

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED SEP 13 1984  
DATE ENTERED OCT 26 1984

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Francovich House

AND/OR COMMON

Francovich House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

557 Washington St.

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Reno

n/a VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Nevada

CODE

32

COUNTY

Washoe

CODE

031

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- n/a BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Sam and Jeff Francovich

STREET & NUMBER

421 South Center

CITY, TOWN

Reno

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Nevada 89501

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Washoe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

75 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Reno

STATE

Nevada

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Reno Architectural Survey, Phase II has this property been determined

DATE

June 1983

eligible? Yes  No

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

City of Reno Community Development Department

CITY, TOWN

Reno

STATE

Nevada

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE <u>October 1983</u>

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

### Summary

The Francovich House (1899-1900) is a two-story, brick, vernacular structure, reflecting Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style influences. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 25, 1983, and delisted when it was moved in October of 1983 to prevent its destruction. The building served as a residence until its move. It now stands empty, though plans call for converting it into professional offices. The house is in fair condition.

### Site

Originally, the structure stood near an alley on a good sized city lot facing Ralston Street. It was separated from the sidewalk by an iron fence set into a brick base with newer brick piers. This fence postdated the house considerably. The home stood in a neighborhood composed largely of wood frame nineteenth-century houses of slightly smaller in scale. The Francovich House was the largest and most substantial structure in its neighborhood. The house was moved in October of 1983 to prevent its destruction. The new site is only three blocks away from the old site. The new neighborhood environment is similar in that it is primarily a residential neighborhood, with houses dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Surrounding structures are both brick and wood frame. Even in this new location the Francovich House continues to be the most substantial structure in the neighborhood.

### Description of Exterior

The Francovich House is a two-story, brick, vernacular structure, reflecting Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style influences. Constructed between 1899 and 1900, the structure is rectangular in form with a polygonal tower projecting from one corner of the facade. The tower is topped with a polygonal peaked roof ornamented with a pointed finial. The roof over the main structure is pyramid in shape, intersected by the large corner tower roof form. Roof eaves overhang the building and are ornamented with brackets. Windows are double-hung, one large pane over one, with cast concrete sills. The house originally rested on a granite block foundation. After its move in October of 1983, the house was placed on a new cinder block foundation, a requirement of city code. This cinderblock foundation is to be faced by granite, so that it retains its original appearance.

A porch with a gable roof above the entrance and supported by simple turned Tuscan columns, projects from the facade. A decorative iron balustrade extends between the columns, and wooden brackets ornament the porch eaves. Attached to the rear of the building is a one-story hipped roof extension, which is essentially a large enclosed porch.

### Description of Interior

On the interior of the structure, both the living room at the first story level and the master bedroom at the second story level, are located in the tower portion of the building. There are five fireplaces and five bedrooms, a large dining room, and a screened-in porch off of the large kitchen. The main ceiling is 11 feet high and all of the doors are eight feet tall, made of mahogany diamond-cut wood with the grain painted back in.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1899-1900

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Eli Francovich

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Summary

This turn of the century structure is an unusual and interesting vernacular Queen Anne design that utilizes masonry to express a building form more commonly expressed in wood. The structure also is significant due to its association with the Francovichs, an important Reno family. The Francovich family continues to own this building. The Francovich House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 25, 1983, and was delisted when it was moved in October of 1983 to prevent its destruction.

### Architectural Significance

This structure utilizes the polygonal tower motif that rather traditionally characterizes Queen Anne styling. It also reflects elements of the Colonial Revival style in the porch design. These stylistic elements are sometimes found executed in masonry on the east coast, in residential as well as commercial and public buildings. However, when these styles appear in the west, in residential work particularly, they are generally executed in wood.

Before 1900, most revival styles in Reno followed western stylistic conventions dictated by the use of wood as the primary building material. Thus, the extant intact examples of the Queen Anne Revival style in Reno (and there are few) closely echoed these traditions in their massing and highly textured detailing.

Around 1900, the situation in Reno was dramatically altered. At that time, the Reno Pressed Brick Works came into being and for several decades dominated the building materials market in the western part of Nevada. It is after this date that there appears increasing numbers of revival-styled domestic and commercial architecture executed in brick. The Francovich House is the earliest and most intact domestic example of this early change in the use of building materials traditionally associated with the Queen Anne style.

In the earliest examples of brick residential buildings in Reno, massing remained consistent with the style but detailing was severely limited. Wood still was used as classical detailing for porches, entablatures, and gable projections, but the wall plane was essentially flattened and embellishment became totally reliant on visual effects created by changing the configuration of the brick placement. As time passed, the use of brick in Craftsman and other Bungalow-inspired styles of the late teens and early twenties, and in Period Revival styles in the twenties and thirties, became endemic to Reno.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview: Sam Francovich, Jr., attorney  
 Reno City Directories  
 Sanborn Insurance Maps for Reno; 1899, 1904  
 Founder's Title Company of Nevada, Title and Deed Records

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1 1</u>	<u>2 5 6 3 4 0</u>	<u>4 3 7 9 3 4 0</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 6 and 7 of Western Addition, Reno, Nevada. Deed Book 117.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Paula Boghosian/revised by Pat Lawrence-Dietz

June 1982/December 1983

ORGANIZATION

Historical Environment Consultants/Div. of Historic Preservation  
 and Archeology

DATE (916) 446-2447  
 (702) 885-5138

STREET & NUMBER

2306 J Street, Penthouse/201 S. Fall Street

TELEPHONE

California/Nevada

CITY OR TOWN

Sacramento/Carson City

STATE

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Ronald M. Jones*

TITLE

*Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer*

DATE

*6 Sept, '84*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Bob Gussner*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

*10/26/84*

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

FRANCOVICH HOUSE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET DESCRIPTION      ITEM NUMBER 7      PAGE 1

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Alterations

Both the front and rear porch were affected by the three block move. The front porch was not moved with the house as its concrete foundation made this move prohibitive. The roof of the rear porch was moved with the house, though its walls were dismantled. Both porches will be rebuilt to resemble their original appearance as closely as possible.

FRANCOVICH HOUSE  
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

The Francovich House can be seen as the precursor of an interesting regional manifestation of a series of stylistic alterations brought about by the availability of readily accessible, inexpensive building materials that historically had not been associated with the Queen Anne and other stylistic modes.

Associated with Significant Persons

The Francovich House was constructed between 1899 and 1900 by a Yugoslavian immigrant family, the Francovichs. The first member of this family to come to Nevada was Eli Francovich. He travelled to Virginia City, Nevada, where he worked in the mines, leaving his wife and son behind in Yugoslavia. In 1860 Eli moved from Virginia City to Reno where he opened a saloon on the corner of Commercial Row and Virginia Street called the Old Wine House. It was eventually expanded to include a restaurant and gambling facility, and then became a restaurant/bar. The Old Wine House was the first three-story gambling hall in Nevada.

After opening his business in Reno, Eli Francovich sent for his wife and son Spiro. Spiro worked for his father's business for a while, and then returned to Yugoslavia to marry. Spiro returned to Reno with his wife and together they raised a family of seven children. Their first family home, now gone, was on Virginia Street. When it became too small for Spiro's seven children, the brick Queen Anne was built. It is unclear whether individually Eli or Spiro Francovich built the house, or whether they built it together. Many members of the Francovich family still reside in Reno.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Francovich House

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE One

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100' of Lot 1 and the northwest 25.5 X 100' of Lot 2. The structure is on its original site.

