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RECEIVED 2280

Hancock Apartments
Name of Property

Hampden County, MA
County and State

AUG 14 2015

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Nat. Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hancock Apartment Building

Other names/site number: Hancock Apartments / Geckler Building

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

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

2. Location

Street & number: 116-118 Hancock Street, 130 Tyler Street

City or town: Springfield State: MA County: Hampden

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<u>Brona Simon</u>	<u>July 31, 2015</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title: Brona Simon, SHPO	Date
_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

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:)

Joe Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

9.29.15
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

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Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling
- COMMERCE/TRADE/ department store
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ multiple dwelling
COMMERCE/TRADE/ specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Classical Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, STONE/brownstone, RUBBER

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 Hancock Apartment Building (SPR.4391), constructed in 1912, is located in Springfield's Old Hill neighborhood at the corner of Hancock and Tyler streets. The building is surrounded by two-family, wood-frame houses and several one-story commercial properties. The four-story, Classical Revival-style apartment building with a corner storefront is the only masonry, mixed-use building on Hancock and Tyler streets. Executed in an orange brick, the building features two primary elevations: one on Hancock Street and one on Tyler Street. The building is detailed with decorative brick courses including quoining, pressed-metal frieze and cornices, brownstone sills and lintels, and three pressed-metal, slightly curved bays.

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In 2014, a tax-advantaged rehabilitation was completed on the interior and exterior, including replacement of windows and doors, kitchens, and bathrooms. Historic details and finishes, such as interior staircases and a first-floor tin ceiling, were preserved. The project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation, and the building retains its architectural integrity.

Narrative Description

The Hancock Apartment Building is a four-story, three-by-seven-bay brick building with a rectangular footprint and a tall first story. The building has three upper floors of apartments above a mixed-use first floor. The building is supported by a brick foundation and sheltered by a flat roof. The rubber-membrane roof contains three brick chimneys with slight corbelling at their tops, and a skylight. The roof extends to the north to cover the porch on the north elevation. The building has two primary elevations, the south and east, which contain the bulk of the building's ornamentation. Windows throughout the building are predominantly aluminum, 1/1, double-hung sash on the upper floors, fixed display windows on the first story, and awning windows at the basement level.

The Hancock Apartment Building is located at the corner of Hancock and Tyler streets at the edge of the sidewalk, with storefronts at the corner of Hancock and Tyler streets and along the south (Tyler Street) elevation. The building occupies the majority of the lot, with an asphalt walkway running along the west elevation and plantings along the north elevation. A parking lot on a separate parcel (not part of the nominated property) is located to the north and services the building.

The orange, glazed-brick, east (primary) elevation on Hancock Street is three bays wide with a center pedestrian entrance door that services the upper-level apartments (photos 1 and 2). This elevation features brick laid in a running bond, and its upper stories are adorned with steel plates. At the basement level is one rectangular window opening with a rough-cut brownstone lintel that has been infilled with wood paneling. The center entrance is at grade and is a rectangular opening topped with a rough-cut brownstone lintel. A 2014 aluminum-and-glass door system features a center metal-panel door flanked by sidelights with metal panels at their base, and surmounted by a tripartite transom. To the north of the pedestrian entrance is a pair of windows set within a rectangular opening with a rough-cut brownstone sill and lintel.

A commercial storefront is located on the south side of the pedestrian entrance. The upper stories consist of two bays of paired window openings with brownstone lintels and sills and aluminum mullions. The pairs of windows flank a slightly curved, center set of triple-ganged windows with wide metal mullions, pressed-metal panels with wreath reliefs, and brownstone sills. Starting at the second story, the elevation features decorative brick beltcourses in between window openings and wrapping around the south elevation. These brick courses consist of raised stretcher courses at the window sills of the third and fourth stories. The header courses consist of diagonally laid headers surrounded by raised stretcher courses, and alternating raised and recessed headers below the lintels of the second and third stories. At the fourth story, vertically laid headers, surrounded by raised and horizontally laid stretcher courses, are located below the lintels. Below the roofline, the elevation is topped with a pressed-metal frieze with wreath reliefs, and decorative scrolled brackets supporting the pressed-metal cornice.

At the first story, the building features a corner storefront at the intersection of Tyler and Hancock streets (photos 1 and 2). The storefront has a center entrance with a concrete landing and a metal-framed glass door with a transom above. The door is flanked by rectangular windows within wood panels below and transoms above. Fronting on Tyler and Hancock streets are large, rectangular display windows with

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wood panels below and transoms above, separated by wide mullions. The storefront also features an entablature, as well as small brownstone panels at the corners and a pressed-metal cornice.

The orange, glazed-brick south elevation (primary elevation) on Tyler Street is seven bays wide, and also features a tall first story. The corner storefront extends along the elevation for one full bay. A second storefront also faces Tyler Street (photo 1). This elevation features brickwork and detailing matching the east elevation. The Tyler Street storefront has details that match the corner storefront, consisting of a center entrance with a concrete landing and metal-framed glass door. The entrance is flanked by rectangular windows with wood panels below and transoms above. Parallel to Tyler Street are two large, rectangular display windows with wood panels below and transoms above.

A modern, metal, recessed-panel pedestrian door with a granite stoop and brownstone lintel is located on the Tyler Street elevation. A small rectangular window with brownstone lintel and sill is adjacent to the door. To the west is a 2014 metal-and-glass door system within a rectangular door opening. The opening, supported by a brownstone lintel, contains a center metal-panel door flanked by sidelights with metal panels at their bases. At the basement level, two rectangular window openings with brownstone lintels and sills have been infilled with wood paneling. Above the basement windows are two first-story, rectangular openings with brownstone lintels and sills.

The upper stories of the south elevation feature the decorative brick courses consistent with the east elevation. Rectangular window openings contain singular, paired, and triple-ganged windows with matching head and sill heights, with the exception of those windows at the interior staircase at the western end of the elevation. Where openings are within the masonry wall, the openings contain brownstone sills and lintels. From east to west on each story are a bay of singular window openings; a slightly curved set of triple-ganged window openings with wide metal mullions and pressed-metal panels with wreath reliefs; two bays of paired window openings with aluminum mullions; a bay of single window openings; a bay of paired window openings as well as a recessed brick panel at the fourth story; and a set of slightly curved, triple-ganged window openings with wide metal mullions and pressed-metal panels with wreath reliefs. The elevation is topped by a pressed-metal frieze with wreath reliefs, and decorative scrolled brackets supporting the cornice.

The north (side) elevation is ten bays wide, executed using red brick laid in a common bond with Flemish headers (photo 2). This secondary elevation contains three planes as the building varies in width from east to west, and has more closely spaced window openings than the east and south elevations. Upper-level window openings have segmental-arched brick lintels and brownstone sills, with rectangular windows and arched headers. Basement windows, partially below grade within curved, metal light wells, are set within brick segmental-arched openings and consist of rectangular windows with arched headers. The first plane is four bays wide, and has an orange, glazed-brick bay wrapping around the edge from the east elevation, forming quoining at the third and fourth stories. From east to west, the first plane at the first story contains a bay of single window openings with identical windows above it on the upper stories. The second bay has a pair of single window openings at the first story. The upper stories have slightly curved sets of triple-ganged rectangular windows with simple, flat, pressed-metal panels. The third bay consists of a pair of rectangular windows. The final bay consists of a single, smaller window opening that has the same head height as the adjacent pair of windows, but a higher sill. These three windows are repeated at the upper stories.

The second plane of the north elevation is three bays wide. It is set back approximately ten feet from the first plane and approximately five feet back from the third plane. Between the first and second planes is a cavity containing recessed modern porch entrances. The modern lumber porches with steel handrails at

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each story replaced earlier porches. Each story contains brick, segmental-arched doorway openings with modern metal doors flanked by brick, segmental-arched window openings with brownstone sills. Some window openings have been infilled with brick or wood paneling. On the flanking walls on each story are segmental-arched brick door openings with 2014 metal doors.

The third plane begins immediately west of the cavity, where the brick steps forward approximately five feet and extends to the west end of the building. The third plane is three bays wide, and contains a pair of single brick, segmental-arched window openings on each story. The window openings contain brownstone sills and rectangular windows with arched headers. Each story also contains a single smaller window opening, with the same head height but higher sill, with a rectangular window within a brick, segmental-arched opening with a brownstone sill and arched header. The modern four-story porch at the west end of the building, connecting planes two and three, consists of steel structural supports as well as wood framing and a steel balustrade. Staircases on the third plane lead to the upper stories, while a handicap-access ramp leads from grade to the first-story entrances.

The west elevation is two bays wide and executed in red brick laid in a common bond with Flemish headers. Each story contains a pair of windows, separated by a wide metal mullion within a brick, segmental-arched opening with a brownstone sill and arched header. A single window, within a brick segmental-arched opening with a brownstone sill and arched header, is also present.

Interior (see figures 10 and 11)

The interior of the first floor contains two former commercial spaces, including one with original beadboard wainscoting, window and door trim, and a tin ceiling (photo 5). Both residential entrances provide access to interior vestibules, with metal doors within original wood surrounds. Original wood door surrounds survive on most doorways, which contain wood-panel doors. The two interior staircases have wood treads and risers, wood handrails, wood square balusters, and newel posts (raised in height for code compliance by new wood stringers), and are enclosed within plaster stairhalls with wood baseboards and trim (photo 3). Two residential units are located on the first floor, and three residential units are located on each of the upper floors (photo 4). Units are accessed off staircase landings at each level, and many of the unit doors retain their original wood trim (photo 3). Some original interior wood trim remains within residential units around windows and doors. The units' floor plans remain generally as they were when the building was constructed (see figures 10 and 11).

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are known on the Hancock Apartment Building property or in the general area (within one mile), sites may be present. Most ancient sites in the region are located on riverine terraces within 1,000 feet of the Connecticut River, its tributaries (including the Mill River), and ponds. Environmental characteristics of the property represent some locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The apartments are located on level to moderately sloping topography; however, the nearest wetlands are located well over 1,000 feet away, and soil characteristics are impossible to determine. The Connecticut River lies approximately 1½ miles southwest of the apartments. Soils in the area are classified as urban land, or an area that has been so altered or obscured by urban works and structures that identification of soil types and their characteristics is impossible. Buildings, industrial areas, paved parking lots, sidewalks, roads, and railroad yards cover most of the surface. Given the above information, the size of the nominated

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property (less than one acre), and the effects of historic landuse, a low potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American archaeological resources on the property. Locational criteria for the property, especially its excessive distance from the nearest wetlands, reduce the overall site sensitivity for this location. Any potential ancient Native American resources that might have been present on the property were destroyed by construction of the Hancock Building and construction and removal of the earlier 1½-story wood-frame dwelling also on the lot.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the Hancock Apartment Building property. While the Old Hill neighborhood, in which the Hancock Apartment Building is located, is in the general area of Springfield's initial (1636) settlement on the east side of the Connecticut River, no evidence of that settlement has been identified for the nominated area. During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Old Hill locale continued to grow, as pockets of industrial settlement grew and residential settlement expanded to the eastern side of town. Hancock Street was laid out in 1830, during this period of expansion. Between 1870 and 1915, Springfield experienced a residential construction boom. At the turn of the century, the vicinity of Hancock and Tyler streets in the Old Hill neighborhood was dominated by small, one- to two-story, wood-frame buildings on narrow parcels. In 1896, the northwest corner of Hancock and Tyler Streets was occupied by a 1½-story, wood-frame dwelling. By 1911, the building was occupied by a laundry run by Chinese immigrants. By 1912, the building was removed to make way for the new apartment building. Additional historic research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may determine the exact location of the wood-frame dwelling and its relationship to the footprint of the Hancock Building. It is possible that the smaller wood-frame dwelling was located entirely within the footprint of the much larger, and later, Hancock Building. In that scenario, the earlier structure would have been completely destroyed. Otherwise, structural evidence may survive from the late 19th-century wood-frame building that predated the Hancock Building on the lot. Similar research may also recover archaeological evidence of barns, stables, garages, and occupational-related features (trash areas, cisterns, utilities) associated with both the Hancock Apartments and the earlier dwelling.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL HISTORY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1912-1965

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

B. Edward Geckler
Oscar Jurist

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

The Hancock Apartment Building in Springfield, MA, is a well-preserved, representative example of an early 20th-century, Classical Revival-style, mixed-use building. Constructed in 1912 by mason Oscar Jurist, it was built as an investment property for Tessie Schaffer & Company, a group of newly arrived Eastern European Jewish immigrants. The architect, B. Edward Geckler, designed several residential and commercial buildings in Springfield during the city's late 19th- and early 20th-century building boom. That building boom was spurred on by the influx of new immigrant groups arriving to work in the city's armory, as well as in its automobile and textile industries. The building's masonry construction represents a shift in architectural development resulting from the adoption of the building code in Springfield. The Hancock Apartment Building meets Criterion A for its association with the wave of immigrants settling in Springfield in the early years of the 20th century and for its association with Springfield's building boom in the same period. The Hancock Apartment Building meets Criterion C as a local example of a Classical Revival-style, mixed-use building. The building retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and is significant at the local level. The period of significance begins in 1912 with construction of the building. It ends in 1965, or fifty years from the present.

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

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: The development of apartment buildings within the city of Springfield at the turn of the 20th century exhibits a major shift in the architectural character of the city, which up until the 1890s was largely occupied by wood-frame, single-, two-, and three-family houses. This shift is directly associated with increased availability of employment within the city, which precipitated a population increase and the expansion of the streetcar system. These multifamily, masonry apartment buildings took hold in all neighborhoods within the city, and had a profound effect on how the city looks today.

ARCHITECTURE: Designed by B. Edward Geckler and constructed by Oscar Jurist, the Hancock Apartment Building is a representative example of Classical Revival-style architecture. Distinctive features include brick quoining, decorative brick beltcourses, pressed-metal window surrounds, brownstone lintels and sills, a pressed-metal cornice, and rectangular (primary) and segmental-arched (secondary) window openings. Executed in orange brick, the building has the bulk of its ornamentation on the Hancock and Tyler street façades. The secondary elevations feature red brick. Rather than a simple rectangular building, Geckler designed the Hancock Apartment Building so that the north elevation had varying planes; along with banks of porches, these provide additional light and ventilation for the residential units.

Historical Overview

Springfield was initially settled as a fur-trading post in 1636. Located on the east side of the Connecticut River, Springfield was connected to eastern Massachusetts by an east-west thoroughfare, now known as State Street. Early settlement was focused on Main Street (which runs north to south and intersects

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State Street), with agricultural fields along its west side next to the Connecticut River. Due to its location on the river and the presence of a major route to Boston, Springfield was an important crossroads, and in 1662 it became the county seat for Hampden County. In 1776, Springfield was selected as a site for a cannon foundry (which later developed into the Springfield Armory, NHL). As a result, the city became a significant community in the country's fight for independence. Over the ensuing 40 years, the armory's expansion made Springfield a center of commerce and industry.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Springfield continued to grow, with Main Street serving as the civic, commercial, and religious center. Residential development spread east toward the armory, north to Round Hill, and south to the Mill River. Between 1776 and 1820, the population grew from 1,900 to 3,914, and Springfield became the most populous community in western Massachusetts. Farming as a source of income gave way to industrial development, and by 1815 Springfield had eleven mills, most on the Mill River and at the north end of town. By 1820, 58 percent of the town's labor pool worked in manufacturing jobs that ranged from iron works to cotton textiles. In 1830, during this period of increased manufacturing, Hancock Street in the Old Hill neighborhood (where the Hancock Street Apartments would later be built) was established (see figure 2).

In the early to mid 19th century, the Hill area of Springfield, including Old Hill and Upper Hill, roughly centered around the intersection of State and Walnut streets, was competing with the commercial center along Main Street, largely due to the presence of the Springfield Armory and the growing commercial area around it. With the main thoroughfare of Walnut Street (the boundary between the Six Corners and Old Hill neighborhoods) established in 1810, connecting the Hill area with the Watershops Armory, the neighborhood benefited from increased overland trade, including the development of stage lines along Boston Road (later State Street), which is the northern boundary of the Old Hill neighborhood (see figure 2). The Watershops Armory was associated with metal forging for the Springfield Armory. In 1839, the Western Railroad was constructed through Springfield, providing access from Boston to Albany, NY. The Connecticut River Railroad intersected this east-west route in Springfield, providing transportation on a north-south route along the Connecticut River in 1844. With this improved transportation system, manufacturing expanded to both serve the new transportation industry and take advantage of newer and faster shipping routes. Springfield became a city in 1852.

The city continued to thrive during the Civil War, when the armory served as a major small-arms production facility for the United States Army. The needs of the Union were also met by many private companies in Springfield that produced ammunition, uniforms, and other war-related supplies. Prosperity was also high during this period for industry that was not war related. In Springfield, manufacturers produced tools, gold chains, boxes, a myriad of textiles, and many other items. The city's population grew 65 percent between 1855 and 1865, as workers sought employment in the many industries. With the armory at its northwest end and the Watershops Armory at its south end, the Old Hill neighborhood had two major employment centers, in addition to the Hampden Watch Company on Tyler Street.

Although production was dramatically curtailed at the armory following the war, those employees found new opportunities in the many other industries in the city. By the end of the 19th century, Springfield was home to more than 500 companies producing items such as railroad cars, lawnmowers, and textiles, and representing ten percent of the overall production for the state. The population of the city reached 102,971 by 1915. About one quarter of the population were immigrants, most from Ireland, but many others were of French Canadian and Italian descent. During the 1880s, Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe also began to arrive in Springfield, with Jacob and Tessie Schaffer (part owners of the Hancock Apartment Building) arriving in 1894, and Max Schaffer (part owner of the Hancock Apartment Building) arriving with his wife in 1904.

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The population of the city spread further away from the core as the streetcar and automobile became more popular after 1920. Many small businesses followed, and small neighborhoods were created. Springfield's prospects began to decline during the Great Depression. As businesses closed, the population began to leave. Many buildings within the city were left vacant, and by the 1950s large-scale demolition began. Demolition continued into the 1970s with urban renewal plans. In the last several decades, many of the city's remaining historic buildings have been rehabilitated.

Residential Development of Springfield

During the Colonial period, settlement in Springfield was centered along the Connecticut River between Round Hill and the Mill River. Residential development then expanded east from Main Street, and along State Street to the Revolutionary War-era armory, in what would become known as "The Hill" neighborhood. As industry emerged on the southern edge of the Old Hill neighborhood at the Watershops Armory, along what is now Allen Avenue, residential development expanded southward where employment was available. Pockets of industrial development in the Indian Orchard and Sixteen Acres areas of the city continued in the 19th century, resulting in settlements on the east side of the town. When the Boston & Albany Railroad was established in 1851, the downtown became a focus of commercial and upper-class residential development in and around what is now the Memorial Square area.

The dramatic increase in population by 1870 brought about residential development, mostly modest single-family houses, in the McKnight, Bay, Indian Orchard, and Brightwood sections. On the north side of town, industrial development was extensive, limiting space for housing in the area. A second wave of residential growth began in the early 20th century with the expansion of the street railway system, which precipitated the construction of single-, two-, and three-family housing in Forest Park (Belmont Avenue and White Street area), the Upper Hill area (Wilbraham and Hancock streets), and Liberty Heights (Carew Street area).

Between 1870 and 1915, Springfield as a whole experienced a residential construction boom. A large number of houses, for a variety of income levels, were constructed throughout the city. Housing types of this period include upper-, middle-, and working-class, single-family houses; wood-frame, two- and three-family houses; and large masonry apartment blocks. Most wood-frame construction occurred outside of downtown, with masonry rowhouses primarily constructed in the center of the city. Large apartment blocks became a popular housing type at the turn of the century, with tracts of development north of the commercial core, near the armory, and in the South End, as well as along the streetcar routes in the Upper Hill, the North End, and Forest Park.

The availability of public transportation via the street railway, along with the increased road network in turn-of-the-20th-century Springfield, were significant forces behind the development of housing, because people could travel throughout Springfield and to adjacent communities, even as far as Hartford, along the street railway. In particular, those who could not afford travel via horse or automobile benefited. The construction of apartments close to public transportation resulted in working- and middle-class residents, many of whom were immigrants, living in large apartment blocks. Expanded rail access, and eventually automobile access, allowed for development further and further away from the city center in neighborhoods like the South End. Residential development continued to expand along major automobile routes toward East Springfield and Route 20, to Sixteen Acres and East Forest Park. Development slowed during the Great Depression and did not pick up until the post-World War II period, when suburban development flourished in the eastern half of the city.

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In the early 20th century, the City of Springfield began the creation of a building code. Rapid development of wood-frame, multifamily residences had resulted in unsafe buildings that were susceptible to fire. Proponents of the building code sought to increase the safety of buildings and the health of occupants by placing requirements on the height of wood-frame buildings (limited to two stories), mandating the use of fire-resistive materials such as masonry, and increasing the amount of light and ventilation available per unit. Springfield's building code was adopted in 1910. One of the provisions was the creation of a fire-limitation district encompassing a large section of the city. The district allowed the building commissioner to regulate building materials and height to provide better fire safety. This resulted in the construction of multiunit residences greater than two stories in height using masonry rather than wood-frame construction. One such building was the Hancock Apartment Building.

In 1910, according to the *Springfield Republican*, there was a substantial demand for housing for factory workers. This, along with the impending passage of the building code, created an intensified housing boom. After passage of the code, development of multiunit apartment blocks continued. But like the Hancock Apartment Building, the buildings were constructed out of masonry, and local brick suppliers had difficulty keeping up with increased demand from both industrial and residential buildings. Despite a materials shortage, housing construction continued as more and more people flocked to Springfield to find employment.

Springfield's Jewish Community

The first major wave of Jewish immigration to Springfield began in the early 1880s, when Eastern European and Russian Jews left their homelands to escape persecution. As the wave of immigration continued, Jews moved to previously settled areas of the city, such as Springfield's North End, where new immigrants found employment opportunities and held social and religious gatherings. As the community prospered, it expanded from the North End to the city center, along Liberty Street, and to other neighborhoods, such as the Old Hill, where the Hancock Apartment Building is located. Although early immigrants were mostly laborers, their children often became grocers, tailors, teachers, lawyers, and doctors.

Tessie Schaffer & Company, Developers

The developer of the Hancock, Tessie Schaffer & Company, consisted of Max Schaffer (1882-1934) as well as Jacob (1861-1925) and Tessie (1863-1920) Schaffer, who were married. Genealogy records show that they were not immediate family members, but they may have been related. Jacob and Tessie arrived in the United States in 1894. They lived in many locations within Springfield, and Jacob operated his own tailor shop at 117 Eastern Avenue, one block away from the Hancock Apartment Building. Although their primary language was Yiddish, the couple both spoke English by at least 1910. In 1911, in partnership with Max Schaffer, they invested in the construction of the Hancock Apartment Building.

Max Schaffer arrived in the United States in 1904, receiving political asylum after fleeing Latvia with his wife Anna. The two left Latvia as the Russian Revolution became more violent, and Jews were regularly executed and their homes burned. Upon their arrival, Schaffer and his wife settled in Springfield among the established Jewish community, and resided at 40 Gray's Avenue. Max was a sheet-metal worker in a local metal shop, and Anna was a homemaker taking care of their two young children, who were born in 1908 and 1910.

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Like Jacob and Tessie, Max and Anna's primary language was Yiddish, but both spoke English by at least 1910. The two became naturalized citizens in 1916. By 1919 (the year they sold the Hancock Apartment Building), Max owned his own automotive metal shop, Liberty Auto Metal Company, at 177 Dwight Street in the heart of the commercial and residential core of Springfield's Jewish community. The growing family, then with four children under the age of 11, lived on one floor of a two-family house that they owned on Greenwood Street.

B. Edward Geckler (architect) and Oscar Jurist (mason)

The designer of the Hancock Apartment Building, Burton Edward Geckler (1881-1961), was born in Orange, Massachusetts, to Edward and Clara. Edward was a laborer at the New Home Sewing Machine Company. Burton graduated from Orange High School in 1901, and then graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1905. Upon graduation, Burton moved to Springfield and opened his own architectural practice by 1910. He prospered in his work, and by 1920 was living on St. James Avenue with his family and live-in servants. Geckler was the architect of numerous residential and commercial buildings in Springfield including the Ethel Apartment House (NR 1987), which was completed the same year as the Hancock. Other buildings attributed to Geckler include apartment blocks known as The Springfield, also known as The Kentucky (15-25 Salem Street / MHC# SPR.3560 / NR Quadrangle-Mattoon Street Historic District), and the Hanover (24-28 Wilcox Street / MHC# SPR.2810). He was also responsible for many commercial buildings, including the Parker-Studebaker Block and the Tait Brothers Ice Cream Block. Several churches in Springfield and many single-family houses in Longmeadow are also among Geckler's work.

The construction of the Hancock Apartment Building was led by Oscar Jurist (1868-1926). Jurist was a successful mason in Springfield by 1912. A Jewish immigrant, Jurist arrived in the United States from Romania in 1900. His wife and daughter arrived one year later. The family settled in Springfield, where Oscar worked as a journeyman bricklayer. By 1920, Jurist ran his own masonry business, participating in Springfield's early 20th-century building boom.

Development of the Hancock Apartment Building

At the turn of the century, the vicinity of Hancock and Tyler streets in the Old Hill neighborhood was dominated by small, one- to two-story, wood-frame buildings on narrow parcels. In 1896, the northwest corner of Hancock and Tyler streets was occupied by a 1½-story, wood-frame dwelling (see figure 3). By 1911, the building was occupied by a laundry business run by Chinese immigrants (see figure 5). Many of the larger lots within the neighborhood were being subdivided during this time, allowing for construction of new single-family houses. In August of 1911, a City of Springfield building permit was issued for the construction of the building, with Jacob Schaffer listed as owner and B. Edward Geckler listed as architect. Oscar Jurist was listed as the mechanic, and the building cost was \$16,000. In 1912, a building plan was filed with the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety. Max Schaffer was listed as owner, and the building was named the Geckler Building. It was not uncommon for building names to change over time after initially being named for the location, owner, or architect. The 1½-story, wood-frame building housing the laundry was removed to make way for the new apartment building. Once constructed, the building was called the Hancock Apartments. Permits show that the commercial storefront was part of the original design of the building, along with eleven apartments.

Geckler capitalized on the demand for new apartment blocks, obtaining commissions for the Hancock Apartment Building and other apartment blocks over the next decade. Jurist, as a mason, benefited from the creation of the new 1910 building code necessitating the use of masonry in apartment blocks.

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Similarly, the Schaffers, as new immigrants, saw the need for increased housing and participated in the development boom in Springfield in the early 20th century.

When the Schaffers had the Hancock Apartment Building constructed in 1912, it was the only building of its type in the immediate vicinity. Unlike many apartment buildings, the Hancock had commercial space on the first floor. The mixed-use design of the Hancock Apartment Building differed from Geckler's other projects, which were usually either strictly residential or commercial buildings. Tessie Schaffer & Company sold interests in the property to Eli Cohen and Company in 1913, and ultimately sold their entire holdings by 1919 (see figure 1). Ownership of the property changed thereafter, often within ten years or less, throughout the 20th century.

While there were many apartment buildings with ground-floor commercial space on such major thoroughfares as Main and State streets, the ground-floor storefronts at the Hancock Apartment Building were unique for this neighborhood. Although there were two separate storefronts, the spaces generally operated as a single commercial enterprise. For many years, the commercial space was rented to Hyman Fishkin, who operated a dry-goods store. Fishkin lived in the two-story, single-family house immediately north of the Hancock Apartment Building. The commercial space remained a local source for household goods into the 1930s, when William Perguide utilized the space as a small, local grocery store (see figure 9).

In the 1910s and 1920s, the apartments were occupied by many New England-born and French-Canadian descendants working for themselves, or for nearby factories, the railroad, or the Springfield Armory. One example is the Upton family, consisting of Frank, his wife Margaret, and their daughter Eleanor. Frank worked as an inspector at the Springfield Armory. Both he and his wife were born in Massachusetts, he being of English descent.

Howard C. Peckham, a photographer and later an inspector at the armory, lived at the Hancock with his wife Ruth and their young son George. Most residents were single men, such as Henry Dubour, an employee at KM Company, or couples with one or two children. There were also a few widows, including Mrs. Elizabeth Donahue, a laundress; Mrs. Katherine Robertson, a stenographer and Canadian immigrant; and Mrs. Nellie Gleason. Generally, residents lived at the Hancock for a few years. Most were American born, but of Canadian, English, Irish, Italian, or Eastern European descent. During the early 20th century, the neighborhood was largely characterized by one- and two-family houses, although automobile-related businesses began to emerge in the form of filling stations and garages by 1930.

The Hancock Apartment Building had its longest stretch of continuous ownership from 1923 to 1942, when Anthony Symasko owned it. Symasko purchased the property from Wladyslaw C. Malanowski, who owned it less than a year (see figure 1). Symasko was a Polish immigrant who owned his own funeral home and lived in nearby Holyoke. He lost the Hancock to foreclosure in 1942. After that, the property changed hands quickly until it was purchased by Frederick and Creola Brown, who owned it from 1945 until 1954. Frederick was a Jamaican immigrant and pastor, while Creola was African American, originally from Alabama, and worked at a cannery. The Browns owned the property until 1954 while living elsewhere in Springfield. During the mid 20th century, changes were occurring in the area around the Hancock Apartment Building. Immediately across the street was a small, wood-frame building housing a Seventh Day Adventist Church, which was replaced by a large greenhouse facility in 1950.

Based upon a list of family names, in the 1930s, the residents maintained their mix of backgrounds, with Irish residents and native born from New York or the New England states. Several residents had no jobs

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listed in the census, suggesting that they were unemployed during the Great Depression. Those with occupations listed included painter, ice cream salesman, waitress, and an electric-appliance motor inspector, suggesting that there were fewer residents occupying skilled-labor positions.

In the post-WWII era, residents of the building had a variety of positions in the service industry, including George Ford, a tailor, and Claude Francis, a waiter, as well as some with manufacturing positions. By 1952, the storefront at 118 Hancock Street was occupied by Hancock Cleaners. During the 1950s and 1960s, most residents resided in the building for only a few years. By 1960, there were military personnel here, such as William C. Carter and his wife Mary. Carter served in the Air Force, likely at nearby Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee. There were also residents with skilled-labor positions such as Thomas Ferguson, a utility worker who lived here with his wife Jessie, and Marcell Daugherty, a presser at Russ Cleaners, who lived here with his wife Julia.

The 1960s saw the demolition of many late 19th-century houses in the neighborhood. These lots either remained vacant, or new, one-story commercial structures replaced the demolished properties. During this period, the nominated property was owned by two couples, Fred and Mary Cohn and Leon and Jean Sisitsky. Frederick worked at Sam's Package Store and Leon worked at the Pine Delicatessen. Neither couple resided in the building, and they sold the property in 1962 to James Bennett, a contractor who owned the property until 1976. According to the building permits, in 1963 the Hancock Apartment Building suffered fire damage to the north-elevation porch and the interior of the third floor, though the building remained largely intact.

Post Period of Significance

A small fire occurred in 1968, damaging a portion of the interior of the building at the west end along with some windows and doors, which required replacement. The north-elevation porches and windows have been replaced and the interior underwent repairs and minor rehabilitation in 2000, but the architectural character and materials present at its initial construction remain. The two storefronts survive at the ground floor, and the original wood staircases providing access to the residential apartments also remain. The adjacent lot, once occupied by Hyman Fishkin, is utilized as parking for residents of the Hancock Apartment Building. The house on that lot was demolished after 1969, and the parking lot is not included in this nomination. In 2014, a tax-advantaged rehabilitation was completed at the Hancock Apartment Building, preserving the building's key features (compare photo 1 to figure 9). The project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to Springfield's late 19th-century settlement and ethnic heritage. Additional historic research, combined with archaeological survey and testing, may help to determine the exact construction date for the wood-frame dwelling, later a laundry operated by Chinese immigrants. Since Hancock Street was established by 1830 and the wood-frame dwelling is represented on the 1896 Sanborn map, it seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the wood-frame dwelling was built sometime between 1830 and 1896. Any information relating to the removal of the 19th-century, wood-frame dwelling and subsequent construction of the Hancock Building could contribute important information on the role that the Old Hill neighborhood played in the building boom in the early decades of the 20th century in Springfield.

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Structural analysis of outbuildings and detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features associated with the tenants of the Hancock Apartment Building may contribute important information related to Springfield's ethnic heritage and changing social history. Archaeological resources may contribute information related to Springfield and the Old Hill neighborhood's change from single-family farms and estates to multifamily housing and tenements in the city. In the early 20th century, a wave of immigrants settled in the Old Hill neighborhood. Ethnic groups that changed through time occupied tenements like the Hancock Apartment Building. Archaeological information from outbuildings and occupational-related features may contribute information that indicates ways in which different ethnic groups adapted to change, possibly by supplementing their wage earnings and subsistence with scaled-down attempts at husbandry and agriculture. The presence of a Chinese-run laundry in the wood-frame dwelling located on the property may offer the unique opportunity to learn more of the acculturation of an underrepresented ethnic group in the area.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Ancestry.com census records, vital records, city directories.

City of Springfield Atlases, 1899, 1910, 1920.

City of Springfield Building Permits.

City of Springfield Engineering Office Street Records.

Department of Public Safety Architectural Files, Massachusetts State Archives
Plan# B-5-23-11751.

Findagrave.com – Schaffer.

Gerlin, James A. *Starting Over: The Formation of the Jewish Community of Springfield, MA 1840-1905*. New York: University Press of America, 1984.

Hampden County Registry of Deeds (see figure 1).

JewishGen.org. *JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR)* [database on-line].
Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2008.

Massachusetts Historical Commission Reconnaissance Survey Report (for Springfield,
1982).

National Register Nominations: Upper Worthington Historic District (Candace
Jenkins/Margo B. Webber, 1982); Quadrangle-Mattoon Historic District Boundary Increase
(Michelle Plourde-Barker/Betsy Friedberg, 2000); Outing Park Historic District (Christine
Beard, 2012); Gunn and Hubbard Blocks (Fred Clark, 1980).

National Register Nomination Draft: Hollywood (Edmond P. Lonergan, 1984).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1886, 1896, 1911, 1931, 1950, 1970).

Springfield City Directories (1910-1961).

Springfield Republican. Various articles on Building Code: April 23, 1909; January 2, 1910;
September 3, 1910; December 6, 1910; September 23, 1914; December 28, 1914; February 4,
1915.

United States Federal Census (1900 – 1930).

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): SPR.4391

HPCA # 27,221

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 42.106756 Longitude: -72.568509

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 18 Easting: 701040 Northing: 4664491

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

The boundary includes the single parcel of land at 116-118 Hancock Street, Springfield, MA, encompassing Assessor's Parcel No. 06250-0024.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is limited to the parcel of land historically associated with the Hancock Apartment Building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Taya Dixon, Senior Consultant and Brian Lever, Preservation Planner, Epsilon Associates, Inc. with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC
organization: Massachusetts Historical Commission
street & number: 220 Morrissey Boulevard
city or town: Boston state: MA zip code: 02125
e-mail betsy.friedberg@sec.state.ma.us
telephone: 617-727-8470
date: August 2015

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.

Hancock Apartments

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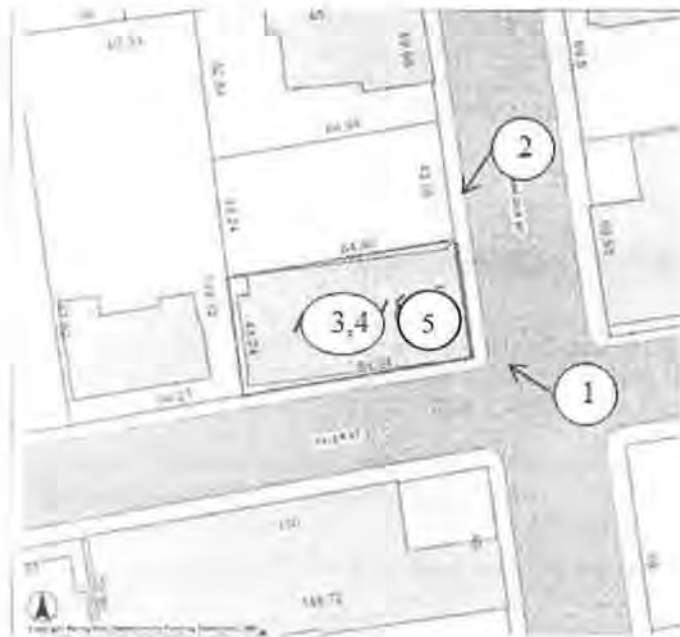
Photo Log

Name of Property: Hancock Apartment Building
City or Vicinity: Springfield
County: Hampden State: MA
Photographer: Brian Graves
Date Photographed: March 2014

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

- 1 of 5: View northwest of south and east elevations
- 2 of 5: View southwest of east and north elevations
- 3 of 5: Interior, detail of stairway
- 4 of 5: Interior, typical residential unit
- 5 of 5: Interior, detail of storefront

Key to Photographs



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.

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Figures

Transfer Date	Book/Page	Grantee	Grantor
11/8/2012	19536 / 574	Cross Town Corners LLC	Center City Housing Inc.
4/5/2000	11149 / 490	Center City Housing Inc.	Springfield Renovation Assoc.
11/21/1983	5533 / 183	Springfield Renovation Assoc.	Springfield Redevelopment Authority
11/21/1983	5533 / 179	Springfield Redevelopment Authority	James J. Bennett
5/16/1983	5436 / 88	Springfield Redevelopment Authority	City of Springfield
2/13/1979	4738 / 158	City of Springfield	Richard and Theresa Desellier
8/30/1976	4316 / 27	Richard and Theresa Desellier	James Bennett
1/15/1962	2857 / 273	James Bennett	Mary Cohn, Leon & Jean Sisitsky
11/23/1954	2352 / 168	Fred & Mary Cohn, Leon & Jean Sisitsky	Frederick & Creola Brown
10/18/1945	1808 / 314	Frederick & Creola Brown	Peter Bialka
8/7/1942	1744 / 238	Peter Bialka	John Sinodinos
8/1/1942	1744/10-11	John Sinodinos	Amherst Savings Bank
7/30/1942	1743/474	Amherst Savings Bank	Anthony Symasko (foreclosure)
6/8/1923	1184/126	Anthony Symasko	Wladyslaw C. Malanowski
10/20/1920	1100/168	Wladyslaw C. Malanowski	Jacob J. Cooley
5/26/1920	1082 / 97	Jacob J. Cooley	Frederic Cohn
8/13/1919	1029 / 200	Eli Cohen, Allis Freedman, Frederic Cohn et al	Tessie Schaffer & Co.
5/28/1913	865 / 190	Eli Cohen et al	Tessie Schaffer & Co.

Figure 1. Chain of title

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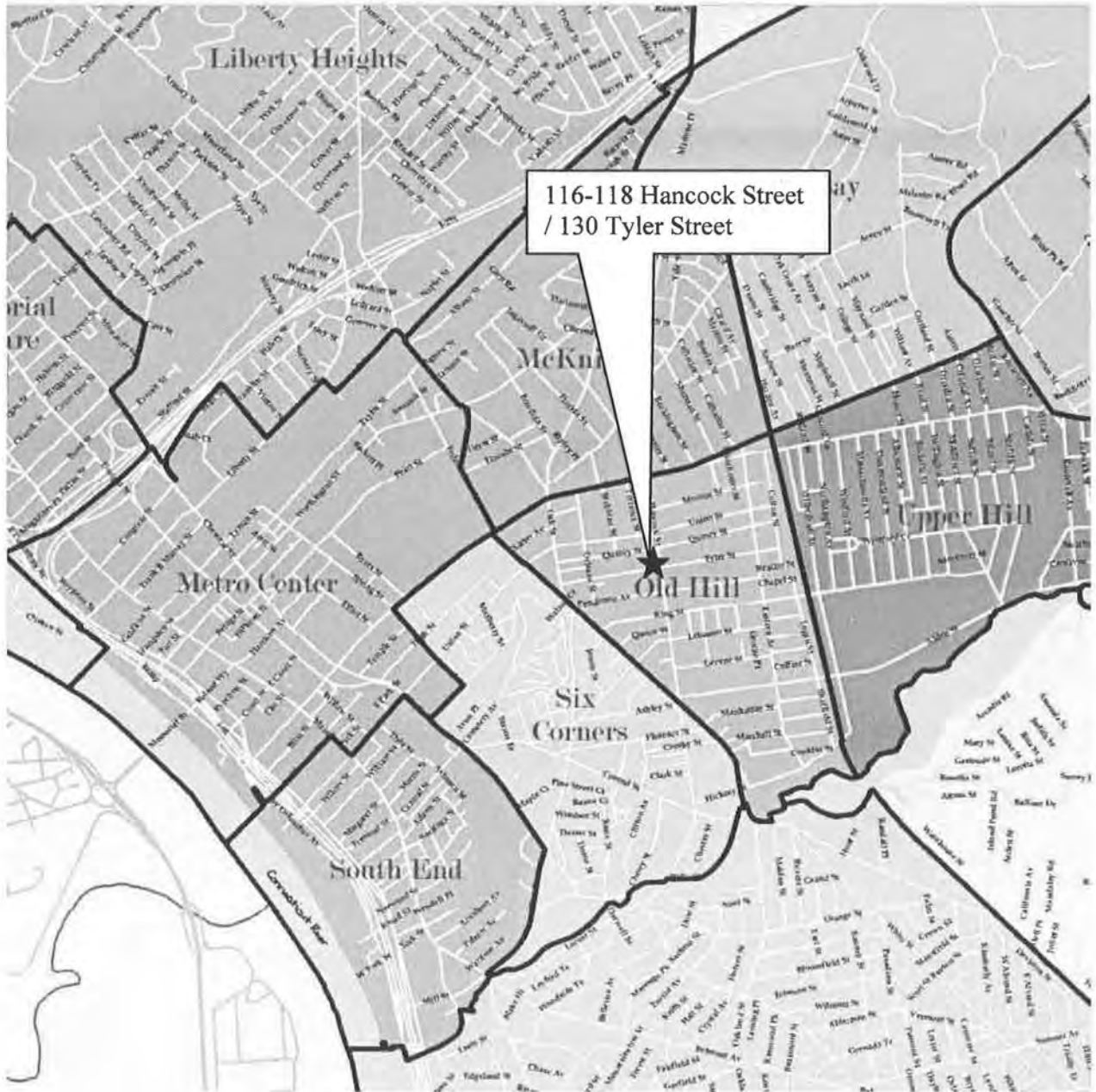


Figure 2. Old Hill neighborhood locus map, showing location of Hancock Apartment Building.

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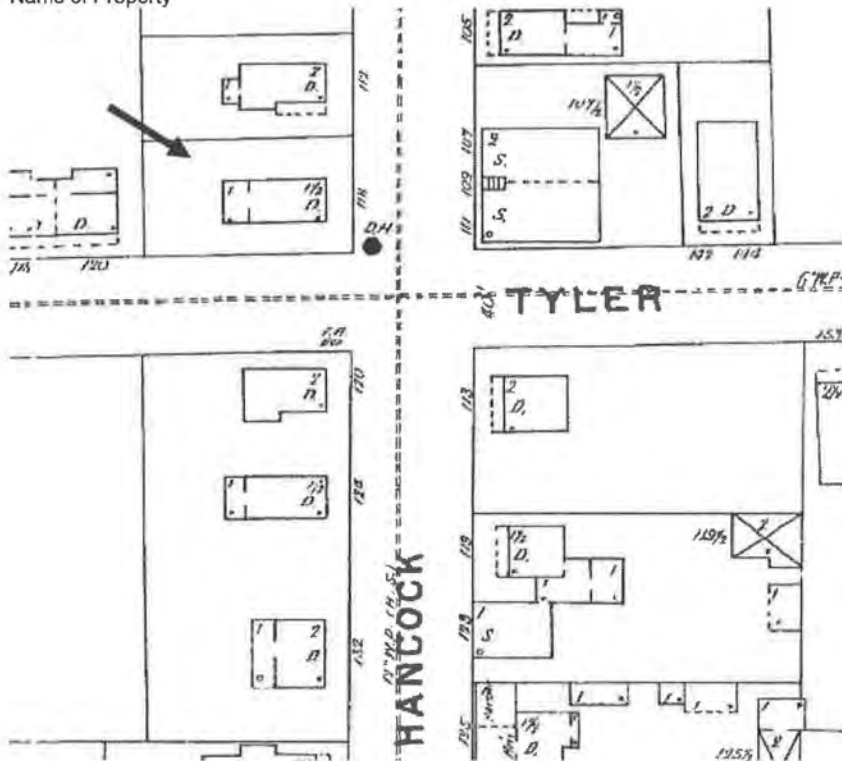


Figure 3. 1896 Sanborn map, showing future location of Hancock Apartment Building.



Figure 4. 1910 City of Springfield Atlas, showing future location of Hancock Apartment Building.

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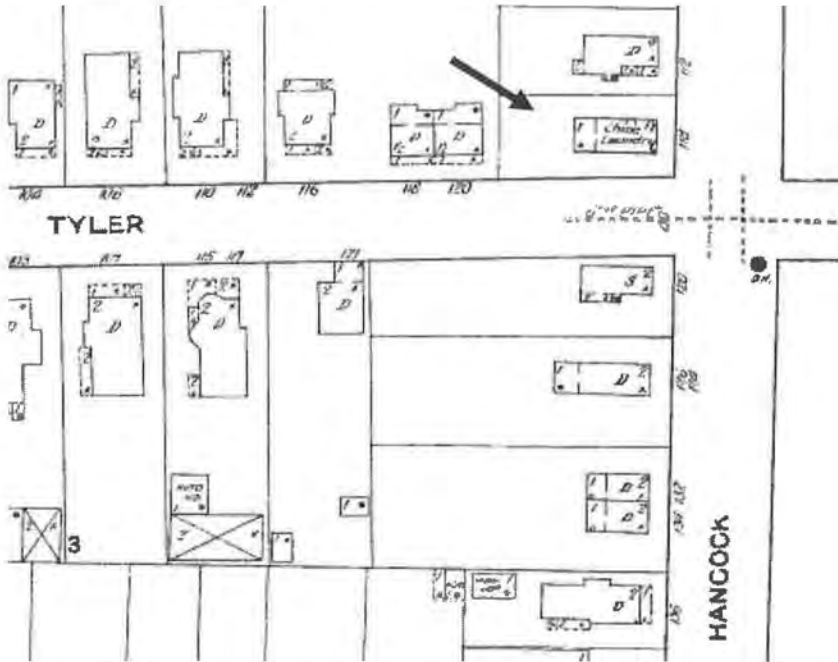


Figure 5. 1911 Sanborn map, showing future location of Hancock Apartment Building.



Figure 6. 1920 City of Springfield Atlas, showing location of Hancock Apartment Building.

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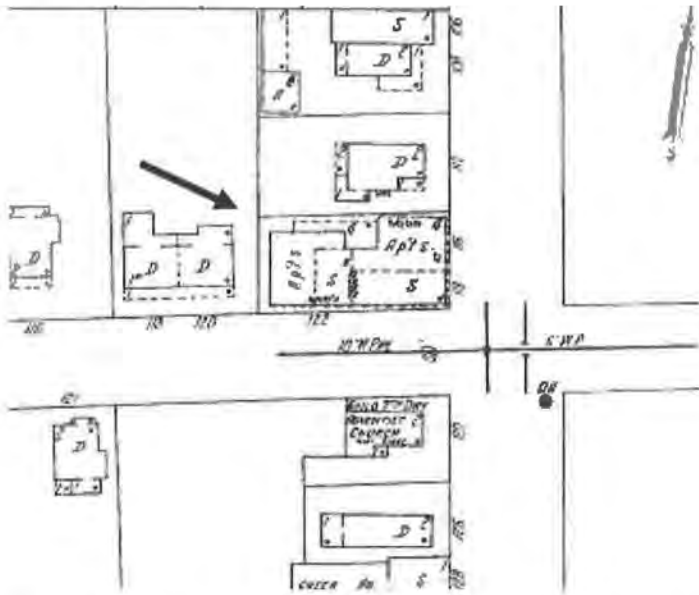


Figure 7. 1931 Sanborn map, showing location of Hancock Apartment Building.

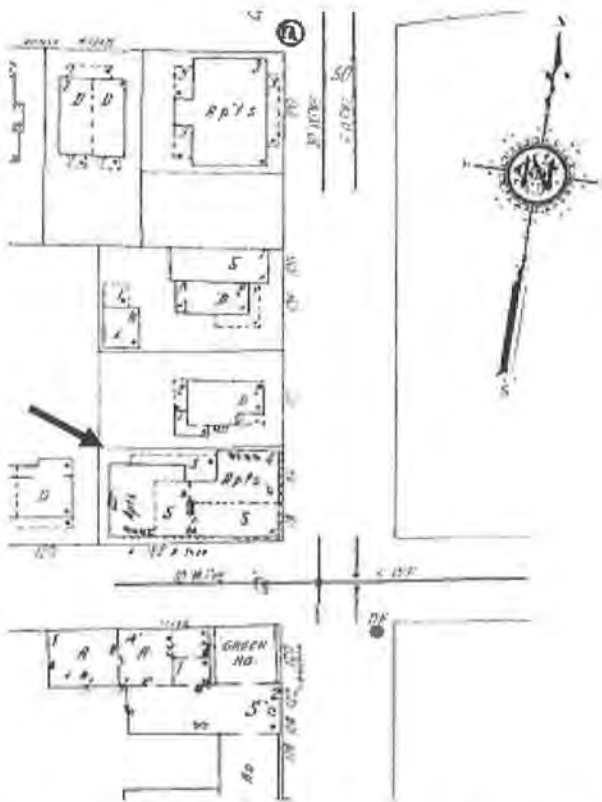


Figure 8. 1931 Sanborn Map, updated 1950, showing location of Hancock Apartment Building.

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Figure 9. 1939 photograph (south and east elevations), Springfield Building Department.

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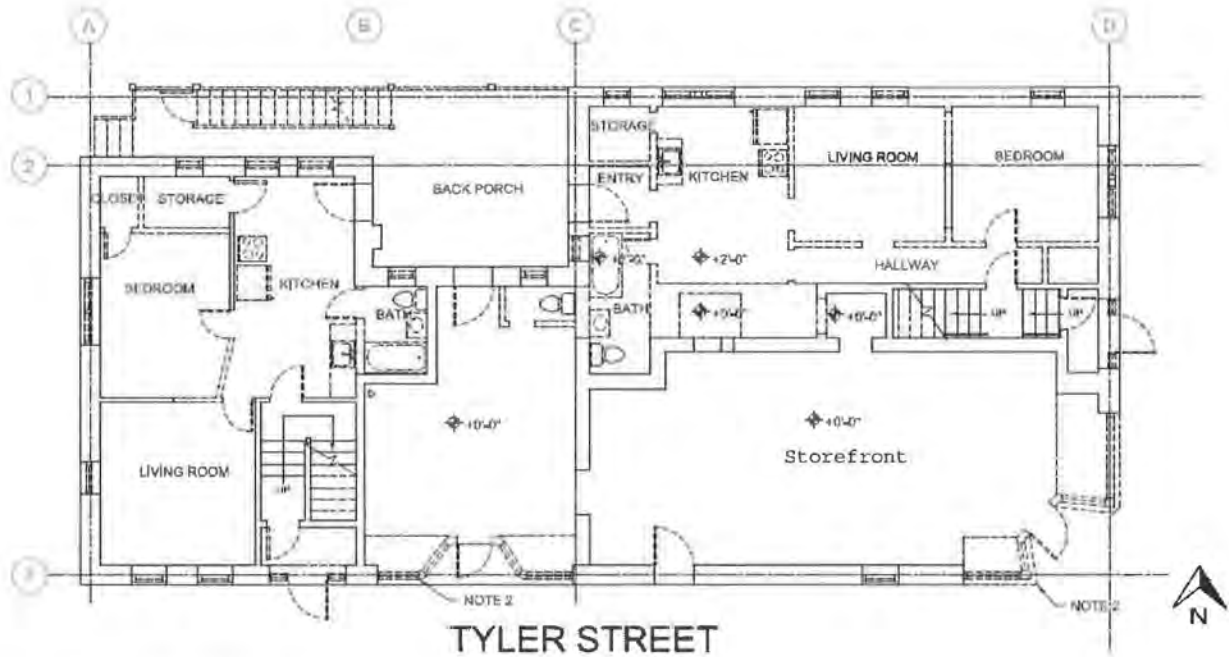


Figure 10. First-floor plan.

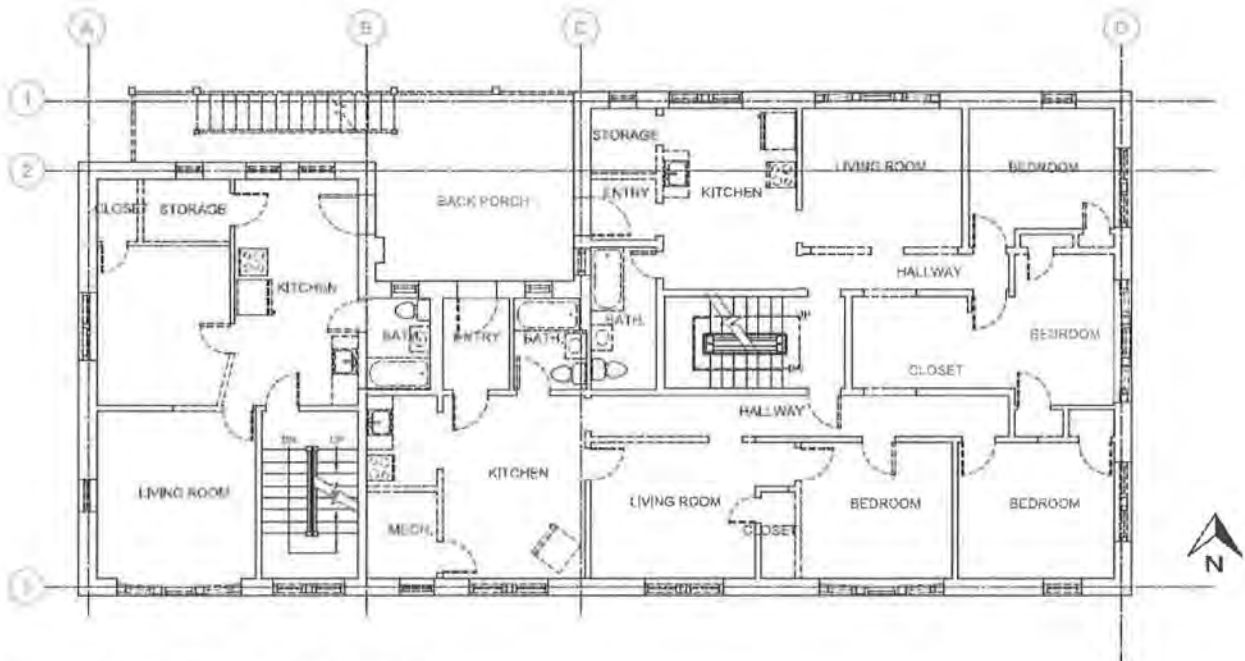


Figure 11. Typical upper-floor plan.



703

TYLER ST
HANCOCK

STOP









EXIT

FIRE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Hancock Apartment Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Hampden

DATE RECEIVED: 8/14/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/09/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/24/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/29/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000662

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9.29.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

RECEIVED 2280

AUG 14 2015

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

July 31, 2015

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Hancock Apartment Building, 116-118 Hancock Street, 130 Tyler Street, Springfield
(Hampden), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the properties were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Brian Lever, Epsilon Associates, Inc., consultant
Patrick McCarthy, Cross Town Corners LP
Mayor Domenic Sarno, City of Springfield
Ralph Slate, Springfield Historical Commission
Kate Stebbins, Springfield Planning Board