

Parcel #: 11-183-14  
Acreage: Less than one acre.  
Location: 45 California Avenue  
City: Reno State: Nevada County: Washoe

Current Owner: Aldo Vachina, et al  
Address: 45 California Avenue, Reno, Nevada 89501

Data Prepared by: Rainshadow Associates Date: 07/05/83  
Address: P.O. Box 352, Carson City, Nevada 89702

Property Information

Original Use: Apartments  
Present Use: Apartments  
Condition: Good  
Architect: Frederic J. DeLongchamps  
Builder: Unknown  
Construction/Modification Dates: 1922  
Building Type: Residential - Apartments

Physical Description

The building is an attractive, two-story, concrete block, hip roof, rectangular building with a full basement and Classical entrance portico. The exterior shows the small concrete blocks, while large concrete block quoins enrich the corners. A sill course separates the basement and first floor levels. Windows are primarily one-over-one, double hung, with flat lintels and sills. A low pitch, hip roof, a boxed cornice and a denticulated frieze crowns the building.

The centrally placed entrance features a portico with four Tuscan columns and two pilasters supporting the portico roof. The front door is framed by four light side-lights and a five light transom.

Statement of Significance (Criteria A, C)

The California Apartments is significant as an intact example of Classical Revival architecture designed by prominent Nevada architect, Frederic J. DeLongchamps. The building is also significant for its historical association with Nevada's early 20th century divorce industry.

Frederic J. DeLongchamps practiced between 1907 and 1965. The designs for over 500 public, commercial, and residential structures have been credited to DeLongchamps. The California Apartments is an example of DeLongchamps' restrained Classical Revival design. For a more detailed discussion of DeLongchamps' work, please refer to the cover form.

Nevada's early liberalization of divorce residency requirements attracted a significant temporary population during the first four decades of the 20th century. In 1931, 4,800 divorce decrees were sought in northern Nevada. The majority of Nevada's temporary residents settled in the Reno area. As a result of the increased demand for housing, Reno experienced a dramatic rise in hotel and apartment construction. One of the earliest major apartment buildings to be constructed was the California Apartments.

Bibliography

Nylen, Robert A., "Reno's Premier Architect," Heritage Herald, May/June 1983, pp. 4-5.

Official Bicentennial Book, Ed. Stanley W. Paher, "Dude Ranches in Nevada." (State of Nevada, 1976), pp. 118-119.

Legal Description: Marsh's Addition and Fraction. Beginning at intersection of north line of California Avenue and easterly line of South Sierra Street, then easterly along north line of California Avenue 150 feet, then northerly and parrallel to easterly line of South Sierra Street 166.8 feet, then westerly 133.7 feet, then southerly 120.2 feet to point of beginning.

Begin at intersection of the north line of California Avenue with the eastern line of said Granite Street, thence westerly along said northern line of California Avenue 20.24 feet, more or less, to a point of curvature of a 20 foot radius curve to the right, thence along the arc of said 20 foot radius curve 31.42 feet more or less to a point of tangency with the eastern line of the Plumas Street/Sierra Street connection as per map attached; thence N 0 06' 37" W along said eastern line of the Plumas Street/Sierra Street connector 93.11 feet more or less to the intersection with the prolongation of the northern line of that parcel of land described in Book 956, page 659, of the Official Records of Washoe County, Nevada, as recorded March 9, 1976, under File No. 399372; thence easterly along said prolongation 9.65 feet more or less to said eastern line of Granite Street, then S 15 05' 26" E along said eastern line of Granite Street 120.2 feet to the point of beginning.

Location of Legal Description: Washoe County Courthouse, 117 South Virginia St., Reno, Nevada 89501

Representation in Existing Surveys: Reno Cultural Resources Survey, 1983, Local survey deposited at the Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology, Carson City, Nevada

UTM References: Zone 11, E 258850 N 4378580.