

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Pekin Street Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

Roughly and Candace
Area (bounded by Pekin Street, Douglas Avenue, Candace Street, and Chalkstone Avenue S. — not for publication

city, town Providence N. Vicinity of Hon. Claudine Schneider congressional district #2

state Rhode Island code 44 county Providence code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N.A. in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple: see owners list on file at R.I. Historical Preservation Commission

street & number

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Providence City Hall

street & number 25 Dorrance Street

city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Smith Hill, Providence has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

150 Benefit Street

city, town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Pekin Street Historic District is a densely built, urban residential neighborhood of 104 dwellings filled almost exclusively with multiple-family dwellings erected during the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century. Pekin Street, the spine of the district, runs north/south between Douglas Avenue and Chalkstone Avenue; Alma, Inkerman, and Mansfield Streets run east from Pekin, connecting with Candace Street on the east side of the district. The streets themselves are narrow; Pekin and its side streets are approximately twenty-five-feet wide. The houses, sited on the sidewalk line, are tightly serried on the narrow lots (forty feet wide and eighty to 100 feet deep) common to such residential neighborhoods of the period. Only a handful of the properties retain original picket fences, and portions of the yards have been paved.

Most of the buildings within the district are types commonly built in southern New England's urban, working-class neighborhoods between 1870 and 1910. This district represents the most intact and least altered concentration of such structures in Providence--and probably in Rhode Island.

Multiple-family house types in Rhode Island descend from a common prototype: the two-and-a-half-story, wood-frame dwelling set gable end to the street with a three-bay facade and side-hall plan. This basic form was established in Providence by the early years of the nineteenth century and proved particularly suitable for Greek Revival forms: framed with pilasters and its end gable pedimented, this became the standard vernacular interpretation of the Greek Revival. The side hall plan adapted easily to two-family use through repetition of the same plan on each floor. Late, diluted Greek Revival two-family houses began to rise during the 1860s but were soon superceded.

During the 1870s, the two-family-house format began to evolve. The standard house had an end-gable roof and two-bay facade: a two-story bay window (usually rectangular in plan) to one side and the entrance (usually a single door leading to both units) under a hood supported on consoles to the other. This form, which continued more or less unaltered until almost 1900, is a prominent element in the district and is here designated "Type A."

A larger form began to appear alongside Type A during the 1880s. "Type B" is generally higher, wider, and often deeper, and in some a third unit was tucked under the slightly raised eaves. The roof is a cross gable, providing light and air to the attic story on one or both sides. The facade differs only slightly. The bay windows are often more prominent and semi-octagonal in plan. A porch is more common than the hood, particularly in dwellings with two separate entrances, one for the first floor and one for the upper floors.

"Type C" is the triple-decker, the most common form of multiple-family housing in Providence between about 1900 and 1930. The triple-decker is a

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full three-story (in some cases three-and-a-half-story) dwelling with one unit per floor. It is usually larger than Types A and B, but its plan is quite similar. Its most prominent feature is the full height porch on the front, sometimes the full width of the building, sometimes half the width and accompanied by a full-height bay window. Triple-deckers are less common in the district than the other two types.

All buildings within the district are contributing elements. All are wood-frame dwellings. Only those that vary from one of the three basic types are described in detail.

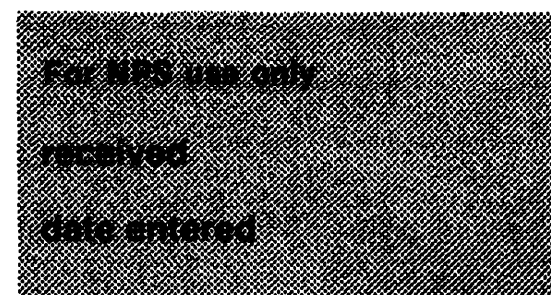
ALMA STREET

- 10 (1886): 3-story, 6-unit dwelling with gable roof set end to the street and entrance in a 1-story porch on the side. Architect Prescott O. Clarke built this as an income-producing property.
- 12-14 (1895): 2½-story double house with gable roof set end to the street, paired bay windows on the facade, and entrances on each side of the building; c.f. 491-493 Chalkstone Avenue. Architect Prescott O. Clarke built this as an income-producing property.
- 13 (1887): Type A, with hooded entrance. Identical to 15, 17, 19, 21, and 23 Alma. Built by James Fuller, a machinist, as an income-producing property; he lived nearby at 56 Candace Street (q.v.).
- 15 (1883): Type A, with a hooded entrance. Identical to 13, 17, 19, 21, and 23 Alma. Built by James Fuller, a machinist, as an income-producing property; he lived nearby at 56 Candace Street (q.v.).
- 16-18 (1887): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Lydia B. Chace as an income-producing property.
- 17 (1883): Type A, with hooded entrance. Identical to 13, 15, 19, 21, and 23 Alma. Built by Sarah B. James as an income-producing property.
- 19 (1883): Type A, with hooded entrance. Identical to 13, 15, 17, 21, and 23 Alma. Built by Sarah B. James as an income-producing property.
- 20 (1894): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Abby, the widow of Michael Crotty, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 21 (1883): Type A, with hooded entrance. Identical to 13, 15, 17, 19,

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Alma Street (cont.)

- and 23 Alma. Built by Sarah B. James as an income-producing property.
- 22-24 (ca. 1897): Type A, with a full-width front porch. Identical to 26-28 Alma. Built by William Greene, trustee, as an income-producing property.
- 23 (1883): Type A, with hooded entrance. Identical to 13, 15, 17, 19, and 21 Alma. Built by Sarah B. James as an income-producing property.
- 26-28 (ca. 1894): Type A, with a full-width front porch. Identical to 22-24 Alma. Built by William Greene, trustee, as an income-producing property.

CANDACE STREET

- 50 (ca. 1890): 2½-story, 2-unit dwelling with 3-bay facade and gable-roof set end to the street. Built by Michael J. Hayes as an income-producing property.
- 51 (ca. 1890): Type B. Built by Patrick McCauley, a laborer, who lived in one unit and rented the others.
- 52 (ca. 1890): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by the heirs of George Corliss as income-producing property.
- 53 (ca. 1890): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by John T. Rafferty, who lived next door at 55 Candace, as an income-producing property.
- 54 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance. William Dumican, a machinist, built this dwelling and occupied one unit.
- 55 (1877): Type A, with hooded entrance. John T. Rafferty, a carpenter, built this house--probably himself--and occupied one unit.
- 55½ (after 1925): 2½-story, 2-unit dwelling with gable roof set end to the street, inset front porches on one corner, and tripartite windows on the facade. This back-lot house is typical of late development in densely built neighborhoods.
- 56 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance. James Fuller, a machinist, built this dwelling and occupied one unit; he also owned income-

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Candace Street (cont.)

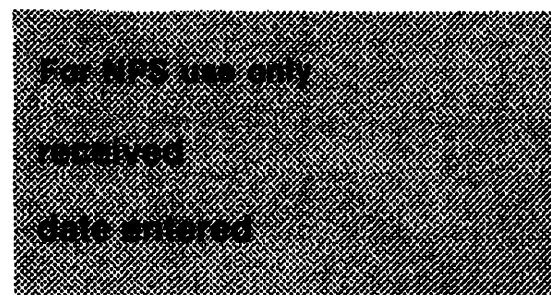
producing property around the corner on Alma Street (see 13, 15 Alma).

- 57 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance and later shed dormers. John T. Rafferty, a carpenter, built this as an income-producing property; he lived next door at 55 Candace, and by 1895 Patrick Rafferty, also a carpenter, was living here.
- 57½ (ca. 1925): 2½-story, 2-unit dwelling set gable end to the street with a 1-story front porch. This back lot house is typical of late development in densely built neighborhoods.
- 58 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance and wood picket fence. James Fuller, who lived next door at 56 Candace (q.v.), built this as an income-producing property.
- 59-61 (ca. 1900): Type B, with a 1-story front porch. Built by Jennie N. Andrews (Mrs. Merrill V.), who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 60 (ca. 1893): Type A, with later 2-story entrance porch. Built by Leonard Blumenthal as an income-producing property.
- 62 (ca. 1895): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Ann M. Donovan as an income-producing property.
- 63-65 (ca. 1890): 2½-story dwelling set gable end to the street with 1-story porch/bay window and 1-story commercial addition on north. Built by Henry L. Aldrich as an income-producing property.
- 64 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and bay window on side under cross-gable. Built by Henry Carney, a lamplighter, who occupied one unit and rented the other.
- 66 (ca. 1890): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Henry Carney as an income-producing property; he lived next door at 64 Candace.
- 68-70 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Henry Carney as an income-producing property; he lived nearby at 64 Candace.

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CHALKSTONE AVENUE

473 (ca. 1880): 2½-story, 3-bay-facade, 2-family dwelling set gable end to the street with hooded entrance and later shed dormers. Built by John Quinn, a machinist, who occupied one unit and rented the other.

475 (ca. 1885): Type B, with 20th-century commercial storefront. Built by Annie M. McElroy, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

485 (ca. 1887): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and bracketed cornice. Built by Michael J. Hayes, a clerk, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

487-489 (ca. 1895): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and bracketed cornice. Built by Mary Baxter (Mrs. Hugh), the wife of a clerk, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

491-493 (1891): 2½-story, cross-gable-roof double-house in the Queen Anne mode. Built by architect Prescott O. Clarke as an income-producing property; c.f. 12-14 Alma Street.

497 (ca. 1900?): 2½-story building set gable end to the street, with storefront on the 1st story. This could be a much-altered early nineteenth-century building moved to this site between 1895 and 1908, perhaps from the nearby construction site of the new State House at 90 Smith Street (c.f. 94 Pekin).

503 (ca. 1900): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and hooded door above. Built by Amy E. Harris (Mrs. E.M.) as an income-producing property.

503½-507½ Thomas Davis House (ca. 1850): The original Davis House was a cruciform plan, 1½-story Greek Revival cottage with a 3-bay facade, which is still intact at 503½ Chalkstone. When the area was platted into house lots and filled with tenements in the 1890s, the structure was divided into the T-shape building at 503½ Chalkstone and the rectangular building at 507½. Davis was born in Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1806, emigrated to Providence as a child, and made his fortune in jewelry manufacturing. Further, he was active in state intellectual and political life until his death in 1891. He was elected as an abolitionist to the United States House of Representatives in 1852. While a native Irishman and the first of his countrymen to represent Rhode Island in Washington, Davis was more closely

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Chalkstone Avenue (cont.)

allied to the existing Yankee society than to the growing numbers of Irish immigrants. His wife, Paulina Wright Davis, was an ardent supporter of women's suffrage, and her salons, both at this house and at the stately gothic mansion the Davises built in 1869 at the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Raymond Street, were filled with intellectual luminaries who discussed the vital issues of the day. Upon his death, Davis left this second house and grounds to the City of Providence; Davis Park has remained an important part of the City's recreational facilities even after the replacement of the main house by the Veterans' Hospital in the late 1940s.

507-509 (ca. 1895): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and hooded door above. Built by Charles H. Flynn, a machinist, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

515 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 2-story entrance porch, bracketed cornice, and wooden picket fence. Built by John J. Buckley as an income-producing property.

525 (ca. 1880): Type B, with hooded entrance, bracketed cornice, and wooden picket fence. Built by Charles A. Phillips, a carpenter, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

DOUGLAS AVENUE

222-224 (ca. 1918): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by the heirs of Margaret A. Quinlan, who occupied all the units of the building.

236-238 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 2-story porch across facade. Built by James Shields, a liquor merchant, who lived in one unit and rented the other to Alban B. Shields, probably a relative.

242-244 (ca. 1892): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Ann and Kate J. Murray as an income-producing property.

246-248 (ca. 1892): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Hugh J. McCormick, a machinist, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

252 (ca. 1892): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Elizabeth

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Douglas Avenue (cont.)

Manton as an income-producing property.

- 256 (ca. 1892): Type B, with 2-story entrance porch (perhaps later). Built by John McQueeny, a laborer, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 260-262 (ca. 1910): Type B, with 1-story porch across facade. Built by William McQueeny as an income-producing property.
- 264-266 (ca. 1910): Type B, with 1-story porch across facade. Built by Ellen M. Halton, a widow, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 270-272 (ca. 1910): Type C, with gable roof set end to the street. Built by Amy E. Harris as an income-producing property.
- 278-280 (ca. 1916): 2-story, flat-roof, trapezoid plan (to fit corner site) building with storefront on 1st story and living quarters above. The Ellian family built this to house their grocery store and lived above the shop.

INKERMAN STREET

- 4 (ca. 1895): End-gable-roof cottage with bay window and 1-story entrance porch on facade. Built by Ann Donovan as an income-producing property, this sits at the rear of 62 Candace Street (q.v.) on the same lot.
- 5-7 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch on bracketed cornice. Built by Mary A. Flynn (Mrs. Peter) as an income-producing property.
- 6-8 (ca. 1897): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch and bracketed cornice. Built by William J. Watson, a provisions merchant, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 11 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 2-story porch across facade (perhaps later). Built by James Heary, a coachman, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 12 (ca. 1895): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by James Kelley as an income-producing property.

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Inkerman Street (cont.)

- 13 (ca. 1893): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by James Kelley as an income-producing property.
- 16-18 (ca. 1912): Type C, with hip roof. Built by Catherine Kelleher as an income-producing property; Mrs. Kelleher lived next door at 20 Inkerman (q.v.).
- 17-19 (ca. 1912): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and bracketed cornice. Built by William J. Machon as an income-producing property.
- 20 (ca. 1890): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Thomas Kelleher, a policeman, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 21-23 (ca. 1890): Type A, with 1-story porch across facade. Built by John M. Conaty, a jeweler, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 24 (ca. 1890): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Thomas Kelleher, who lived next door at 20 Inkerman, as an income-producing property.
- 26-28 (ca. 1895): Type B, with 1-story porch across facade and bay window under cross gable. Built by George Muir, a stonecutter, who lived in one unit and rented the other to relatives.

MANSFIELD STREET

- 6 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by William Kelleher, a carpenter, who lived in one unit and rented out the other.
- 10 (ca. 1890): Type A. Built by Patrick Flynn, a bricklayer, who lived in one unit and rented the other; he moved next door to 14 Mansfield upon its completion but retained this as an investment.
- 14 (ca. 1893): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Bridget Flynn (Mrs. Patrick), who lived in one unit and rented the other, the Flynns moved here from 10 Mansfield, next door.
- 18 (ca. 1890): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Edward Moran, a stonecutter, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

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Mansfield Street (cont.)

- 22 (ca. 1890): Type B. Built by Peter McGovern as an income-producing property.
- 23 (ca. 1895): Type A. Built by Mary A. Rooney (Mrs. John) as an income-producing property; Mrs. Rooney lived next door at 67 Pekin (q.v.).
- 24-26 (ca. 1895): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Jeremiah Dowling, a butter dealer, who lived in one unit and rented the other.

PEKIN STREET

- 13 (ca. 1895): Type A, with 1-story porch across the facade and wooden picket fence. Built by William Greene, trustee, as an income-producing property.
- 14 (ca. 1890): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Charles A. Phillips as an income-producing property.
- 16-18 (ca. 1897): Type B, with 1-story porch across the facade. Built by Charles A. Phillips as an income-producing property.
- 17 (ca. 1895): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by William Greene, trustee, as an income-producing property.
- 19-21 (ca. 1877): Type A, with 1-story porch across the facade. Built by William Chase, who platted this block as an income-producing property.
- 20 (ca. 1900): Type B, with 1-story porch across the facade. Built by Charles A. Phillips as an income-producing property.
- 26 (ca. 1895): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and wooden picket fence. Built by Winnifred A. Foley, a dressmaker, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 29 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by John L. James as an income-producing property.
- 30 (ca. 1890): Type B, with hooded entrance. Built by Carlton S. Hardenbergh as an income-producing property.

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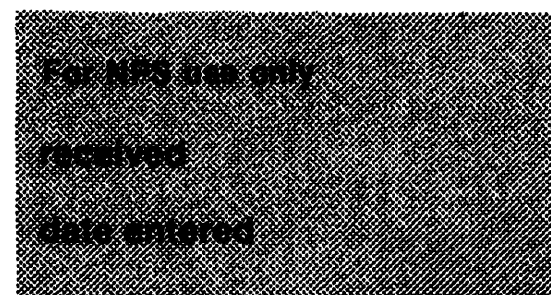
Pekin Street (cont.)

- 32-34 (ca. 1895): Type B, with 1-story porch across facade. Built by Hugh F. Tierney, a watchman, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 33 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by John L. James as an income-producing property.
- 35-37 (ca. 1890): Type A, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Thomas F. Gilbane as an income-producing property.
- 38 (ca. 1885): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Patrick A. Dunn, a cutter, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 41 (ca. 1880): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Thomas Davis (see 503½-507½ Chalkstone) as an income-producing property.
- 42 (ca. 1885): Type A, with hooded entrance and bracketed cornice. Built by Catherine Greene (Mrs. Bartley), who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 45-47 (ca. 1897): Type B, with 1-story porch across the facade. Built by Mary E. Dunn, a saleslady at the J.B. Barnaby Co. (drygoods) Downtown, who occupied one unit and rented the other.
- 46 (ca. 1890): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by the Estate of Sarah B. Eaton as an income-producing property.
- 48-50 (ca. 1900): Type A, with 1-story porch across the facade (now enclosed). Built by Neil McPherson, a carpenter, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 51 (ca. 1881): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Michael Conaty, a laborer, who lived next door at 55 Pekin.
- 55 (ca. 1880): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Michael Conaty, a laborer, who lived in one unit and rented the other; by the mid-1890s the Conatys had left the neighborhood but retained ownership of this as an investment.
- 59 (ca. 1885): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by Michael Conaty, a laborer, as an income-producing property; Conaty lived next door at 55 Pekin.

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Pekin Street (cont.)

- 62 (ca. 1890): Type A, with hooded entrance and bracketed cornice. Built by Martin F. McGrath as an income-producing property.
- 64-66 (ca. 1890): Type A, with hooded entrance. Built by the heirs of George H. Corliss as an income-producing property.
- 67 (ca. 1895): Type B, with original entrance porch removed. Built by Mary Rooney (Mrs. John), who occupied one unit and rented the other.
- 68 (ca. 1890): 3½-story, cross-gable-roof multiple-family dwelling with 3-story bay window and hooded entrance on the facade--an early triple-decker, a transition between Types A & B. Built by Jeremiah Dowling, a butter dealer, as an income-producing property; Dowling lived nearby at 24-26 Mansfield (q.v.) and later moved here.
- 71 (ca. 1890): 2½-story, cross-gable-roof, 2-family dwelling, a larger, foursquare version of Type B. Built by James F. Nolan, a jeweler, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 72 (ca. 1900): 3-story, multiple-family dwelling with hip roof and 1-story entrance porch. Built by James F. Nolan, a jeweler, as an income-producing property; Nolan lived nearby at 71 Pekin.
- 75 (ca. 1890): Type B, with hooded entrance. Built by Catherine O'Connell as an income-producing property.
- 77 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch and bracketed cornice. Built by Catherine McCarthy (Mrs. James), wife of a shoemaker; the McCarthys lived in one unit and rented the others.
- 83-85 (ca. 1928): Type C, with inset, 3-story porch on north half of facade. Samuel Bornstein, a vice president, lived in one unit and rented the others.
- 86 (ca. 1890): Type B, with 1-story entrance porch. Built by Richard Adams, a laborer, who lived in one unit and rented the other.
- 88 (ca. 1888): Cross-gable-roof cottage with bay window and hooded entrance on the facade and bracketed cornice. Built by Mary Tierney, a widow, who occupied the house upon its completion.

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Pekin Street (cont.)

- 94 (ca. 1840?, ca. 1893): Flank-gable-roof cottage with 3-bay facade, center entrance, and paired end chimneys. Typical of early/mid-nineteenth-century vernacular dwellings, this house first appeared on this site between 1882 and 1895; it may well have been moved to this site in the early 1890s when a number of such houses were moved from the site of the State House (90 Smith Street) immediately prior to its construction. Michael Donovan, a vitriol worker, moved the house to this location.

VALE STREET

- 2 (ca. 1908): Type C, with cross-gable roof, octagonal corner bay, and partial-width, 3-story front porch. Built by the Todd-Mellor Company as an income-producing property.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Pekin Street Historic District is a fine and intact late nineteenth-century residential neighborhood significant for its architecture and social history. The district chronicles an important yet little-studied house type, the multiple family dwelling, which comprises the vast majority of its buildings. The district sheds light on the development of a working-class neighborhood during Providence's period of tremendous growth as an industrial center: this was the city's fastest growing neighborhood in the prosperous 1880s,¹ and the ethnic and ownership patterns are revealing.

The multiple-family dwelling became the predominant housing form in Providence during the years 1870-1930. The row house, seen commonly in other metropolitan areas of the northeastern United States, never found acceptance in Providence, which continued to prefer detached housing. Particularly in areas near Providence's many industries or along street-car lines, block after block of multiple-family dwellings rose to accommodate the city's booming population, and these densely built detached multiple-family dwellings help to define the character of Providence during these years.

The development of this area adds to our understanding of late nineteenth-century urbanization. The district is in the center of Smith Hill, a residential neighborhood whose impetus for growth came largely from the development of industry at its edges, along the two principal rivers flowing through the city. The land within the district remained open through most of the nineteenth century. Until the 1880s, the only house here was the Thomas Davis House (ca. 1850), a cruciform-plan Greek Revival cottage at 503½ and 507½ Chalkstone Avenue. Davis had left this house in 1869, and in 1872 he and George L. Clark first offered lots in the "Davis & Clarke Plat No 2" (see map). In 1877, John J.A.R. Whipple platted his land on the west side of Pekin Street. By 1879, William Chase had purchased the block on which Davis's house stands and divided it for sale as house lots. Over the next thirty years, this remarkably uniform neighborhood developed quickly as houses rose singly or in small groups: the 104 dwellings in the district were constructed by sixty-eight different individuals, and none owned more than five properties. Forty-three of the dwellings were owner/builder-occupied upon completion. Eleven of these owner/builders owned houses near their own; in at least two instances, individuals built one house, occupied it for several years, then built

¹Providence Journal, 1 January 1883.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Smith Hill, Providence," Statewide Historical Preservation Report, P-P-4. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, June 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property ca. 10.5 acres

Quadrangle name Providence

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

19	298780	4634330
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

19	298810	4634180
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

19	298620	4634120
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D

19	298540	4634480
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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Pekin Street Historic District is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying map, "Pekin Street Historic District," (See Continuation Sheet #13)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title William McKenzie Woodward, Principal Historic Preservation Planner

organization R.I. Historical Preservation Comm. date November 15, 1983

street & number 150 Benefit Street telephone 401-277-2678

city or town Providence state Rhode Island 02903

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Frank E. Williamson

title _____ date 20 Feb 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 11-1-84

for Helene Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 12

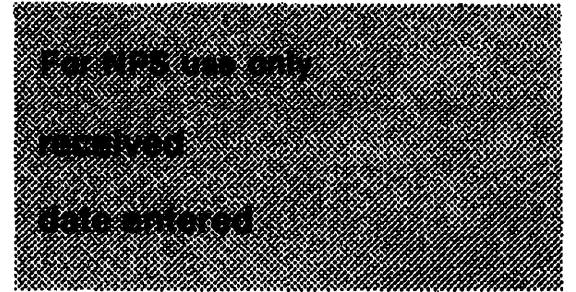
Item number 8

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another house nearby and moved into it while retaining ownership of the first as an income-producing property. Of the sixty-eight builders in this area, forty-two had Irish surnames, and the house directories of the early 1890s show Irish predominant among the residents. Ninety-nine of these dwellings were built as multiple-family dwellings; four are cottages (including Davis's original dwelling); and one was built as a shop with flat for the owner above it. By 1910, this was a densely built neighborhood, much as it stands today; the few dwellings constructed after 1910 were additional multiple-family dwellings, two of these built on the back part of the lot, a common practice in such neighborhoods in the early twentieth century.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet 13

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and drawn at the scale of 160 feet to the inch.

The district boundary is drawn to include a dense concentration of two- and three-family dwellings built primarily between 1880 and 1910; the boundary excludes more sparsely developed land immediately to the south and east, a cemetery to the north, and later housing of varied types to the west.

Pekin Street Historic District Providence, Rhode Island

GR Greek Revival
LV Late Victorian
ET Early Twentieth Century

R.I.H.P.C. 2-84

