

SG 2850

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Hamilton Apartments
Other name/site number: NA
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 2837 Hemphill Street
City or town: Fort Worth State: Texas County: Tarrant
Not for publication: Vicinity: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
(nomination request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my
opinion, the property (meets does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 7/18/18
Signature of certifying official / Title
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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]
Signature of the Keeper

8/29/2018
Date of Action

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

Category of Property

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
2	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Domestic/ multiple dwelling = Apartments

Current Functions: Vacant, Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival

Principal Exterior Materials: Brick walls, concrete foundation, cast stone window and door trim

Narrative Description (see continuation pages 7 through 10)

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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: NA

Areas of Significance: Community Planning and Development; Architecture

Period of Significance: 1927

Significant Dates: 1927

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 11 through 15)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuations sheet 16-17)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. (*Approved 11-9-2015*)
- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 32.70981° Longitude: -97.3312°

Verbal Boundary Description: South Hemphill Heights Addition, Block 15, Lots 10, 11 & 12

Boundary Justification: These are the lots historically associated with the nominated building.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: James H. Johnson, Consultant
Organization: Landmark Renewal
Street & number: 3224 Rogers Ave.
City or Town: Fort Worth State: TX Zip Code: 76109
Email: jimjohnson@swbell.net
Telephone: 817-773-0729
Date: February 14, 2018

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet 18-19)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 20-24)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 25-32)

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photograph Log

Hamilton Apartments
Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 1

West façade (left) and south portico (far right), camera facing east northeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Photo 2

West elevation and interior of the courtyard, camera facing east.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Photo 3

Courtyard south elevation (left), west elevation (center) and north elevation (right), camera facing east.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 4

West façade (left and right) and courtyard north elevation (middle), camera facing southeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 5

Courtyard north elevation, camera facing southeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 6

Courtyard south elevation, camera facing northeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 7

West façade (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing north northeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 8

East elevation, camera facing southwest.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 9

West façade (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing northeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018

Photo 10

Second floor south rear apartment living room, camera facing east northeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Photo 11

Second floor north rear apartment living room, camera facing east.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 12

Second floor south front apartment living room, camera facing southwest.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Photo 13

First floor south front apartment bedroom, camera facing southeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Photo 14

Low rock wall (foreground and background) outlining green space, camera facing east northeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

Photo 15

Gateway entrance to neighborhood in property's south right-of-way, camera facing west.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015

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.

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Description

The Hamilton Apartments at 2837 Hemphill Street, Fort Worth, Texas, is a red brick two-story building located on lots 10, 11 and 12 of Block 15 of the South Hemphill Heights Addition. The building measures approximately 79 feet long by 75 feet wide, with seven-foot protrusions on each side for attached two-story gabled porticos and a center front courtyard measuring 22 feet wide and 50.5 feet deep. The building contains approximately 10,000 square feet and is built on a pier and beam foundation. The courtyard opens to a small lawn fronting Hemphill Street. The style is predominately Colonial Revival, with flat-topped hipped roofs clad in green tile, and small gabled dormers with attic vents (Photograph 1). Single, paired and triple six-over-one rectangular windows trimmed with cast stone are set at regular intervals. Situated at the northeast corner of Hemphill Street and West Lowden Street in the Jennings-May-St. Louis neighborhood, the apartment building occupies the northern two lots, with the southern lot devoted to a large lawn outlined by a low L-shaped rock wall extending from the southern edge of the property toward the back edge of the building. The building is undergoing a certified historic tax credit rehabilitation, bringing it from a long vacant and rough condition to functional and habitable apartments. There have been no major exterior alterations. The interior had become highly dilapidated with few plumbing or light fixtures remaining and pervasive damage to floors, walls and ceilings due to vandalism and water infiltration. Significant interior features, such as plaster gas fireplace mantles, remain intact and are being reused in the renovation. The building will maintain its historic integrity throughout the renovation.

The Hamilton Apartments is in a largely residential area along a busy traffic corridor that transitioned partially to commercial uses over the past four decades. The corridor was in decline over this period, evidenced by an increase in loitering, vagrancy, and perceptions of widespread crime such as drug dealing and prostitution. These realities and perceptions led neighborhood leaders and the City of Fort Worth to rezone many of the residential properties to commercial use in 2008-2009 to undercut slumlords who exploited the residents in these old structures. A consequence of this action was to make apartment houses like the Hamilton obsolete, since they could no longer be legally used for their intended function. The building sat vacant for more than 20 years.

In recent years, the Hemphill Street corridor has experienced increased investment due to gentrification in the Near Southside mixed use district, containing the city's primary hospitals, and resurgent nearby central city neighborhoods. Hemphill Street borders the Fairmount-Southside Historic District and contains several buildings designated with official State of Texas Historical Markers near the Hamilton Apartments: the east entrance to Chase Court in the 1700 block; Hope Works (Hemphill Presbyterian Church) at 1701; Southside Church of Christ at 2101; the Bastion (The Edna Gladney Home) at 2110; and the William Reeves House at 2200 (Tarrant County 2016). The Jennings-May-St. Louis neighborhood bordering Hemphill Street on the east is made up of early twentieth century houses that closely resemble those in the Fairmount neighborhood to the west. The area largely maintains its historic character even though the adjacent old homes to the north and across the street to the west have partially been converted to commercial uses. A vacant lot is directly across Hemphill Street, and two late 20th century retail strip centers occupy a portion of the block to the south on the west side of the street and north of the house adjacent to the apartment building. The large houses to the south and behind the property to the east maintain their residential character and use. Coordinated enforcement efforts against crime and building neglect, along with appropriate rezoning and the renovation of nearby properties, have recently created an improved environment on Hemphill Street. Four homes across the street in the 2800 block have been renovated in the past two years, and renovation activity is ongoing up and down the Hemphill corridor.

Exterior Features

The Hamilton Apartments building is configured in a U shape around a courtyard opening onto Hemphill Street (Figure 1). The courtyard originally contained a concrete walkway leading to each of three front entrances, one on

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

each side of the U and one in the center (Photograph 2), and then around the sides to the back of the building. The apartment building (labeled “1” in Figure 1) occupies most of the northern two thirds of the property. The southern third of the property contains a grassy area with large trees outlined by a low, L-shaped rock wall (labeled “4” in Figure 1). Directly behind the wall is a driveway leading to the historical parking location. A small non-contributing two-story wood frame garage apartment and attached shed (labeled “3” in Figure 1) at the rear of the property were demolished in 2016, as was another non-contributing shed (labeled “2” in Figure 1). A new compatible garage apartment is planned for the site of the old one.

The renovated apartment building will contain eight apartments, modified from the original plan of 12 units in a symmetrical pattern of three apartments (labeled A, B and C in Figures 2 and 3) arranged in a mirror image on the north and south wings on each floor. The new plan (Figures 5 and 6) preserves all window and exterior door locations, along with interior stairs and apartment front door locations as required for eight units. Originally, back entrances to each apartment were accessed from the two-story gabled porticos on the north and south sides of the building and an interior staircase on the east side, at the rear of the building. The renovation plan removes these staircases, creating porches for the four front units and, at the rear, a vestibule on the ground floor with a new basement staircase, and an open patio on the second floor. The historical rear building entrance is accessed via a new landing and shared outdoor patio. Opposite this rear entrance, the original interior staircase accessed from the front of the building gets a restored lobby and leads to the upstairs apartments. This lobby connects through a doorway with the ground floor vestibule and rear building entrance.

The building has a pier and beam foundation with a concrete wall. Repairs have been made to the north foundation wall to improve structural integrity. The brick veneer blends alternating colors of dark red, brown and grey. Windows and doorways are trimmed with white cast stone and courses of vertical brick. While most of the original exterior doors are missing and all windows have varying degrees of damage, the renovation will repair or restore them using like materials and identical profiles.

Tiled pediments appear above the two opposing courtyard entrances, and a second story pediment overhangs the central courtyard entrance (Photograph 3). None of the pediments have columns. The overhang contains the street address just above the doorway, and above the address is a rectangular window frame that previously contained an inappropriate arched divided light window. This was replaced by a rectangular double divided light window. There are no pediments above the two side portico entries or the rear entry.

The building’s exterior gives a Colonial Revival appearance. The flat-topped hipped roof was clad in green tile with peeling red paint. The paint was applied since the historic resources survey. As removal of the paint was impossible without destroying the surface of the tile, the renovation uses primarily new roof tiles with a near identical profile and color as the originals. Some original tiles are used on select dormers and gables. Ten small gabled dormers with attic vents appear at regular intervals around the building: on the front courtyard façade, and on each leg of the U; one on each side of the interior courtyard; two on each side of the building; and two on the rear façade. Four short brick chimneys, one on each main side and two in the rear on the flat portion of the roof, provide venting for plumbing fixtures. A gutter system encircles the building at the roofline with downspouts and drains at intervals.

In addition to the three doorways at the courtyard entrances and the rear door, there are two doorways, facing the front and rear of the building, in each of the two porticos, for a total of eight. Where doors are missing, new ones with the same profile of the historic doors will be installed during the renovation.

Excluding the replacement for the solitary arched window above the front entrance, all windows visible from the exterior of the building are six panes over one of five repeating types: 14 small single windows; 20 large single windows; four small double windows; 30 large double windows; and 15 large triple windows. The replacement

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

window is a large double window. The front façade (west side of the building, exclusive of the courtyard) contains six large single windows on each end of the U shape (Photograph 4). The front-facing courtyard façade has five large double windows including the replaced window (Photograph 5). Each courtyard side façade has four large triple windows and three large double windows (Photographs 5 and 6). Each north and south building side façade, including portico, has three large triple windows, eight large double windows, and seven small single windows (Photograph 7). The rear façade has one large triple window, four large double windows, four small double windows, and eight large single windows (Photograph 8). Repairs have been made where possible; otherwise new windows of the same profile and materials were installed.

Exterior decoration is minimal. Windows and doors are marked by contrasting white cast stone sills and are capped by cast stone squares in the upper corners with bricks set vertically in between (Photograph 9). The three front entries in the courtyard are remarkable for the pediments on each side and the pedimented overhang in the center (Photograph 3). The two side porticos provide variation in the long side building facades, visually breaking up the long spans (Photograph 7).

It is not known whether the low rock wall outlining the grassy area south of the building is original. However, its appearance and construction indicate longevity and weathering (Photograph 14). It functions, along its eastern portion, to denote the driveway to the rear parking area, and along its southern portion, to denote the property line along Lowden Street. Based on these functions, the rock wall is a contributing feature of the property, as it outlines the large grassy area south of the apartment building. Adjacent to the property near the intersection of Hemphill and Lowden Streets is a red brick gateway structure signaling the primary entrance to the Jennings-May-St. Louis neighborhood (Photograph 15). According to neighborhood sources, this and similar structures throughout the neighborhood were built in the late 1990s. This element is not a feature of the property, despite its similar materials and color.

Three non-contributing structures including a garage apartment were removed prior to renovation. In city directories from 1926 forward, there is no rear apartment listed until 1941. County tax records indicate that the garage apartment was built in 1940, after the period of significance.

A structure in the parking area at the rear of the property represented on the Sanborn map dated April 1925¹ (Figure 4) no longer exists. Like the non-contributing garage apartment which is also represented on that map, this structure was likely built after the period of significance and added to the Sanborn map on a correction slip later. It appears to have been a wide garage or carport extending from the back of the garage apartment to the north property line. There is no evidence of any other major alterations or changes to the property.

Interior Features

The apartment units mix common materials and trim of early twentieth century residential buildings—wood flooring, plaster walls, hexagonal tiled bathroom floors, and picture frame moldings around windows, doors and ceilings—with unusual features, such as ornate plaster gas fireplace mantles, Shaker style cabinet doors, and a compact central hallway with doorways into each room of the apartment. Embellishments are few, with the most noteworthy being the decorative plaster fireplace mantle with gas connection in the living room of each unit. The mantle design incorporates classically inspired details: an arched recess, above which is a raised shield pattern, flanked by vertical detailing and capped with an ornate frieze board supporting the mantle (Photograph 10). The element creates an air of formality in a room meant for welcoming visitors. In one of the units, the mantle was painted red with white highlights, creating a striking visual centerpiece (Photograph 11). In the other units, mantles were painted white. The

¹ The Sanborn map is from <http://sanborn.umi.com/tx/8530/dateid-000009.htm?CCSI=362n>. Selected city is Ft. Worth[Tarrant Co]. Selected Date is 1910-1951*. Selected volume is vol. 1, 1910-Jan. 1951. The sheet is numbered 81.

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

renovation plan reuses the mantles in similar locations in the redesigned apartment units.

As originally built, every apartment's front door opened to the living room and the back door opened to the kitchen. Each of the three original floor plans had in common a compact central hallway opening into every room in the apartment (Photograph 12): living room, kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, plus in apartment plan A, a second bedroom, and in plan C, a dining room. The only exception is plan C where the kitchen was accessed through what was probably intended to be a dining room. The renovation reconfigures the interior space into eight larger, more open units (Figures 5 and 6). Existing demising walls are retained to the extent possible to maintain integrity of design and feeling. The interior perimeter of the building is restored to original, and all new elements define spaces with minimal if any connection to the perimeter walls, providing a clear distinction between old and new. The original compact interior stairwells built in a rectangular spiral pattern are maintained, and a fourth one added. There are no long corridors in the building, neither in the original plan nor planned in the renovation.

The units' simple moldings around doors and ceilings (Photograph 13) are maintained in the renovation. All base, casing and crown moldings were reused. Oak flooring was reused where possible and replaced as necessary (due to significant water damage) with identical board patterns. Modern heating and air conditioning has been added with ducts installed in the basement for ground floor units and in the attic for second floor units. Condensing units are placed outside. Common areas have mini split systems.

Analysis of Historic Integrity

Despite decades of change to the neighborhood, the buildings nearest the Hamilton Apartments are the same as in the late 1920s, and the broader area retains much of its historic character. Exterior alterations, such as red paint on roof tiles and the added arched window above the main entry, were minor and were reversed during renovation. The low rock wall outlining the south lawn remains, and parking is in its historic location at the rear of the property. The property retains its integrity of location, design and setting.

The Hamilton Apartments has been vacant for several years, leading to deterioration from vandalism, neglect, disuse and lack of maintenance. Interior damage resulting from these factors was evident in water-stained walls, missing and worn windows, buckled flooring, peeling and broken plaster, and graffiti. Bathroom fixtures and most kitchen cabinets and fixtures were missing prior to renovation. Despite the damage, the renovation assures that the building retains its fundamental character. New windows in the style and profile of the historical windows are used and doors are repaired or replaced with like styles and materials. Floors and walls are repaired, and the simple moldings and cabinets that aptly illustrate the flavor that the apartment building originally possessed are reused or replaced in a similar style. The distinctive plaster gas fireplace mantles are being reused in appropriate locations in the reconfigured units. Thus, the building retains its integrity in materials, workmanship and feeling.

The property is returning to its intended use in a functional manner, and it will look, feel and function as it did in the late 1920s and 1930s so that its integrity of association is restored. The sensitive restoration currently underway will bring this long vacant landmark back to life and rejuvenate the neighborhood. Listing the Hamilton Apartments on the National Register will recognize the distinctive character of the property and development trends of the time of which it was an integral part.

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Hamilton Apartments at 2837 Hemphill Street in Fort Worth, Texas were built in 1927 by real estate investor William F. Hamilton during an economic boom that brought rapid population growth and accelerating construction of houses and commercial buildings. Constructed along a streetcar line, the building embodies the architectural style of the early twentieth century courtyard apartment. The Hamilton Apartments is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, in the Community Planning and Development area of significance, for its role in the 1920s residential building boom in Fort Worth prior to the Great Depression, reflecting predominant national trends. The Hamilton Apartments is significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a representative of the courtyard style of apartment buildings constructed in residential areas and along thoroughfares on the Southside of Fort Worth, as well as an uncommon local example of the Colonial Revival style applied to a non-institutional building.

William F. Hamilton, developer of the Hamilton Apartments, was born in 1864 in Alabama and settled in 1882 in Coryell County, Texas where he “became one of the leading men of that part of the state” (Paddock 1922, III, 204-205). He moved to the city of Polytechnic in 1904 and immediately began a career in real estate investment and development. From then until 1928, he made 34 separate real estate purchases in Tarrant County, at first in the Polytechnic Heights Addition, then moving on to the Boaz-Dillow, J.C. Ryan South, A. A. Pope/J. L. Purvis Survey, P. H. Ahler Survey, S. Gray Survey, McAnulty-Nye/Field Welch, Cheltenham, Rosedale, Van Zandt, University Place, South Hemphill Heights, and Roy T. Denman/Cobb Orchard Additions.

Hamilton was also active in Dallas County real estate. He appears as a co-founder of Walker & Cope Investment Company of Dallas, capitalized at \$48,000, in February 1912 (United States Corporation Bureau 1912, 60). This firm is mentioned on Murphy & Bolanz maps (1880-1920) as developers of the Country Home Addition around Mt. Vernon Ave. and Mockingbird Lane near Southern Methodist University (maps 305-1 and 305-25). In 1916 he co-founded and was a director of Texhoma Oil and Refining Company, which by 1920 owned “a large refinery, with pipe lines, storage, tank car lines and valuable producing properties” (Paddock 1922, III, 205).

According to city directories, as late as 1914, while living at 3205 G Ave. in Polytechnic Heights, he worked as a clerk for grocer S. S. Dillow. In 1921 Hamilton was elected mayor of Polytechnic, a suburb of Fort Worth, and his administration’s first act was an austerity measure “to reduce salaries and overhead running expenses,” including pay for mayor and city commissioners from \$25 to \$5 per month (City of Polytechnic, 273-274). Serving less than a year in office, Mayor Hamilton presided over his city’s annexation by Fort Worth by way of a citizen petition. “Residents of Annexed City Rejoice When Suburb Is Officially Admitted to Municipal ‘Family’ of Fort Worth,” announced the January 31, 1922 Fort Worth Star-Telegram (Nichols). That same year, Riverside, Diamond Hill, Washington Heights, Rosen Heights, Arlington Heights, Van Zandt, South Fort Worth, Mistletoe Heights and the T.C.U. addition “became part of Greater Fort Worth,” doubling the city’s area and increasing its population by an estimated 40,000 – 50,000 people (Nichols).

In 1925 Hamilton was living at 2141 Pembroke in the exclusive Berkeley Place neighborhood of Fort Worth, but shortly after departed the city, according to city directories. He lived in the Highland Park area of Dallas from 1933 until his death in 1954. Besides his real estate dealings in Fort Worth, he also invested in commercial property in Dallas, owned a house in McAllen, and had extensive real estate holdings in the Rio Grande Valley, according to an obituary in the Dallas Morning News titled, “Real Estate Investor, W. F. Hamilton, 90, Dies” (August 27, 1954, p. 5).

Criterion A Significance

The 1920s saw Fort Worth’s population growth accelerate from a 45.2% rate in the 1910s to a torrid 53.5% rate between the 1920 and 1930 censuses. Growth was fueled by the extension of the city’s transportation network, meat

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

packing plants, grain mills and elevators, brick makers, automobile manufacturers and suppliers, and many other industries (Paddock 1922, II, 677-679). Oil discoveries in Burkburnett, Ranger, Breckenridge and other places west of Fort Worth led to the establishment of 11 refineries in the city at the start of the decade (Paddock 1922, II, 672). While the oil boom would last only until the middle of the decade, the rest of the local economy remained strong until the onset of the Great Depression.

Keeping up with population growth required a substantial increase in the city’s housing stock, including multifamily structures like the Hamilton Apartments. Located along a main trolley line, the building was nestled among large houses, slightly older apartments and the occasional corner grocer or gas station on Hemphill Street and in adjacent neighborhoods to the east and west.

The Depression brought an abrupt end to Fort Worth’s building boom of the late 1920s and brought social and economic dislocation as elsewhere in the country. Migration to Texas and urbanization within the state “slowed...to a crawl” (Campbell 2003, 361). By 1931, the drop in construction had created 18,000 unemployed in Dallas, while “thousands of unemployed, homeless ‘tramps’ began to roam the countryside and show up around the state’s largest cities.... Unemployment stood at near catastrophic levels throughout the thirties” (Campbell 2003, 378). Fort Worth’s population grew only 8.7% from 1930 to 1940, which was reflected in the slowdown in construction.

Construction spending dropped precipitously after 1930. Table 1 shows the number of buildings covered by permits issued for new construction and repairs, and their dollar value, for Fort Worth during the 1920s and 1930s.

Table 1. Building Permits Issued in Fort Worth, TX, 1920-1939

Year	Number of Buildings	Proposed Cost of Buildings	Year	Number of Buildings	Proposed Cost of Buildings
1920	2,234	\$10,373,000	1930	2,616	\$10,463,000
1921	2,206	\$4,486,000	1931	1,923	\$6,345,000
1922	2,517	\$7,020,000	1932	1,325	\$1,432,000
1923	2,978	\$8,479,000	1933	922	\$2,626,000
1924	2,464	\$11,031,000	1934	903	\$1,405,000
1925	2,291	\$8,434,000	1935	1,224	\$3,312,000
1926	4,271	\$19,402,000	1936	2,010	\$8,534,000
1927	4,812	\$28,484,000	1937	1,918	\$7,105,000
1928	4,560	\$11,544,000	1938	2,481	\$6,349,000
1929	3,237	\$11,262,000	1939	3,043	\$7,304,000

Source: Compiled from the Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1925-1940

Construction activity remained strong throughout the 1920s, peaked in 1927 when the Hamilton Apartments was built, slowed and then dropped sharply after 1931. From 1930 to 1932, construction spending dropped 86% with only a partial recovery after 1934.

The recovery in construction was tied to New Deal programs that benefited Fort Worth. Two such programs, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA), spent \$15 million on a variety of Fort Worth projects, including a complete modernization of the entire school system. The PWA built 13 new schools, remodeled and made additions onto 13 more, and landscaped 54 of the existing 63 school grounds (Procter 2010). The agencies also funded “red-brick roads, ...the 12,000-seat concrete high school stadium named Farrington Field, Will Rogers Memorial Coliseum and Auditorium, John Peter Smith City-County Hospital, a new city hall and jail, a new public library, and the famous Fort Worth Rose Garden” (Procter 2010).

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

The chronic unemployment and rental vacancy of the Depression caused dislocations for builders and landlords alike, as was reflected in the ownership history of the Hamilton Apartments. Table 2 shows the chain of title for the property from 1926 to 1939.

Table 2. Warranty Deed Transactions, 2837 Hemphill Street, 1926-1939

Seller	Buyer	Deed Date	Vol, Page	Stated Price
Board of Home Missions of the Methodist Protestant Church, Pittsburgh	W. F. Hamilton	11/26/1926	948, 34	\$7,000 in cash
W. F. Hamilton & Sarah J. Hamilton	R. C. Sweeney & C. M. Butcher	10/1/1928	1070, 181	\$25,000 cash, \$21,500 vendor note, subject to \$17,000 mortgage
C. M. & Josie V. Butcher	R. C. Sweeney	3/16/1932	1171, 241	\$10 & "other valuable consideration" all cash
R. C. Sweeney & Carrie Geneva Sweeney	R. A. Stuart	11/1/1939	1415, 623	\$40,500 in cash and notes

Source: Tarrant County Deed Records, County Clerk's Office

Within a two-year period, Hamilton purchased the property, built the apartments at the peak of the local construction boom, fully leased it by the time of the 1927 city directory, and sold the property to Charles M. Butcher and Robert C. Sweeney, partners in a general contracting firm with a long and illustrious history in Fort Worth. The total sale price, including cash, seller note and existing mortgage, was \$63,500. A mere three and a half years later in 1932, with construction spending down 95% from its 1927 peak, Butcher relinquished his half interest in not just this, but also three other jointly owned properties, to Sweeney in a transaction priced in total at "\$10 and other valuable considerations, all cash."

Of the 12 units in the Hamilton Apartments, five were listed as vacant in the 1931 city directory. The following year, eight units were vacant. Given the high 1928 purchase price, substantial debt on the property and 67% vacancy rate, the apartment building was doubtless bleeding red ink and may well have been worthless by 1932. By the time of the 1936-37 city directory, only two units were vacant, and by 1938-39, all units were occupied and nearly all residents had telephones, an urban middle-class convenience when only 35% of U.S. households had them (Riordan 2002, 3). This directory also lists, for the first time, an onsite manager for the Hamilton Apartments: Mrs. Kate Kimmel in Apt. H, telephone 4-5532. Sweeney sold the property in late 1939 to former state senator and Tarrant County District Attorney Robert A. Stuart, for \$40,500, 36% below the 1928 sale price. The Depression had inflicted lasting damage on the value of the Hamilton Apartments, even though by then it was fully occupied.

Built at the zenith of Fort Worth's 1920s building boom, the Hamilton Apartments vividly illustrates the city's dramatic growth and ensuing crash, meriting its listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its reflection of national trends of the pre-Depression economic boom.

Criterion C Significance

The Colonial Revival-style Hamilton Apartments is both an unusual design and an example possessing the distinctive characteristics of early 20th century U-plan courtyard apartment building, meriting its listing on the National Register in the area of Architecture.

As Fort Worth's near Southside experienced rapid population growth due to meat-packing and other industries, the

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

predominant residential house style prior to the mid-1920s was the rectangular bungalow, typically made of brick after World War I in reflection of the prosperity of the oil boom (Historic Preservation Council 1986, 6). Apartments of the era reflected this basic pattern, with varying stylistic embellishments and brick colors. While larger single-family houses featured “picturesque massing with staggered plans and varied roof forms,” apartment houses tended toward simple designs with historicist eclecticism, such as the Mediterranean or Spanish Colonial Revival style featuring a tiled roof like that of the Hamilton Apartments (Historic Preservation Council 1986, 6-7). Apartments from the teens typically were a “two- or three-story brick structure with blocky massing,” while those built from the mid-1920s onward were often “mirror-image two-story buildings facing a central courtyard, typically designed in the Tudor Revival style” (Historic Preservation Council 1986, 7). The Hamilton fit the general courtyard apartment pattern of the times, but with specific distinguishing features.

The 1920s saw the expansion of cities toward predominantly residential “streetcar suburbs,” outlying areas that offered open spaces, lower densities and a feeling of country living. The design of courtyard apartment buildings is reminiscent of Ebenezer Howard’s ideal of the Garden City, the marriage of town and country (Fishman 2003, 31) in a single property: multifamily residences combined with an open, park-like space. When Howard turned to Raymond Unwin in 1903 to realize his vision at Letchworth in England, the resulting houses were not detached cottages, as was common in the English villa, but instead were “joined into rows of three to ten...grouped around a central courtyard or field” (Fishman 2003, 51). The plan combined individual privacy with shared open space representing “that fruitful balance of individual and community which the Garden City stood for” (Fishman 2003, 51). Unwin “appreciated the fact that working-class family life traditionally centered around the hearth,” bringing to mind the fireplace mantel used as the focal point in each apartment at the Hamilton. However, while Unwin’s design combined living room and kitchen to be comfortable, spacious and open—foreshadowing the late 20th century “open concept” layout—the Hamilton Apartments retained the traditional middle-class home layout with separate rooms for living, dining and cooking.

The countryside ideals of fresh air and green space found expression in U.S. cities in the courtyard apartment building. This style has two major advantages over typical central hallway apartment designs: each unit gets cross-ventilation, views and two egress points by fronting on both edges of the building; and all apartments gain a shared courtyard space (Hannsman 2014). Hallways are eliminated, reducing the interior common areas that must be cleaned, maintained, and in modern times, climate controlled. Instead, common area is expressed as a shared outdoor space, inviting community but also maintaining a clear distinction between public and private space. Sharing only a foyer and stairs with three other neighbors “is much more personal and friendly than a long sterile hallway lined with anonymous doors on both sides” (Hannsman 2014).

Individual apartments at the Hamilton were accessed from the front via foyers opening onto the U-shaped courtyard along Hemphill Street, and from the rear via a back entry adjacent to the parking area and gabled porticos on the north and south sides of the building. The mirror image building design uses only three floor plans for the 12 units; each unit has front and back exposures including a covered back porch. A concrete walkway leads to the front entrances and around each side of the building to the rear. Courtyard entrances are pedimented without columns. The south lawn, partially enclosed by a low rock wall, provides an unusual additional open space at the corner of the property.

The apartments’ exterior is set off by a flat-topped hipped roof with striking green glazed tile and gabled attic vent dormers at regular intervals. The building is marked by windows and doorways with white cast stone sills capped by cast stone and vertically laid bricks. The minimal exterior decoration portrays an elegant simplicity that carries over to the building’s interior, where the sole extravagant decoration is an ornate plaster fireplace mantel in each apartment.

According to the Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey, similar courtyard-style apartment buildings were constructed on the south side of Fort Worth in the 1920s, typically designed as two mirror-image two-story buildings

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

facing a central lawn and located on or near streetcar lines (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 7). The earliest was the Carnes Court Apartments (c. 1918) at 2100-04 Hemphill St. (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 137), designed as two buildings in an elongated L-shape with interlocking hipped roofs. Like the Hamilton and other apartments of the era, garage stalls were in the rear. This building would become part of the Edna Gladney Home in 1960.

Around the time the Hamilton Apartments were built, three nearly identical apartment complexes owned by the Management Co. of Texas were constructed on the Southside. The courtyard of the 2½-story LaSalle Apartments (c. 1927) at 1420-26 College Ave. was created out of rectangular buildings with cross-gabled roofs and half-timbering in gable ends and dormers (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 134). Like the LaSalle, the Fairmount Apartments (1927) at 1101-07 Fairmount Ave. consisted of two rectangular buildings with gabled roofs and cross-gabled end-bays in the Tudor Revival style (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 29). The third example in the Tudor Revival style is the Barclay Apartments at 2100-06 Forest Park Blvd. (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 106). Each is made of mirror image rectangular buildings facing a central courtyard with parking in the rear.

Around 1929, two more courtyard apartments were added: the Granada Gables Apartments at 2000-04 Forest Park Blvd., with engaged Tuscan columns and pediments at entries (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 106); and the Mary Elizabeth Court Apartments at 2008-12 Hemphill St. (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 137), which used hipped-roof, yellow brick buildings joined by a mission parapet wall screening the courtyard. Both shared the basic design of mirror-image brick veneer buildings around a courtyard, though each had unique touches and finishes.

Investigation of four other volumes of the Historic Resources Survey (1982, 1988, 1989, 1990) yields only one other courtyard-style apartment building outside of the near Southside: the four-building Spanish Colonial Revival-style Park Hill Apartments at 2500 S. University Dr. This complex features tan brick, cast stone entry surrounds, and arched windows with wrought iron balconies on the second floor. "Gable and hip roofs are clad in red tile; a tiled-roof arcade with cast stone columns joins the two structures fronting on University Dr." (Historic Resources Survey, 1989, 243). The buildings are situated close to the street at the intersection of University Dr. and Park Hill Drive. An open lawn borders the building on the south, like that of the Hamilton Apartments, though narrower and on the flip side from the street. The two rear buildings were damaged by fire and razed in modern times.

The Hamilton Apartments differs from all of these, as it is a single building in a U shape creating the central courtyard. A slightly later (c 1930) unusual one-story U-shaped apartment building was built at 800 Capps St. (Historic Preservation Council, 1986, 81), apparently designed to look like two single family houses to blend into its neighborhood.

These courtyard apartment buildings were built to house the working and middle classes of Fort Worth's burgeoning neighborhoods. Each example possesses the advantages of the courtyard apartment over typical designs, particularly cross-ventilation and efficient use of space, along with availability of semi-public open space in a contained area. The evidence from the Historic Resources Survey shows that such apartments were not built in other parts of Fort Worth, making these examples unusual and distinctive.

Each of these courtyard apartment buildings has unique embellishments and variation in design, with the three Management Co. of Texas properties considered as a single design. The Hamilton Apartments is unique in its treatment of the courtyard apartment form: having a U-shaped single building, and a great lawn exterior to the courtyard apartment. For its understated and elegant architectural style and its unique embodiment of the early 20th century courtyard apartment building, the Hamilton Apartments deserves listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Bibliography

- Campbell, Randolph B. 2003. *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- City of Polytechnic. City Council Meeting Minutes, 1917-1922. Fort Worth Public Library Archives.
- Fishman, Robert. 2003. "Urban Utopias: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier," in Campbell, Scott and Susan S. Fainstein (eds.), *Readings in Planning Theory* (pp. 21-60). Malden: Blackwell.
- Hannsmann, Della, 2014. "Chicago Building Types: The Courtyard Apartment." Accessed January 29, 2018. <http://moss-design.com/courtyard-apartment/>.
- Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas. 1982. *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey. Phase III, Fort Worth Central Business District*. Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas.
- Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas. 1986. *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey. Phase III, Fort Worth Southside*. Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas.
- Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas. 1988. *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey, Fort Worth Near North Side, West Side, Westover Hills*. Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas.
- Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas. 1989. *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey, Fort Worth Upper North, Northeast, East, Far South and Far West*. Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas.
- Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas. 1990. *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey. Selected Tarrant County Communities*. Fort Worth: Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas.
- Murphy & Bolanz, Allison Baker, and Michael C. Miller. 1880-1920. Accessed October 3, 2017. <https://dallaslibrary2.org/dallashistory/murphyandbolanz/home.html>.
- Nichols, Mike. "Hometown by Handlebar: Cowtown as seen from a very narrow bicycle seat." Accessed October 3, 2017. Bridges: <http://hometownbyhandlebar.com/?p=6554>. Polytechnic: <http://hometownbyhandlebar.com/?p=2368>.
- Paddock, B. B. 1922. *History of Texas: Fort Worth and Northwest Edition*, 4 vols. Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing Company.
- Procter, Ben H. 2010. "GREAT DEPRESSION," *Handbook of Texas Online*. Texas State Historical Association. Accessed February 13, 2018. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/npg01>.
- Riordan, Michael H. 2002. "Universal residential telephone service." *Handbook of Telecommunications Economics*. Accessed February 13, 2018. <http://www.columbia.edu/~mhr21/papers/US-aug-29.pdf>.
- Tarrant County, Texas, Deed Records. Grantee Index to Deeds-Surname Hamilton, 1877-1937; Grantor Index to Deeds-Surname Butcher, 1879-1937; Grantor Index to Deeds-Surname Sweeney, 1890-1937. Fort Worth: County Clerk's Office.

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Tarrant County. "Historical County Records. Texas Historical Markers in Tarrant County." 2016. Accessed February 13, 2018. <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/en/tarrant-county-archives/holdings/historical-county-records/texas-historical-markers.html>.

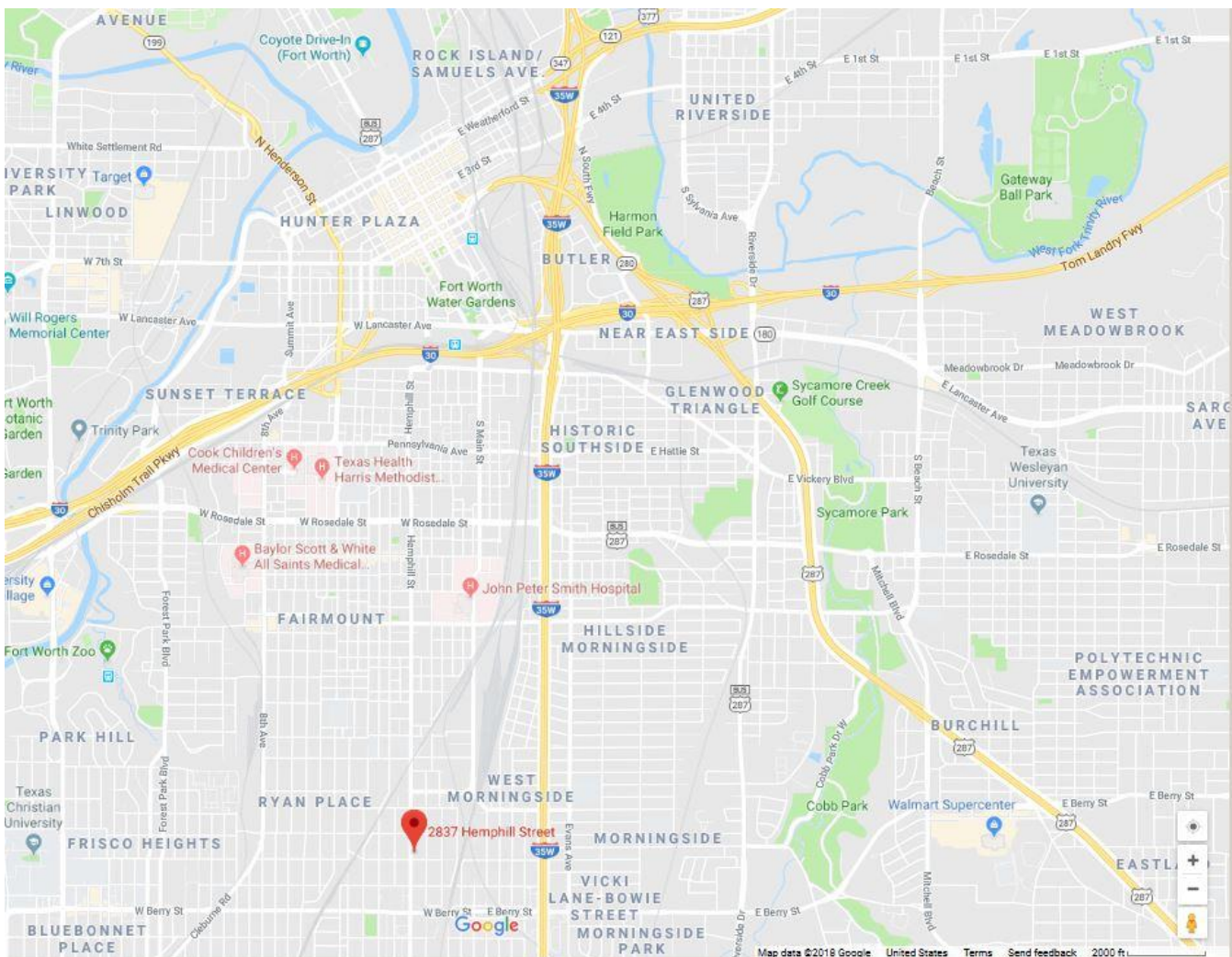
United States Corporation Bureau, Inc. 1912. *The National corporation reporter* 44, no. 1 (February 15). Chicago: United States Corporation Bureau, Inc.

Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas



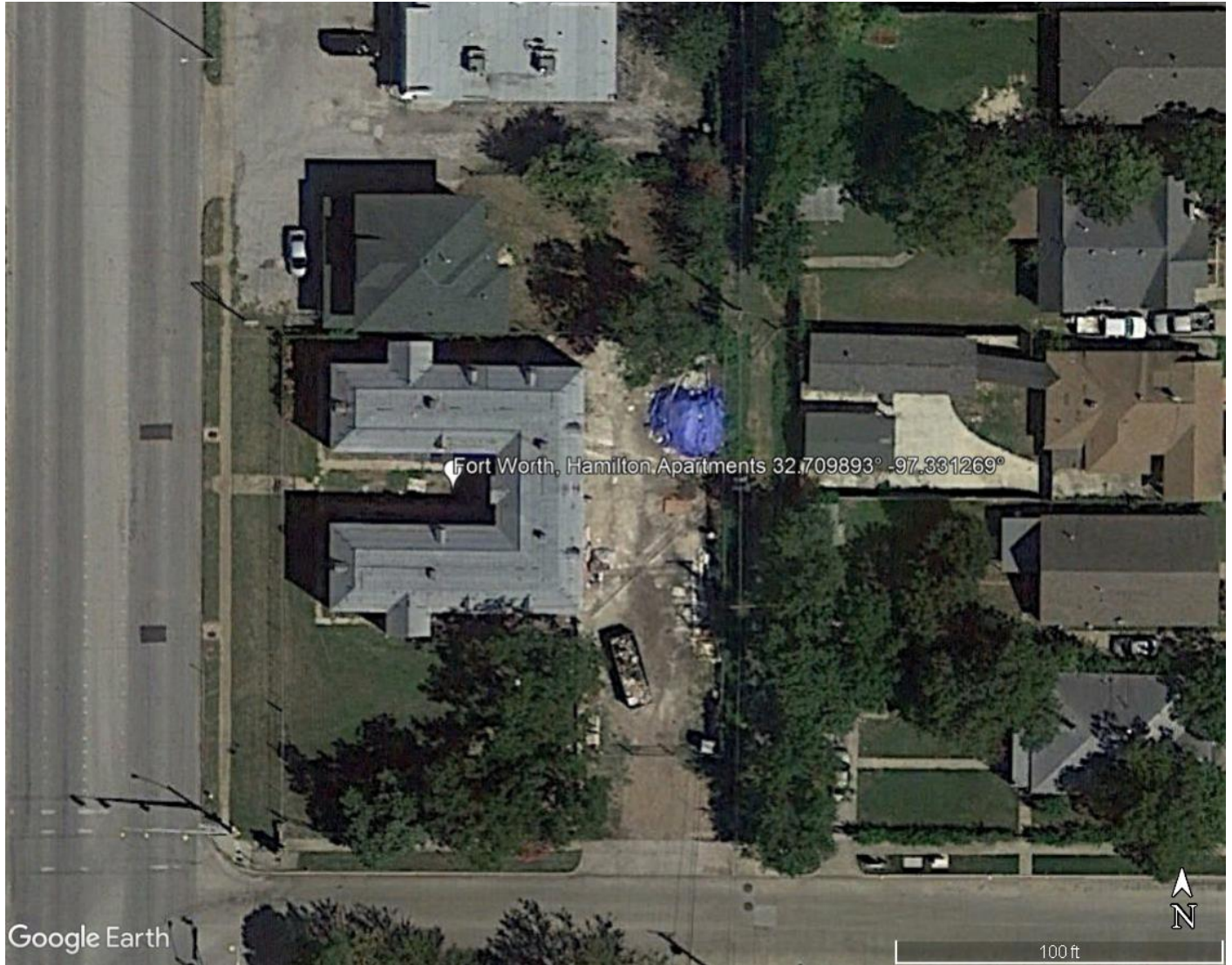
Tarrant County, Texas

City map, showing property in relation to downtown Fort Worth. Google Maps, accessed March 11, 2018.



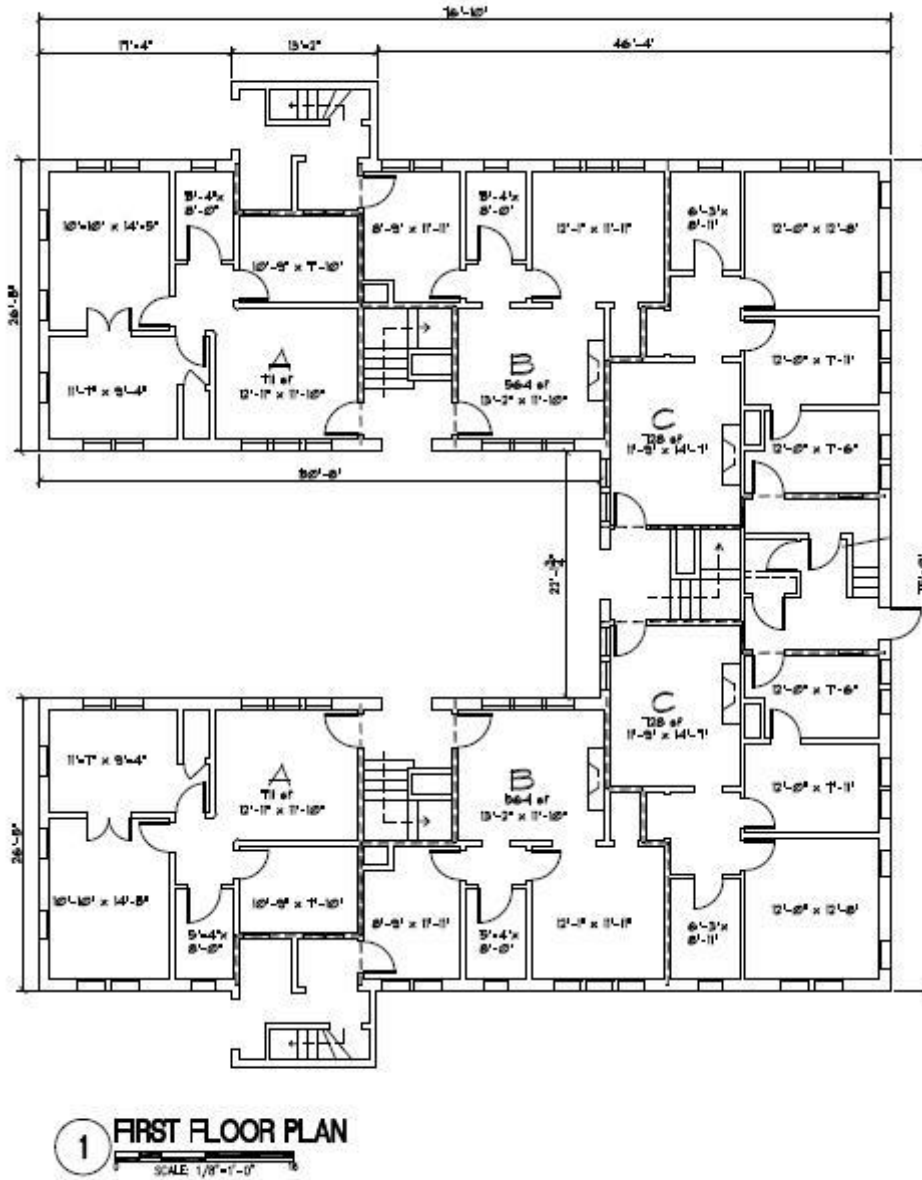
Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Google Earth Map (Figure 1)
Accessed February 28, 2018



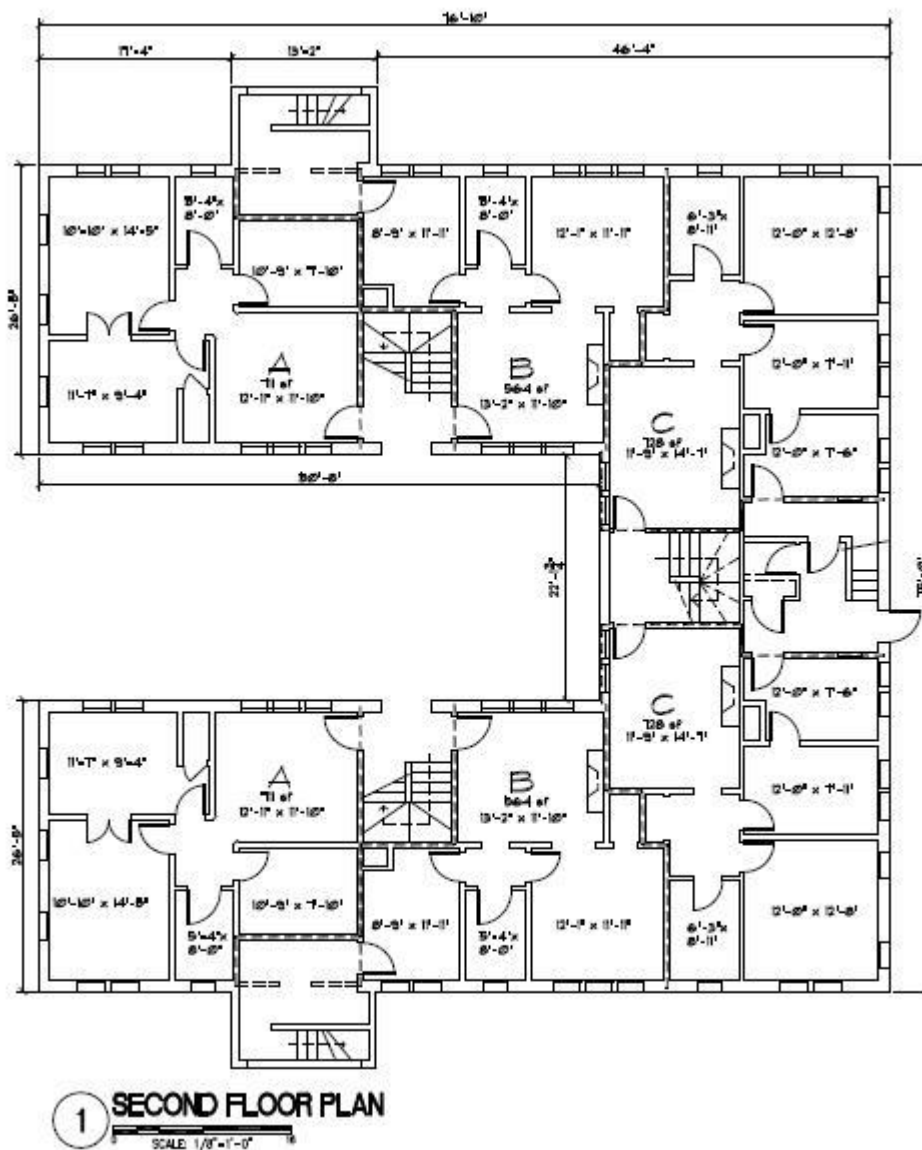
Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure # 2
Original plan view of the first floor



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure # 3
Original plan view of the second floor



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure # 4
Sanborn fire insurance map, Fort Worth, 1910-Jan. 1951, Volume 1, sheet 81 dated Apr 1925



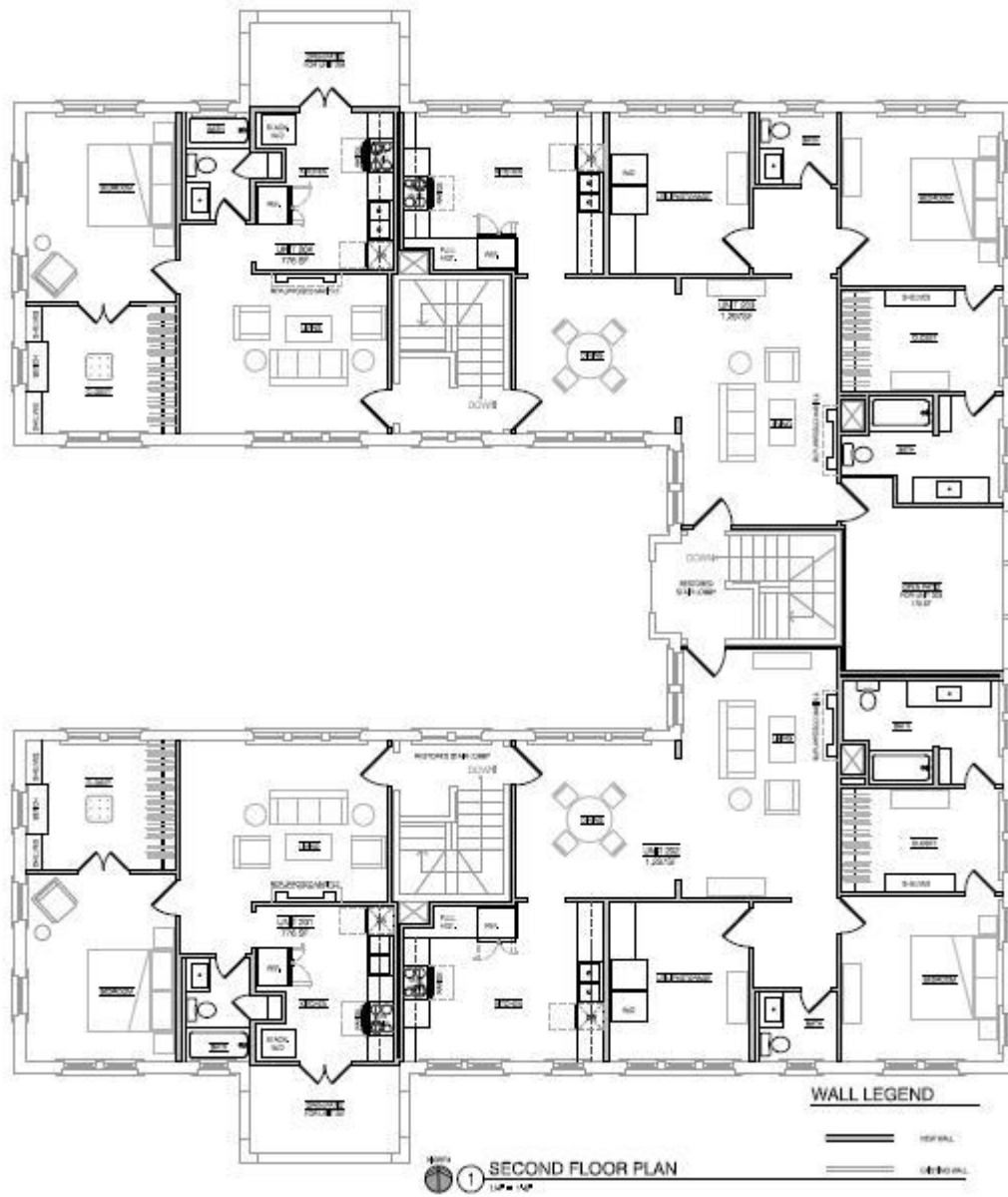
Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure # 5
Renovation plan view of the first floor



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Figure # 6
Renovation plan view of the second floor



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 1

West façade (left) and south portico (far right), camera facing east northeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Photo 2

West elevation and interior of the courtyard, camera facing east.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 3

Courtyard south elevation (left), west elevation (center) and north elevation (right), camera facing east.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Photo 4

West façade (left and right) and courtyard north elevation (middle), camera facing southeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 5
Courtyard north elevation, camera facing southeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Photo 6
Courtyard south elevation, camera facing northeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 7

West façade (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing north northeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Photo 8

East elevation, camera facing southwest.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 9

West façade (left) and south elevation (right), camera facing northeast.
Photographed by Stacy Lueckner, March 3, 2018



Photo 10

Second floor south rear apartment living room, camera facing east northeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 11
Second floor north rear apartment living room, camera facing east.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Photo 12
Second floor south front apartment living room, camera facing southwest.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 13

First floor south front apartment bedroom, camera facing southeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Photo 14

Low rock wall (foreground and background) outlining green space, camera facing east northeast.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

Photo 15

Gateway entrance to neighborhood in property's south right-of-way, camera facing west.
Photographed by James H. Johnson, July 6, 2015



- end -





2837

2837

















STACY 2014
ADAM EVER

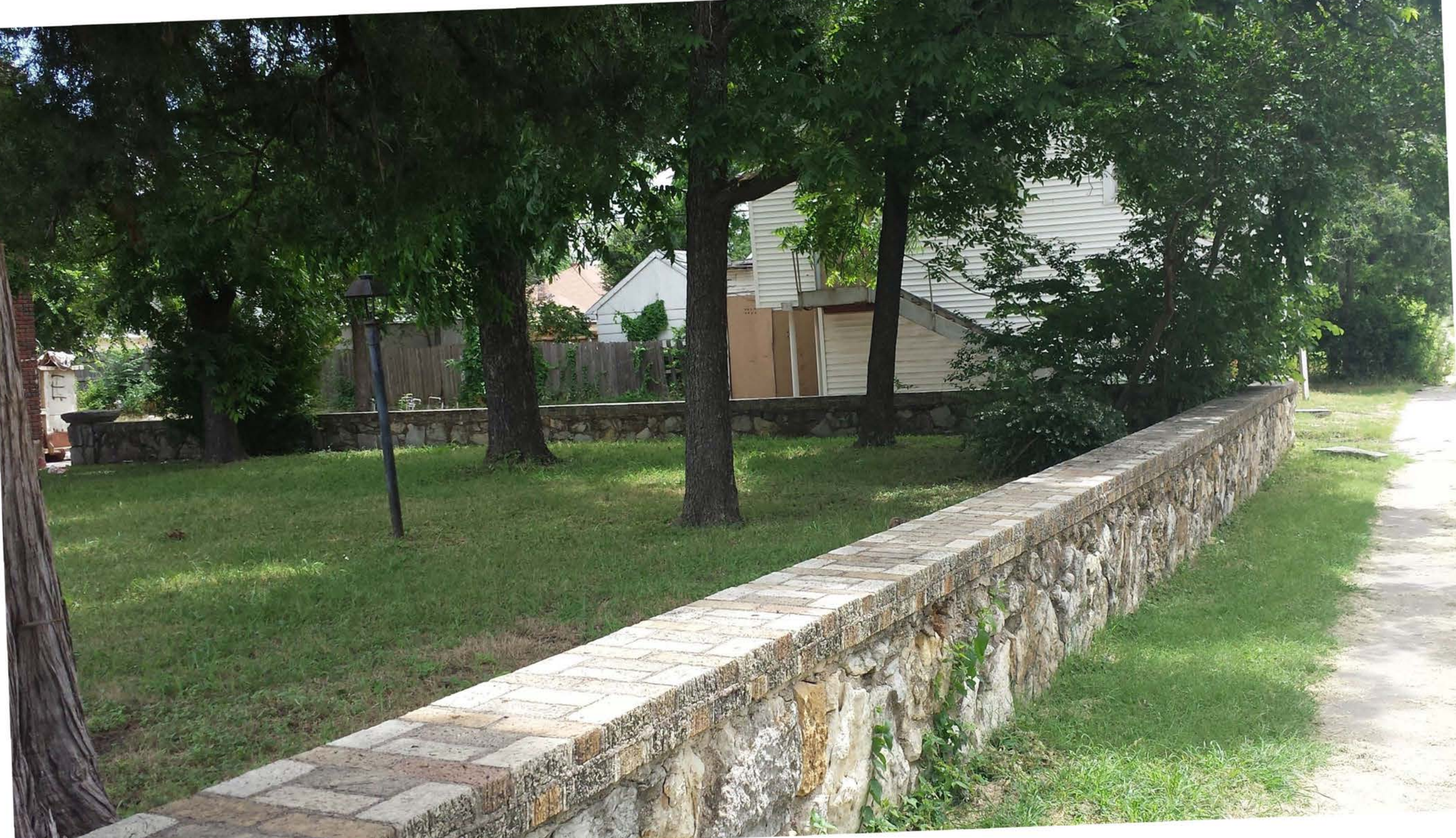
~~WENTRO
LOVO~~

7-18











UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Hamilton Apartments

Multiple Name:

State & County: TEXAS, Tarrant

Date Received: 7/20/2018 Date of Pending List: 8/13/2018 Date of 16th Day: 8/28/2018 Date of 45th Day: 9/4/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100002850

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 8/29/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Hamilton Apartments are locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Community Planning and Development, and Architecture. Completed in 1927 by local real estate developer William F. Hamilton, the apartment building reflected the significant expansion of residential Fort Worth during the economic boom of the early twentieth century. Built along a local streetcar line, the two-story, brick building, appointed in a Colonial Revival style, is an exemplary local example of the courtyard apartment property type built to serve the city's ever increasing need for working and middle class housing in the 1920s.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 08/29/2018

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

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

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

real places telling real stories



TO: Paul Lusignan
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

From: Mark Wolfe, SHPO
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Hamilton Apartments, Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

DATE: July 16, 2018

The following materials are submitted:

Table with 2 columns: checkbox and description. Rows include: Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk (checked), Resubmitted nomination, Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO, Multiple Property Documentation form on disk, Resubmitted form, Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO, CD with TIFF photograph files, KMZ files, and nomination PDF (checked), Correspondence.

COMMENTS:

- ___ SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
___ The enclosed owner objections (do___) (do not___) constitute a majority of property owners
___ Other:

