56-749

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual probabilities. How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural class categories and subcategories from the instructions.	Form. If any item does not apply to the property being
1. Name of Property	IAM DE DOLT
Historic name: Saint Rita Apartments	JAN 2 7 2017
Other names/site number:	Matt. Day, of Minteres Blo
Name of related multiple property listing:	Natl. Reg. of Historic Plac National Park Service
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple proj	perty listing
2. Location	
Street & number: 35 Owen Street	
City or town: Detroit State: MI Construction: Vicinity: Construction: Vicinity: Construction: Constr	County: Wayne
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Histo	ric Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this <u>X</u> nomination <u>reque</u> reque the documentation standards for registering properties. Places and meets the procedural and professional requestions.	es in the National Register of Historic
In my opinion, the property _X_ meets does not recommend that this property be considered significated level(s) of significance: nationalstatewideX_located level(s) Applicable National Register Criteria:	ant at the following
ABX_CD	
Buen Calley	1/19/17
Signature of certifying official/Title:MI SHPO	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Gov	vernment
In my opinion, the property meets does	not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title:	State or Federal agency/bureau

Saint Rita Apartments Name of Property	Wayne County, MI County and State
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	

aint Rita Apartments me of Property		Wayne County, MI County and State
Number of Resources within Pro (Do not include previously listed to Contributing		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	<u> </u>	Total
6. Function or Use Historic Functions (Enter categories from instruction DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling		
Current Functions (Enter categories from instruction VACANT/NOT IN USE	s.)	

Saint Rita Apartments	Wayne County, MI		
ame of Property	County and State		
7. Description			
Architectural Classification			
(Enter categories from instructions.)			
Colonial Revival			
<u> </u>			
Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)			
Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Te	erra Cotta, Limestone		

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 historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Saint Rita Apartments is a six-story tall, red brick apartment building in the Georgian Revival style located on the north side of Owen Street, just east of Woodward Avenue. The front faces south. The property is located just over three miles north of downtown Detroit, two blocks south of the Arden Park-East Boston Historic District. Detroit's former Northern High School is located across the street to the south. The Saint Rita's overall footprint is rectangular with the front and rear more narrow than the sides extending back from the street. The footprint has small cut-outs for light wells midway along the side walls between the front and back halves of the building. There is a shallow grassy lawn between the front of the building and the sidewalk. The east side of the building abuts an alley and the west side has a small setback with an overgrown lawn. The rear of the building abuts a paved parking area that has been fenced off. The front facade and front half of each side of the building are clad in dark red brick with extensive, contrasting white terra cotta trim and decoration. The raised basement is clad in limestone. The rear half of each side and the back of the building are clad in buff colored brick with limestone sills at the window openings.

Saint Rita Apartments	
Name of Property	

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Narrative Description

The building front is symmetrical and has a five-part design, with the central bay on each side wider than the others and projecting forward of the two narrow outer bays and another narrow one in the center of the facade. The limestone-clad basement and limestone-trimmed ground story, with limestone water table and horizontal banding separating three levels of brickwork, and a terra cotta cornice spanning the front above the first floor windows create the building base. The second through fifth stories are finished in dark red brick with the trim limited, below the fifth story, primarily to limestone window sills. The top of the building, the fifth and sixth stories and roofline, displays the building's primary decorative flourishes in white or cream-color terra cotta – classical cornices capping the fifth and sixth floors, console brackets and elaborately detailed panels, segmental pediments, architrave and keystone-detailed window trim, and decorative balustraded parapet.

The front façade is divided into five bays; each bay is framed by projecting brick piers capped below the fifth-story cornice with terra cotta "capitals." The center of each capital has a massive console bracket with a garland draped around it. The capitals are integrated into a larger terra cotta cornice that runs across the front of the building above the fifth floor windows. The cornice and capital decoration wraps around the first bay of the side elevations. The top of the front façade contains elaborate terra cotta decorations. The top of each pier in the sixth story has a panel on three sides containing a shield surrounded by garlands. Topping the sixth story the piers support a dentil molding and projecting cornice that is capped by a blind decorative balustrade. A classical segmental pediment, with dentil molding around the inside and curved bracket keystone, caps each of the projecting broader bays flanking the building's recessed center bay.

Fronting the ground story and base, the center bay contains a shallow terra cotta portico fronting the entrance door. A fluted Tuscan column on each side flanks the doorway and supports an entablature and a broken segmental pediment above that originally contained an urn in the center. "Saint Rita" is spelled out in raised letters on a panel centered in the fascia of the entablature. The floors in the narrow recessed center bay above contain window openings that, illuminating the stairwell, do not align horizontally with the rest of the façade. The openings contain the remains of pairs of wood double-hung windows that were eight-over-eight at the second floor and nine-over-nine on the floors above that.

The broader bays flanking the center bay project slightly and are identical. In each bay the first floor window openings are framed in limestone and originally contained a pair of wood eight-over-two double-hung windows. The lintel has a keystone above the center of the opening and there are two limestone panels below the windows. The second through fifth floor window openings each contained a set of three six-over-two double-hung windows. The terra cotta band above the fifth floor windows has a keystone above the center of each opening. The broad sixth floor bays each had two six-over-two double-hung windows separated by a terra-cotta-trimmed brick pier. The terra cotta architrave trim around the head of each window has a keystone above the center of each window.

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The two outermost bays of the building front each had a pair of multi-light wood casement windows framed in limestone at the first floor with a limestone panel below the opening. The second through fifth floors contained a paired multi-light casement window at every floor. The fifth floor window lintels each has a keystone as part of the terra cotta trim around its head.

The building's east and west side elevations are identical. The dark red brick of the front facade clads the south half (nearer the street) of both side elevations and plain buff brick clads the north half of the building including the light wells in the center. The first bay near the street on both side elevations continues the façade treatment, including the limestone cladding of the basement, the horizontal banding and paneling below the window, and the terra cotta cornices, console brackets, and other details in the fifth and sixth stories and roofline. The first through sixth floors had two pairs of casement windows at every floor, with limestone sills. The first floor opening is framed in limestone and has two limestone panels below the window. There is a keystone in the lintel which forms part of the terra cotta band above the fifth floor opening. A terra cotta blind balustrade wraps around this first bay of the parapet wall.

The decorative trim is simpler on the remainder of the front half of the side elevation. Simple flat limestone bands continue across the wall at the tops of the basement and first floor levels. There are two window openings at every floor. They have limestone sills and each contained a pair of eight-over-two double-hung windows. The square-head fifth floor window openings each is topped by the suggestion of a segmental arch formed with limestone blocks, beginning with spring blocks, alternating with the wall's brickwork. At the base of the red brick parapet wall a simple terra cotta cornice extends across the wall in place of the more ornamental cornice and balustrade in the first bay and front.

The back half of the side elevations, behind the light well, has three window openings with limestone sills at every floor. The window opening closest to the light well is wider than the other two and contains a shallow-depth three-sided bay window that is recessed into the wall. Each side contained an eight-over-two double-hung window. The other two openings are narrow and each had a two-over-two window.

The light wells have a pair of two-over-two double-hung windows on the outward facing walls at every floor. The south facing wall in each well contains a short wide pair of casement windows at each floor. The north-facing walls each has a double-hung window at each floor set deep into the light well.

The building's north/rear elevation is five bays wide. The narrow center bay fronts the rear stairwell and has a door at the ground floor. Above, each landing level had a pair of large multipane windows. The wall above the stair extends into a rooftop penthouse with a hoist beam projecting from the top of the wall. Each of the wider bays flanking the center stair bay contains a four-sided bay window at each floor. The flat center of the bay window is wider than the two angled sides and contained a pair of two-over-two double-hung windows. The slanting side sections each had a single two-over-two double-hung window. The two narrow outside bays of the elevation each had a two-over-two double-hung window at every floor.

Saint Rita Apartments	Wayne County, MI
Name of Property	County and State

The building retains only remnants of the original windows. All window openings are currently boarded up on the inside.

Upon entering the building, the vestibule has a decorative black and white tile floor and marble wainscoting on the walls. The stairs leading to the lobby are marble clad. Both the entry vestibule and the lobby have decorative plaster ceilings. The building has central double-loaded corridors with four units per floor. Each unit has a front and rear door accessing the corridor. The first floor corridor has a tile floor that creates a black and white checkerboard pattern, plaster walls with wood trim, and a crown molding containing curved brackets edging the plaster ceiling. The upper floor corridors have the same black and white checkerboard tile floors with plaster walls and ceilings and wood trim. In the upper stories the crown molding at the ceiling is a simple coved molding and is not as decorative as in the first floor corridor. An elevator is located on the west side of the corridor near the center of the building.

The units in the front of the building each have a small vestibule that leads to a living room at the front of the building. The living room ceilings are decorated with wood beams across the ceiling, and there is a small sunroom off the side of the living room. Moving toward the back of the building the unit has a formal dining room with wood trim creating wall panels and coffered ceilings. The hall behind the dining room leads to the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and rear door to the unit. Some of the unit finishes have been altered over the years but generally there are wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings. The bathrooms had tile floors which have largely been destroyed.

The main door to each of the rear units opens to a small entry vestibule that leads to a side facing dining room with a bay window. The rear of each unit has a side facing bathroom and kitchen. The living rooms face the rear of the building and each contained a "Murphy" bed mounted to a door in the back of the room. The second door leads directly from the living room into the rear stair of the building. Like the front units the dining rooms have wood trim wall panels and coffered ceilings and the living room ceilings have decorative beams. The bathrooms had tile floors which are in poor condition.

Saint R Name of		partments rty	Wayne County, M County and State
8.	Stat	tement of Significance	
(Ma	_	able National Register Criteria x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for N	National Register
X		A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant obroad patterns of our history.	contribution to the
]	B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in ou	r past.
X		C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses his or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose combindividual distinction.	gh artistic values,
]	D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important history.	t in prehistory or
C.	·4 • .	Considerations	
		a Considerations 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	
	_] 1	F. A commemorative property	
	7 (G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past	50 years

aint Rita Apartments	Wayne County, N
me of Property	County and State
A G1 101	
Areas of Significance	
(Enter categories from instructions.)	
Architecture	
Social History	
75 1 1 0 CL 10	
Period of Significance	
<u>1916</u>	
Significant Dates	
1916	
<u> </u>	
Significant Dangar	
Significant Person	
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)	
_N/A	
Cultural Affiliation	
N/A	
	
Architect/Builder	
Stevens, Harry C.	
_Stevens, marry C	

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.)

Constructed in 1916, in the first quarter of Detroit's tremendous population growth between 1910 and 1930, the Saint Rita Apartments meets national register criterion A under Social

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

History as an intact early twentieth-century apartment building associated with the primary period of development of Detroit's North End neighborhood as a residential area that contained numerous apartment buildings. It meets criterion C as an intact example of a characteristic form of early twentieth-century apartment building in Detroit, a rectangular-plan building with longer sides extending back from the street than the relatively narrower front and rear facades and small light wells cut back into the sides on either long side. Among such buildings, in which the decorative interest is typically displayed in the front facing the street, while the sides are relatively bare of ornament, the Saint Rita has a façade particularly resplendent in its rich display of terra-cotta Georgian Revival ornament below and along the roofline, including upper and lower cornices, large-scale segmental pediments, console brackets, and an ornamental balustrade parapet. Because of this lavish display of ornament, the building stands out from other early twentieth-century Georgian Revival apartment buildings in the city. The interior of the building retains its original floor plan, and the lobby, corridors and large apartment units retain most of their original wood trim in the living and dining rooms. The period of significance is limited to the year the building was constructed, 1916.

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

The Saint Rita Apartments were constructed in 1916 and designed by Detroit architect Harry C. Stevens. The building's namesake, Saint Rita of Cascia, is the patron saint of forgotten, impossible, or lost causes. A building permit was issued to Robert S. Brown on January 6, 1916, for construction of the building. In the 1916 Detroit city directory Robert S. Brown is listed as a sales manager and living on Westminster Avenue, three blocks to the north of the Saint Rita. Robert S. Brown owned the building until at least 1937, when he is listed on a building permit for installing fireproof walls and fire doors at the front and rear stairways.

Robert S. Brown bought the property for the Saint Rita in 1914 from Edwin R. Campbell and his wife, Marjory Durant Campbell, listed as being of New York City. Robert S. Brown was born in 1870 in Kinderhook, New York. His father was born in Scotland and his mother in Ireland. In 1889 he married Mary Henchey, a native of Manhattan, in New York. Both of Mary's parents were born in Ireland. According to the 1900 U.S. Census record, he, his wife Mary and three of their children, Mary, Raymond, and Cecilia, were then living on Smith Avenue in Detroit. Their oldest daughter, Mary, was born in 1891 in New York and their second child, Raymond, was born in Michigan in 1893, so the Brown family moved to Michigan sometime between 1891 and 1893. Cecilia was born in 1900. Robert's occupation is listed in the 1900 federal census as commercial traveler. The 1901, 1903, and 1904 city directories list him as a travel[ing] agent.

The 1905 city directory lists Brown as manager at the Acme White Lead Works. It is not clear whether his career with the firm began about that time or whether the 1900 census record as commercial traveler and 1901-04 directory entries for traveling agent also reference work for the company. The 1910 U.S. Census record lists the family living on Westminster Avenue and includes a fourth child, Thomas, born about 1904. Robert's occupation is then listed as "paint"

Saint Rita Apartments

Wayne County, MI Name of Property County and State

manufacturing." The Acme White Lead Works was founded in Detroit in 1884 by H. Kirke White and A. E. F. White with W. L. Davies. Based in Detroit the company had a traveling sales staff and branches in other cities in the United States. Although Acme White Lead was purchased by Sherwin-Williams in 1920, it was still publishing separate catalogs at least as late as 1925. One source states that Robert S. Brown founded or owned the company and that he developed the Japan Black paint used on Ford automobiles, but none of these claims can be substantiated.

In 1912 Mr. Brown, along with a Studebaker foreman and a paint salesman from the Forbes Varnish Company, were arrested under charges that they paid Studebaker shop foremen a percentage of profits for using their paint products in their manufacturing. Bond was immediately posted for the release of both salesmen ("Graft Arrests at Detroit Factory," Automobile Topics, March 23, 1912). The disposition of the case is not known although it seems likely that the charges were dropped or the case resolved as Brown continued with Acme for an additional six years before retiring in 1918 as the director of sales at the Acme White Lead Co. of Detroit.

In 1922 Brown purchased a second home in the Dean Alvord-designed and developed Harbor Oaks neighborhood in Clearwater, Florida. According to the National Register nomination for the Harbor Oaks Residential District there, Dean Alvord was a New York and Long Island developer who began developing the neighborhood about 1911 and built the house at 802 Druid as a simple stucco Colonial Revival house. Brown purchased the house and, naming it "Century Oaks," added wings to the north and south sides, changed the windows and extensively landscaped the grounds, including adding a Greek pergola and a carillon tower.

The 1940 U.S. Census lists the family residing in their Clearwater home. Robert and Mary are both listed as being 68 years old. Their daughter Cecilia, her husband Edwin F. Schulte, and their daughter, Robertine, were living or staying there at the time. Mary's 78-year-old brother Dennis Henchey lived with the family as did five servants, William and Jane Wall, natives of England, the houseman and housekeeper; England native Lillian Tobin, the maid; Michigan native Myrtle Gately, the cook; and Wisconsin native Lucille Victory, the child's nurse.

Mrs. Mary Brown died in Clearwater in 1947. When he passed away in October 1953 at the age of 82, Robert Brown is listed as living on Boston Avenue in Detroit, although he died at the winter home in Clearwater after being struck by a falling branch. Both Mary and Robert are buried in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield, Michigan.

The Saint Rita Apartments was featured in the March 1918 issue of an industry publication, *The* Valve World, published by the Crane Company of Chicago, a manufacturer of plumbing and heating/ventilating equipment. In noting the Crane provenance of all the Saint Rita's plumbing and heating equipment, including toilets, tubs, bathroom and kitchen sinks, and heating system, the story remarked that the Saint Rita "...is said to be the most richly appointed and one of the best equipped apartment buildings in Detroit...."

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The article is the sole source of information for the name of the building's architect, listed therein as "Harry Stevensen" of Detroit. There was no architect Harry Stevensen in Detroit at the time, but the Detroit directories do list an architect Harry C. Stevens. Stevens was likely the Saint Rita's architect. The story lists the plumbing contractor as E. R. Brown; whether he was related to building owner Robert S. Brown is unknown with currently available information.

Presently not much is known about the presumed architect of the building, Harry C. Stevens. In the 1910 U.S. Census he was listed as 40 years old, with he and both of his parents listed as born in Michigan. He was divorced and then roomed on Washington Boulevard in downtown Detroit. The 1897 issue of the *Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directory* lists the firm Stevens & Falkner, a partnership with John Falkner located in the Majestic Building. A June 1897 issue of *The Inland Architect and News Record* lists the firm as designing a house for George W. Millen. In August 1897 the same publication lists Harry C. Stevens as the architect for a house at 1734 Strong Street near Jefferson, and for remodeling a house for M. Wendell on Huron near Ashland. In the July 20, 1910, issue of *The American Contractor* he is listed as the architect for a twenty-four-unit apartment building on Watson Street for owner Thomas T. Hollinger. *Beautiful Homes of Concrete Masonry*, a 1929 publication of the Portland Cement Association, shows a photograph of a large house designed by Stevens for D. P. Markey in Detroit. No obituary or American Institute of Architects listing could be found for Harry C. Stevens.

The original tenants in the Saint Rita Apartments had middle class occupations which makes sense for the size and décor of the units. Frank J. Porter was a bookkeeper at the Highland Park State Bank. Fred K. Nickerson was a draftsman for architect H. J. Keough. Charles H. Booth was a manager at Babcock Lumber Company. Clifford C. Boone was a general sales manager at the American Can Company. Isaac Applebaum in unit 23 ran the Applebaum Realty Company with his brother Henry, who lived further east at 150 Owen. William F. Fales was a captain in the United States Army, and Frederick E. Edminster was the superintendent medical examiner for The Maccabees. Two women had their own apartments in the building. Blanche L. King was listed as a teacher. Jennie H. Gunbrier did not list any occupation. Mack MacDonnell was listed as the janitor for the building.

Typical of the surrounding neighborhood at the time the early tenants of the Saint Rita were Caucasian with several being Jewish. According to the 1920 United States Census records three-quarters of the tenants were born in the Unites States. Several had boarders in their units. Tenant turn-over was fairly high, with only four of the original tenants still living in the building four years later according to the 1922-23 city directory. These included Charles Booth, still with Babcock Lumber and a resident of the building until at least 1925; John Breslin, a foreman; and Blanche King, a teacher at Harms School, who also lived in the building until at least 1925. The janitor or caretaker, Mack MacDonnell, a native of Ireland, remained in the building until at least 1931. Although not original tenants in the building, Mrs. Minnie VanSickler and her sister Marjorie were long-term residents who lived in the building between at least 1920-21 and 1931-32. They owned the Van S Shop, a children's clothing store, in the David Whitney Building downtown.

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The 1920 and 1925 city directories show that the tenant mix remained primarily professional and worked in downtown Detroit. Walter Siewek in unit 1 was the president of Siewek Brothers, "manufacturers of jigs, tools, dies, gauges, form and special cutters, machinery and experimental work." Crescent Parker in unit 8 was president of Parker and Maxworthy, Accountants and Auditors. Harry B. Schmidt in unit 9 was a physician with an office in the Kresge Building. Unit 20 housed Moses Himeloch, one of the five brothers who owned the Himelhoch Brothers & Company ladies wear store in downtown Detroit. Hugh Connolly in unit 21 owned Hugh Connolly and Son, a jeweler and optometrist located at Griswold and State. Mrs. Anna Morris was a buyer at Hudson's and her roommate Lucy Conway was a native of Ireland. George Eldridge in unit 11 was president of George R. Eldridge Company, wholesaler of butter, eggs, cheese and oleo-margarine. John Fry was the secretary and general manager of the Detroit Stove Works.

The ethnicities of the tenants remained fairly constant. The 1930 U.S. Census lists three families from Canada, one from England, one from Ireland, one from Lithuania, and the rest from the United States. Six Canadian families lived in the building in 1940, one tenant was from Poland, and one from Lithuania. All of the tenants listed in both censuses were white.

The occupations of the tenants listed in the 1953 city directory are more industry focused. Simon Stewart was an employee at Kelsey-Hayes; John Foreman a scales worker at Bohn Aluminum; Leavy Walker worked at Murray; I. L. Dungy was a Packard employee; Neal Strahand was a machine operator at Gar Wood; and Joe Brown was an employee at Chevrolet. Two tenants had interesting non-manufacturing jobs: Flora Bell was a cook at the Strathmore Hotel and Fred Miles was a forecaster with the U.S. Weather Bureau. Occupations are not listed for a number of the tenants.

North End

The Saint Rita Apartments is located in what is now considered the North End neighborhood, so named because at the time of its initial development it was at the northern boundary of Detroit. The neighborhood as presently defined is roughly bounded by East Grand Boulevard on the south; I-75 on the east; the City of Highland Park on the north; and Woodward Avenue on the west. However, historically it likely extended farther west to include the west side of Woodward to what is now the Lodge Freeway. This area was originally part of the township of Hamtramck, platted in the late 1800s, and annexed to the City of Detroit between 1890 and 1907. Owen Street was platted as part of the Owen and Bartlett's Subdivision in 1891, while it was still part of Hamtramck.

The earliest development in the neighborhood was Arden Park, a street containing large, single family houses for wealthy owners that were constructed starting in 1892. It was mirrored west of Woodward by Chicago and West Boston Boulevards. The development of the neighborhood was likely driven by multiple factors, including the establishment of the electrified Highland Park trolley line in 1882 that ran five miles on Woodward between Baltimore Street in Detroit's New Center northward to Highland Park and became part of the private Detroit United Railway (DUR) by 1901. This transportation gave new residents easy access to downtown Detroit, as

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

evidenced by many of the Saint Rita's early tenants. In addition to downtown there were two major employment centers to the north and south. The Milwaukee Junction area with its numerous automobile related and other factories abuts the south side of the North End neighborhood and was developed starting in 1872, and in 1909 the Highland Park Ford plant opened less than two miles to the north.

In addition to the streetcar lines, improvements to Woodward Avenue, located just a half block to the west of the Saint Rita, made the use of automobiles even more feasible. Woodward Avenue is Detroit's central north-south street and runs from the Detroit River to Pontiac in Oakland County. In 1909 Woodward Avenue between 6 and 7 Mile Roads was paved in concrete, the first concrete paved highway in the nation (Gavrilovich, p. 237). By 1916 all twenty-seven miles of Woodward Avenue were paved in concrete.

The majority of the North End neighborhood was developed in the first three decades of the twentieth century. The main commercial streets were the north-south running Hamilton Avenue on the west, Woodward Avenue in the center, and Oakland Avenue on the east (which also had a streetcar line). The east-west running cross streets contained a variety of single and multi-family residences, from the large mansions on Chicago, Arden Park and Boston Boulevard, to more modest single family houses, duplexes, row houses and apartment buildings scattered throughout. Oakland Avenue contained a number of two and three-story buildings with commercial spaces on the ground floor and offices or apartments above.

Much like the neighborhoods to the south between downtown and Grand Boulevard, the North End's demographics changed over its history. The initial residents were Caucasian, middle- to upper-class professionals who had the means to construct single-family houses. The ethnicity was mixed and a number of these residents were Jewish. That population increased in the 1920s and 30s as more Eastern European immigrant families moved to the neighborhood. Schools, churches, synagogues and businesses developed at the same time. Generally, the smaller synagogues and Jewish businesses were located on Oakland Avenue. It is probably not a coincidence that Northern High School (1914-15) and the Saint Rita were constructed about the same time. Both are indicative of the increasing density and population in this section of Detroit. The Utley Branch of the Detroit Public Library was constructed four blocks south on Woodward in 1913. The Saint Rita stands at the north end of what became known as Piety Hill because of the concentration of churches and synagogues on this section of Woodward Avenue. These include (all National Register listed): Central Woodward Christian Church (1928); St. Joseph's Episcopal Church (1926); Temple Beth El (1921-22); North Woodward Congregational Church (1911); the First Baptist Church (1910); and the Woodward Avenue Presbyterian Church (1911), all in the six blocks of Woodward immediately south of Owen Street. The 1923 Baist atlas shows two other apartment buildings on Owen between the Saint Rita and John R Street, both no longer extant.

In the 1930s many members of a growing middle class among Detroit's expanding black population moved northward from the city's older black neighborhood to the south, purchasing homes in the North End. The 1940 U.S. Census shows that blacks made up over forty percent of the North End's population (Elliot, *History's Future in the North End*, p. 10). Jazz clubs came to

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Oakland Avenue as the population moved northward from Hastings Street and Paradise Valley (Bjorn, *Before Motown*, p. 64). Northern High School had a strong music program and some students played in a band led by Jules Stein in 1923 (Bjorn, *Before Motown*, p. 18).

Like most of Detroit, the North End neighborhood's population peaked about 1950. During the 1950s, a gradual population exodus began as residents started leaving the North End and city for the expanding suburbs. The night clubs and businesses on Oakland Avenue, along with the black church congregations in the neighborhood, continued to thrive and by the 1960s the neighborhood's black population was ninety percent (Elliot, *History's Future in the North End*, p. 13). In 1966 students at Northern High School staged a walk-out to protest the inequality of their education versus other Detroit high schools. Students had a shortage of books and experienced general harassment along with a weaker curriculum. The students set up an alternate school taught by a Wayne State University professor in St. Joseph's Episcopal Church located one block south on Woodward (Elliot, *History's Future in the North End*, pp. 13-14).

The 1967 rebellion impacted the neighborhood, primarily along Oakland Avenue. Those events combined with the completion of the Chrysler Freeway on the east edge of the neighborhood accelerated population loss and disinvestment. By 1970 the North End had lost half of the population. By 1990 the neighborhood had only about a fifth of the residents that it had in 1950 (Elliot, *History's Future in the North End*, p. 15). The loss of people and the dis-investment over the last fifty years has left a neighborhood with vacant lots and boarded buildings. However, local residents and community groups are working to change this pattern. Community gardens, playgrounds and housing rehabilitation are bringing new residents to the area. The owners of the Saint Rita Apartments hope to contribute to this revitalization by rehabilitating the building for mixed income residents.

The Saint Rita in the Context of Detroit Apartment Buildings

The now nearly complete context study commissioned by Michigan's State Historic Preservation Office, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 1892-1970,* corrects the repeated assertion that Detroit's first apartment building was designed and constructed by Detroit architect Almon C. Varney in 1892. Recent research shows that there were multi-family dwellings combined with first floor commercial spaces in the 1880s. The Varney Apartments was the first apartment-only building constructed (Mills, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit,* pp. 4-5). Located at Park and Montcalm in what was then just north of downtown, it was a four-story walk-up and contained sixteen large units. It was predicted to be a financial failure because Detroit's residences at the time were overwhelmingly freestanding single-family houses, made prevalent by the amount of land available for expansion. However, Detroit's subsequent population boom due to the influx of workers drawn from abroad, the rural South, and rural Michigan to jobs created by the burgeoning auto industry, along with the city's other industries (stoves, pharmaceuticals, and tobacco processing, among others) created significantly more demand for apartments, and Varney's apartment building soon became a huge success.

Apartment living became an acceptable housing alternative by the turn of the century. The first types of apartment buildings constructed in Detroit were small-scale buildings, designed in the

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

popular architectural styles of the period, and were generally three to four stories tall, rectangular in shape, and contained one or two spacious flats per floor (Florek, *South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey*, p. 44).

The Saint Rita Apartments fits into the second phase of apartment building development in Detroit. It was constructed in the early part of the Detroit apartment building boom. Detroit experienced unprecedented growth and expansion in the 1910s and 20s. The population rose 113 percent from 1910 to 1920, then increased another sixty-three percent between 1920 and 1930 according to the United States census figures. Detroit increased dramatically in its land area, the physical size of the city more than tripling between 1910 and 1930, as newly platted and rapidly developing suburban areas were absorbed into the city. The influx of people created a housing shortage and increased the demand for apartment buildings and apartment hotels. There were 430 apartment buildings in 1910, 770 in 1915 and 1300 apartment buildings in 1920, according to the city directories (Mills, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit*, p. 12).

This area of Detroit, on both sides of Woodward north of Grand Boulevard, became home to new clusters of apartment development. More buildings appear to have been constructed west of Woodward, but the Saint Rita is just east of Woodward and fits into that pattern. "The apartment development to either side of Woodward between Grand Boulevard and Boston-Edison may have owed something to the enormous Highland Park Ford plant just to the north, although this area also had early access to the downtown via the Woodward and Oakland streetcar lines" (Mills, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit*, p. 15). A large number of Saint Rita residents had businesses and offices downtown, which supports this theory.

The Saint Rita fits into the definition of an apartment house, a purpose-built apartment with long-term leases and self-contained apartment units with their own private kitchens and bathrooms (Mills, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit*, p. 35). With separate living and dining rooms, bedroom, kitchen and bath, the Saint Rita falls somewhere between a higher end building which provided rooms within the units for staff, and the lower end two- or three-room units.

The building's design was certainly influenced by the City of Detroit's adoption of its first building code in 1911 and the 1915 modifications regarding "tenements." The new ordinances limited the lot coverage to seventy or eighty percent, and required front, rear and side setbacks. The ordinance regulated the size of open and closed light courts and required proper drainage and access for cleaning for them. Buildings over two stories were required to have two stairways as far apart as possible; the first floor entrance hall had to have a door opening directly to the public street; public entries, stairs, and halls had to be lit by windows; and a skylight with ventilator was required over each stairway. Every unit had to have at least two rooms plus the kitchen and bathroom, and the living rooms had to be over 140 square feet. Basements could not be occupied unless the ceiling was at least four feet six inches above the sidewalk (Mills, *Apartment Buildings in Detroit*, pp. 36-37). The Saint Rita incorporates most of these requirements. It has a shallow front lawn, and is set back from the west and rear lot lines. Because it is on an alley it is built to the east lot line. The front door accesses the public street, and the two stairways located at opposite ends of the building are lit by windows at every floor. The original front door had a full light to provide the required daylight to the entry lobby. The

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

living rooms are over 140 square feet in size and the raised basement allowed for units at that level



St. Rita Apartments, Detroit

Photograph of the Saint Rita from the March 1918 issue of The Valve World.

The Apartment Buildings in Detroit context study identifies narrow-fronted and deep rectangular-plan apartment buildings with cut-out light wells as a common apartment building form characteristic of Detroit in the early twentieth century and buildings of this form with varying shapes of projecting bays in front as a subset of the type (Mills, Apartment Buildings in Detroit, pp. 38-39). The study discusses the various architectural styles in which the city's apartment buildings were decorated at the time and the fact that for buildings of this type it is typical that the decoration was applied to only the front of the building, leaving the sides and rear much plainer anticipating that adjacent buildings and development would mostly conceal those elevations. The Saint Rita fits into this broad pattern of early twentieth-century Detroit apartment building design as a representative example of the type that retains good integrity despite its vandalized state.

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The Saint Rita's real distinction from an architectural standpoint is its outstanding display of Georgian Revival detail in the front, especially the upper facade. The Detroit apartment buildings context has the following to say about the city's early twentieth-century Colonial and Georgian Revival apartment buildings: "Colonial Revival/Georgian apartments in Detroit during this period were usually restrained in character; typical examples included a rusticated lower level, often rendered in brick with recessed courses to evoke joint lines, stone belt courses, symmetrical facades, and single-story entries. Single, horizontally and vertically aligned windows suggest a Georgian influence, while paired or triple windows are also common. The buildings are often decorated with stone accents" (Mills, Apartment Buildings in Detroit, p. 52). The examples described and illustrated on the following pages illustrate this typical "restrained" character. Among these typical Colonial/Georgian Revival buildings the Saint Rita stands out dramatically for its wealth of Georgian detailing – particularly the highly prominent, oversized segmental pediments over the projecting bays, but also the upper and lower cornices with the console brackets and decorative plaques, roofline balustrade, and the base with its broken pedimenttopped entry porch and horizontal strip accents across the façade breaking up the brickwork. Few if any other early twentieth-century Detroit apartment buildings in the Georgian Revival vein display such decorative flourishes.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Bjorn, Lars, with Jim Gallert. *Before Motown*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2005.

City of Detroit Building Permits for 35 Owen, Numbers 60, 181-A, 53369, 35616, and 90187.

City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board. Jam Handy – East Grand Boulevard Proposed Historic District, Final Report. 2015.

Detroit City Directory. Detroit: R.L. Polk & Company, 1916, 1917, 1920, 1922-23, 1925, 1930, 1941, 1950, 1953.

"Graft Arrests at Detroit Factory," *Automobile Topics*. March 23, 1912, page 295, accessed online through Google Books.

Elliot, Meagan, Daniel Feinglos, et. al. *History's Future in the North End*. Urban and Regional Planning Program, Taubman College of Architeture and Planning, University of Michigan, May 2013. Accessed on-line: https://taubmancollege.umich.edu/urbanplanning/students/student-work/master-urban-planning/historys-future-north-end

Wayne County, MI Saint Rita Apartments Name of Property County and State Florek, Marilyn, and Marleen Tulas. South Cass Corridor Intensive Level Survey. University Cultural Center Association, June, 2002. Gavrilovich, Peter, and Bill McGraw, ed. The Detroit Almanac, 300 Years of Life in the Motor City. Detroit: Detroit Free Press, 2000. Mills, Ruth. Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 1892-1970. Draft multiple property nomination form, National Register of Historic Places, 2016. "The Saint Rita, Detroit." *Valve World*. Crane Company, Chicago, March 1918, pages 99-100, accessed on-line through Google Books. United States Census, Detroit, Michigan, 1910, 1920, and 1930. Accessed through Ancestry.com **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:** X State Historic Preservation Office ____ Other State agency ____ Federal agency Local government ____ University Other Name of repository: **Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** N/A

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior

10. Geographical Data

NPS Form 10-900

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

	nt Rita Apartments		<u></u>		Wayne County, MI
m	ne of Property				County and State
	Acreage of Property18				
	Use either the UTM system of	or latitude/l	ongitude coordinate	s	
	Latitude/Longitude Coordi Datum if other than WGS84: (enter coordinates to 6 decim 1. Latitude: 42.225964		 Longitude:-83.405	150	
	2. Latitude:		Longitude:		
	3. Latitude:		Longitude:		
	4. Latitude:		Longitude:		
	Or UTM References Datum (indicated on USGS r	map): NAD 1	983		
	1. Zone:	Easting:		Northing:	
	2. Zone:	Easting:		Northing:	
	3. Zone:	Easting:		Northing:	
	4. Zone:	Easting:		Northing:	

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

The East 66.25 feet of Lot 1, Owen and Bartlett's Subdivision of the South 297 feet of the North 357 feet of the West 1880 54/100 feet of the ½ Section 44, 10,000 Acre Tract, according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 15 of Plats, Page 52, Wayne County Records.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Saint Rita Apartments	Wayne County, MI
Name of Property	County and State

The boundary is limited to the parcel currently and historically associated with the building.

11. Form Prepared By				
name/title: Kristine M. Kidorf				
organization: Kidorf Preservation Const	ulting			
street & number: 451 E. Ferry Street				
city or town: Detroit	state:	MI	zip code:	48202
e-mail_kristine@kidorfpreservationconsu	ulting.com	1		
telephone:_313-300-9376				
date: March 2016 – rough draft				
	mung.com	<u> </u>		

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.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Saint Rita Apartments

City or Vicinity: Detroit

Saint Rita Apartments

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

County: Wayne State: MI

Photographer: Kristine M. Kidorf

Date Photographed: May 16, 2016

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

1 of 10. Looking northwest at front façade and east elevation.

MI_Wayne County_St Rita Apts_0001

2 of 10_. Looking west on Owen Street with Saint Rita on right, Northern High School on left.

MI_Wayne County_St Rita Apts_0002

3 of 10. Looking northeast at front façade and west elevation.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 0003

4 of 10. Looking north at front façade.

MI_Wayne County_St Rita Apts_0004

5 of 10. Looking north at detail of entrance and front façade.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 0005

6 of 10. Looking south at rear elevation.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 0006

Date Photographed: January 20, 2016

7 of 10. Looking north in entry lobby.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 0007

8 of 10. Looking north in first floor corridor.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 00018

9 of 10. Looking south in living room of front unit.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 0009

10 of 10. Looking northwest in dining room of front unit.

MI Wayne County St Rita Apts 0010

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

Saint	Rita	Apartm	ents

Wayne County, MI

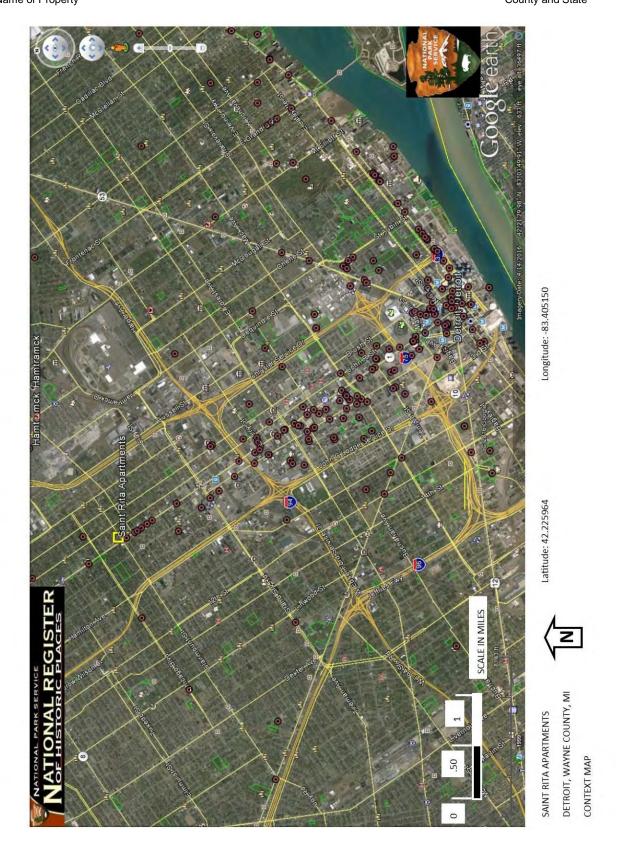
Name of Property

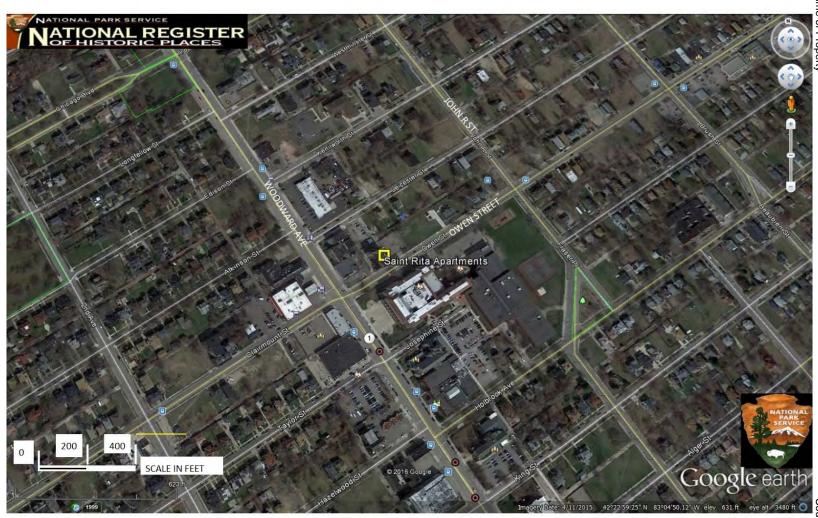
County and State

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.

Wayne County, MI
County and State





SAINT RITA APARTMENTS DETROIT, WAYNE COUNTY, MI LARGE SCALE MAP



Latitude: 42.225964

Longitude: -83.405150





















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:	Nomination				
Property Name:	Saint Rita Apartments				
Multiple Name:					
State & County:	MICHIGAN, Wayne				
Date Rece 1/27/20		g List: Date of 16th Day:	Date of 45th Day: 3/13/2017	Date of Weekly List: 3/22/2017	
Reference number:	SG100000749				
Nominator:	State				
Reason For Review	:				
X Accept	Return	Reject 3/1 :	3/2017 Date		
Abstract/Summary Comments:	Meets Registration Requi	irements			
Recommendation/ Criteria					
Reviewer Edson	Beall	Discipline	Historian		
Telephone		Date			
DOCUMENTATION	: see attached comme	nts : No see attached S	SLR : No		

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



RICK SNYDER GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

KEVIN ELSENHEIMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



January 19, 2017

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief National Register of Historic Places National Park Service 1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th Floor Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the **Saint Rita Apartments** to the National Register of Historic Places. We enclose a copy of our notification and request for comments regarding this nomination to the city of Detroit, a Certified Local Government. At the time of this submission our office has not received a response. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. No written comments concerning this nomination were submitted to us prior to our forwarding this nomination to you.

Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Robert O. Christensen, National Register coordinator, at (517) 335-2719 or christensenr@michigan.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway

State Historic Preservation Officer





RICK SNYDER GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN MICHIGAN STATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

KEVIN ELSENHEIMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 19, 2016

Ms. Janese Chapman Mr. Tim Boscarino Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Suite 218 2 Woodward Avenue Detroit, MI 48226

Dear Ms. Chapman/Mr. Boscarino:

Attached is a National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the St. Rita Apartments. In accordance with our Certification Agreement with the city, we request the city's review of this nomination at the earliest available meeting of the Historic Designation Advisory Board. To provide records of the city's reviews of these nominations, please complete and return to us the enclosed "Certified Local Government National Register Nomination Report Form" for each nomination.

Please contact Robert Christensen, national register coordinator, by phone at 517/335-2719 or by email at christensenr@michigan.gov if you have questions.

Sincerely yours,

Brian D. Conway State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures BDC:roc



Certified Local Government National Register Nomination Review Report

Michigan State Housing Development Authority State Historic Preservation Office

Name of Property: Saint Rita Apartments		
Address: 35 Owen Street, Detroit		
Owner: Ryan Lepper, Saint Rita Apartments LDH		8201-2722
Date completed nomination approved by the SHPO	O: July 19, 2016	
******************	*********	*****
The CLG agrees with the SHPO to expedite the re	view period for this nomination	n.
YES (date of agreement)	NO	
(date of agreement)		
Signature of CLG Commission Chairperson	Date	
Signature of Elected Chief Official ************************************	Date *********	*****
Date(s) of commission meeting(s) when nomination	on was reviewed;	
Date of written notice to property owner of comm	ission meeting:	
The CLG provided the following opportunities for nomination:	public participation in the rev	iew of this
Were any written comments received by the CLG (Please submit copies with this report.)	? YES NO	
Was the nomination form distributed to CLG Com-	mission members? YES	NO
Was a site visit made to the property by CLG Con If yes, when?	nmission members? YES	NO
Did the CLG seek assistance of the Michigan Hist this property for the National Register? YES		eligibility of
VERIFICATION of Professional Qualifications of Appendix 1, of Michigan's Certified Local Govern		vith 36 CFR 61,

List those commission members who meet the 36 CFR 61 qualifications required to review this type of resource.

Commission Member	Professional Qualifications
1,	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
Was an outside consultant used? YES	NO
If yes, provide the name and list the 36 CFR 61	qualifications the person meets:
The CLG Commission finds that the property r significance:	neets the following national register criteria of
The CLG Commission finds that the property r YES NO	neets the national register standards of integrity.
Recommendation of CLG Commission:	
APPROVAL(specify reasons on a separate	sheet of paper)
Signature of Chief Elected Official	Date
Date of transmittal of this report to MHC/SHP	0
Date of receipt of this report by MHC/SHPO	