

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

For NPS use only

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

received **AUG 5 1985**

date entered **SEP 5 1985**

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

**1. Name**

historic Fire Station No. 9

and/or common Prescott Neighborhood Center

**2. Location**

street & number 2 South 14th Street N/A not for publication

city, town Kansas City N/A vicinity of

state Kansas code 20 county Wyandotte code 209

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Kansas City, KS c/o City Administrator

street & number Municipal Office Building, 701 North 7th Street

city, town Kansas City N/A vicinity of state Kansas 66101

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Clerk

street & number Wyandotte County Courthouse, 700 North 7th Street

city, town Kansas City state Kansas 66101

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys** (See Continuation Sheet also)

title Register of Historic KS Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date July 3, 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Dept., Kansas State Historical Society

city, town Topeka state Kansas 66612

## 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Fire Station Number 9 is a three story building of solid masonry construction with interior timber framing. In plan it is a Latin cross with the two main doors at the foot of the cross (east end). The side arms are short and close to the body, and do not extend above the second floor. The west end of the cross is very short. A crenellated hose tower with copper domed cupola is attached to one side, at the juncture of the east and north arms of the cross. The building is faced up to the first floor sill line with an off-white, rough-faced limestone trimmed with a matching terra cotta. Above this, the facing is a hard-glazed mustard-colored brick with rounded edges and deeply raked mortar joints. A broadly overhanging hipped roof of red tile begins immediately above the third floor windows in an echo of the Prairie style. Dark green woodwork and copper gutters and downspouts add to the colorful effect.

Of particular note are the doors, two on the east, one on the north and one on the west. They were enframed in terra cotta with pointed arches flattened to the point of being almost (but not quite) round. At the principal corners of the building are terra cotta gargoyles in the shape of dwarfish firemen. Two different designs are employed for these figures, one on the main body of the structure and one on the hose tower. The overall impression is of a mixture of Prairie and Tudor Revival styles, with perhaps some touches of the Mediterranean as well, in a combination that is both aesthetically pleasing and rather whimsical.

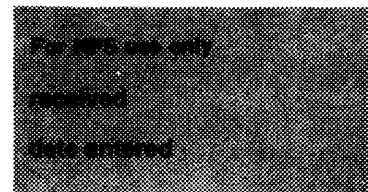
The interior has brick walls on the first floor and sand-finished plaster trimmed with flat pine moldings on the second. The third floor is a single large recreation room with a brick wainscot and a plastered cove ceiling, the windows on all sides being set in the wainscot close to the floor and supplemented with dormers cutting into the cove.

In 1950 the front doors were widened and their arches removed, in order to better accommodate larger fire trucks. At the same time the north and west arches were filled in with a cream-colored brick. These rather heavy-handed alterations did not significantly prolong the life of the station, however. A new three bay station was opened in 1967 at 11th and Central in Bethany Park, and old No. 9 was turned over to the city painters and carpenters for use as a shop and storage. These maintenance workers unfortunately did not maintain their own building to any high standard, with the result that what once had been a well-landscaped neighborhood showplace become increasingly shabby looking.

About 1975-76 the city agreed to convert the building to use as a neighborhood community center. Exterior restoration, except for the main doors, was carried out in 1977. The reopening of the north and west doors and work on the interior followed in the Spring of 1978. Architects for the restoration project were M.A. Solomon/R.J. Claybaugh (later Solomon Claybaugh Young Architects Inc.) of Kansas City, MO. The Prescott Neighborhood Association agreed to fund the needed landscaping and site improvements that were carried out in 1979. There are plans to restore the main doors when funds become available.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 6

Page 1

Title: Kansas City, KS Historic Landmark

Date: May 25, 1983

\_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county  X  local

Depository for survey records: City Planning Division, City of Kansas City, KS

City, town: Kansas City

State: Kansas

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1911 **Builder/Architect** William E. Harris

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Fire Station No. 9 is a very distinctive example of municipally sponsored neighborhood fire house architecture of the early 20th century. Its design suggests the "free eclecticism" of the period, based particularly at this time on a taste for Mediterranean, Tudor Revival and Prairie School forms and detailing. The building's strong character and the charm of its details have been noted in several national publications in recent years.

Fire Station No. 9 was one of the first of many civic improvements carried out during Kansas City's period of greatest prosperity, from 1910 to 1927. This era began with the reform adoption of the city commission form of city government in 1910. This change was followed by the construction of a new city hall, the development of an extensive parks system (including six public swimming pools), new schools and a number of new fire stations, all to serve a rapidly growing population. Although largely built in response to public needs, civic pride nevertheless played a significant role in the design and implementation of many of these improvements.

The Grandview neighborhood where Fire Station No. 9 was located had begun to develop as early as 1886. Growth ceased with the Panic of 1893, but resumed again in the early years of this century. Fire Station No. 9's service area was bounded on the north by Minnesota Avenue, on the south by Muncie Boulevard, on the east by 10th Street and on the west by 37th Street (the city limits of that time). Just inside the eastern boundary of this area was Bethany Hospital, also completed in 1911, whose construction may have sparked the building of the station. By the time the City's development again came to a general halt in 1927, this service area was solidly built up with a mixture of middle class and blue collar homes and related shopping facilities along Central Avenue.

Almost nothing is known about the architect, William E. Harris. It is assumed that he was local, as such design commissions were rarely given to "outsiders." At the same time that Fire Station No. 9 was constructed, Harris also designed Fire Station No. 8 at 16th and Garfield in Kansas City, KS using an identical floor plan. Executed in red brick and red terra cotta, No. 8 was more consciously Tudor Revival in style than No. 9 and somewhat less interesting. Fire Station No. 8 was demolished in 1984 following extensive damage due to arson.

Fire Station No. 9 opened on December 6, 1911. Fire Station records indicate that it initially housed an Anderson combination chemical and hose wagon equipped with 1,000 feet of 2½ inch hose, 200 feet of ¼ inch hose, 22 foot and 10 foot ladders, and two 35 gallon chemical tanks, manned by a crew of four. No trace now remains of the horse stalls and related fixtures that must once have existed.

The building's decline, subsequent restoration and adaptive use are noted under Item number 7. Fire Station No. 9 was listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places on July 3, 1979, and declared a Kansas City, KS Historic Landmark on May 25, 1983. It remains an object of pride to the community and an outstanding if idiosyncratic example of fire station design.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

City of Kansas City, Kansas Fire Department Records.  
Progressive Architecture Magazine, Vol. LX, No. 11, November, 1979.  
Rebecca Zurier, The American Firehouse. New York: Abbeville Press, 1982.

This nomination was prepared from a draft submitted by Larry K. Hancks, City Planning Division,

## 10. Geographical Data

Municipal Office Bldg., 701 N. 7th St., Kansas City, Kansas 66101.

Acreage of nominated property .22 acres

Quadrangle name Shawnee, KS

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A	<u>15</u>	<u>357790</u>	<u>4329380</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

All of Lots 22, 23 and 24, Block 11, Reynold's Grandview Park, an addition in Kansas City, Wyandotte County, KS.

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

state	code	county	code
N/A			

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard J. Cawthon, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society date June 21, 1985

street & number 120 W. 10th telephone (913) 296-3251

city or town Topeka state KS 66612

## 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

*Joseph H. Snell*

Executive Director  
title Kansas State Historical Society

date 7-3-85

### For NPS use only

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

*for Allover/Lyer*  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 9/5/85

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration