevated concrete slabs, with a five foot overhang, express the simplicity common to the Modern architectural designs during the mid-20th century.

The Darragh Building's exterior is dominated by the horizontal lines of the building's extended floor and roof slabs, its flat roof slab, and the building's floating steps on the front of the building. The building is rectangular in plan and is raised above the surrounding ground level on a recessed platform, allowing the building to appear to float above the surrounding ground plane. The exterior wall of the Darragh Building features large concrete infill panels that are decorated with three-dimensional diamond patterning that is indicative of the artistic additions found throughout much of Noland Blass, Jr.'s work. This can also be read as a design that celebrates ornamentation, in its use of the repeated diamond pattern, and plays with the expectation of structure and support in the floating concrete slabs and panels of the exterior and interior. This playfulness of design and structure is counter to the simplicity and lack of ornamentation of other mid-century Modern buildings found in Central Arkansas. The use of repetitive patterning and innovative structures can be seen in other structures designed by Noland Blass, Jr., including the Worthen Bank Building, now known as the Bank of America Building in downtown Little Rock, as well as the circular structure of the Supreme Court chambers on the capitol grounds in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The Darragh Building's interior floor plan is laid out such that all occupied spaces are oriented along the exterior walls to utilize as many windows and as much natural light as possible. Interior materials are indicative of the time period in which the building was designed and constructed: aluminum-framed windows, plaster walls, ceramic tile, carpet, and stained-wood veneer doors. The utilitarian spaces such as the restrooms, vault, kitchenette, and conference room are located in the center of the building and are accessible from the perimeter offices by a corridor that wraps around the interior utility spaces. The interior corridor walls utilize transom windows to allow natural light to flow into the corridors. Skylights were also positioned over the inner restroom spaces to allow natural light into these otherwise completely windowless spaces. The conference room walls also utilize full-height glass panels. Clearly the theme of natural lighting is prevalent throughout the design of this building.

The diamond pattern seen on all four facades is repeated throughout the site, including in the front door push/pull bar and the painted parking lot divisions. The diamond symbol is still an integral part of the Darragh Company's logo and is a historic symbol of the State of Arkansas.

Statement of Significance

The Darragh Building, constructed circa 1958 and located in Little Rock's warehouse district east of Downtown Little Rock, originally served as the corporate office headquarters for the Darragh Company. The building is based on a simple structural grid utilizing concrete wrapped

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steel columns and concrete floor and roof slabs. The rectilinear glass and concrete forms of the Darragh Building sandwiched between the two elevated concrete slabs, with a five-foot overhang, express the simplicity common to the Modern architectural designs during the mid-20th century. The Darragh Company Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** as an excellent example of modernist architecture in Little Rock, Arkansas, designed by Noland Blass, Jr, with **local significance**.

Returned

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Darragh Building
Name of Property

Pulaski, Arkansas
County and State

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Returned

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 Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Darragh Building
Name of Property

Pulaski, Arkansas
County and State

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): PU10047

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.134 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Returned

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 15 | Easting: 568202 | Northing: 3844653 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Part of Section 2, Township 1 North, Range 12 West Lot 2, Darragh Commercial
Subdivision, City of Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas

Darragh Building
Name of Property

Pulaski, Arkansas
County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Darragh Building and currently owned by the property's owner.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Matt Bell, Partner

organization: Sustainable Properties, LLC

name/title: Callie Williams, National Register Historian (Edited By)

organization: Department of Arkansas Heritage, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

street & number: 1100 North Street

city or town: Little Rock state: Arkansas zip code: 72201

e-mail callie.williams@arkansas.gov

telephone: 501.324.9789

date: 09/01/2016

Returned

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Darragh Building
Name of Property

Pulaski, Arkansas
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Darragh Building

City or Vicinity: Little Rock

County: Pulaski State: Arkansas

Photographer: Callie Williams

Date Photographed: April 27, 2016 and August 23, 2016

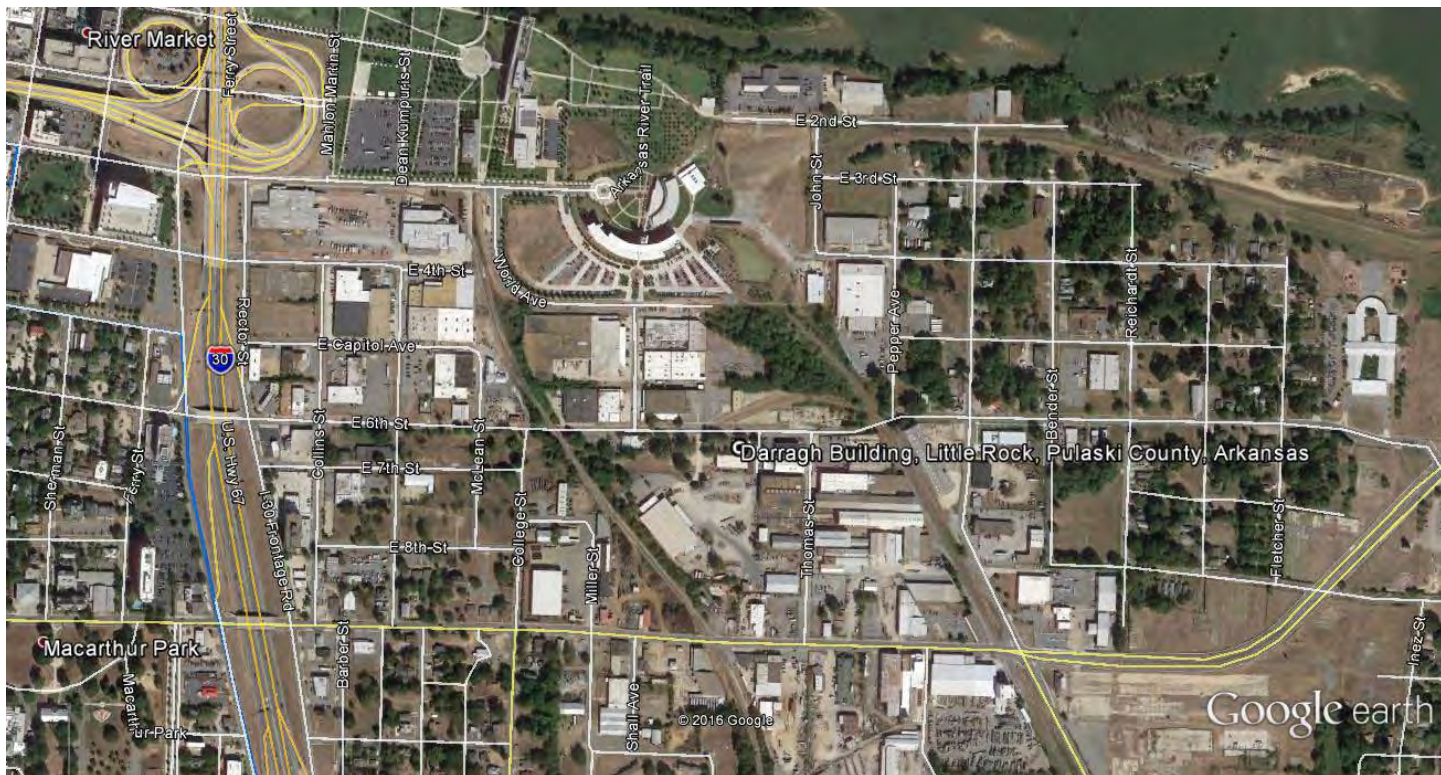
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 14: Front (East) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing west.
- 2 of 14: Front (East) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing west.
- 3 of 14: Front (East) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing west.
- 4 of 14: Front (West) Elevation and Side (North) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing southeast.
- 5 of 14: Partial view of Front (West) Elevation and Side (North) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing southeast.
- 6 of 14: Rear (East) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing east.
- 7 of 14: Side (South) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing northwest.
- 8 of 14: Detail of the Side (South) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing north.
- 9 of 14: Side (South) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing northeast.
- 10 of 14: Front (West) Elevation and Side (South) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing northeast.
- 11 of 14: Detail of floating stairs, Front (West) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing southeast.
- 12 of 14: Detail of diamond pattern on exterior wall panels, Side (North) Elevation of the Darragh Building, camera facing southwest.
- 13 of 14: Interior hallway space in the Darragh Building, camera facing east.
- 14 of 14: Detail of diamond pattern on interior wall panel in the Darragh Building, camera facing northeast.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Darragh Building, Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas



Google earth



UTM

NAD1983

Zone: 15 S

Easting: 568202

Northing: 3915803

Returned

Darragh Building, Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas



Google earth



UTM

NAD1983

Zone: 15 S

Easting: 568202

Northing: 3844655

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Darragh Building

Multiple Name:

State & County: ARKANSAS, Pulaski

Date Received: 12/9/2016 Date of Pending List: 1/11/2017 Date of 16th Day: 1/26/2017 Date of 45th Day: 1/24/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100000557

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

<i>Submission Type</i>	<i>Property Type</i>	<i>Problem Type</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years

Accept Return Reject 1/13/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary See attached comments
Comments:

Recommendation/ Return
Criteria

Reviewer Jim Gabbert 

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275

Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Darragh Building, Pulaski County, AR

Reference Number: SG100000557

Reason for Return

The Darragh Building nomination is being returned for substantive revision.

Subsequent to the preparation of the nomination for this property, but before it was received by this office, the Darragh Building has undergone changes as part of a rehabilitation project. Among those changes is a permanent connection to the adjacent warehouse building. This warehouse, despite its proximity to the Darragh Building (including having its flat roof cantilever over the Darragh Building) was not mentioned in the original nomination. It is now attached, as evidenced by images submitted by your office on January 13, 2017. This attachment warrants a new appraisal and evaluation of the integrity of the Darragh Building. If this nomination is resubmitted, the boundary must be redrawn to include the now-attached warehouse. The nature of the attachment and any other alterations made since the original document was prepared need to be described and their affects on the historic integrity of the Darragh Building evaluated. We recommend that if this nomination proceeds, that it be rescheduled for the state review board since the boundary will have been altered.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at <James_Gabbert@nps.gov>.

Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
1/17/2017



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

723 West Markham Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1334
Phone: (501) 371-4790 Fax:(501) 399-3435
www.littlerock.gov

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION REVIEW

Name and Address of property:

Darragh Building, 1403 E 6th, Little Rock, AR 72202

Name of Owner:

Sustainable Properties LLC

Project Sponsor:

Ralph Wilcox, AHPP

CLG Name:

City of Little Rock, Arkansas

Date of Public Hearing by CLG:

July 10, 2017

Applicable Criteria:

Criterion A (Historic Events)

Criterion B (Important Person)

Criterion C (Architecture)

Criterion D (Archaeological)

The Little Rock Historic District Commission hereby recommends the above stated property for nomination.

Attest:

Richard A. Kelley
Chair

Bruce Meyers
Secretary/Staff

7-10-17
Date

7-10-2017
Date



THE DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS
HERITAGE

Asa Hutchinson
Governor

Stacy Hurst
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural
Heritage Commission

Arkansas State Archives

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



ARKANSAS HISTORIC
PRESERVATION PROGRAM



1100 North Street
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www.arkansaspreservation.com

An Equal Opportunity Employer

August 2, 2017



J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.
Washington D.C. 20005

RE: Darragh Building – Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Darragh Building to the National Register of Historic Places. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Stacy Hurst
State Historic Preservation Officer

SH:rsw

Enclosure