



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bryn Mawr Apartments

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 511 29th Street not for publication n/a

city or town Des Moines vicinity n/a

state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50312-4039

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. _____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Joe King
Signature of certifying official

18 AUG 2017
Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper
Tatiana Andrews

Date of Action
10/10/2017

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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 count)

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

Name of related multiple property listing

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

 n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Multiple dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/
 Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
walls BRICK

roof

other CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE _____

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT _____

Period of Significance

1918 _____

Significant Dates

1918 _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a _____

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson _____

Bryn Mawr Apartments
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(Enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 41.585174 Longitude: -93.656444

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Alexa McDowell email akaymcd@hotmail.com

organization AKAY Consulting date 07/01/2017

street & number 4252 Oakland Avenue telephone 515-491-5432

city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55407-3123

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps: A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Bryn Mawr Associates, LP

street & number 3408 Woodland Avenue, Suite 504 telephone 515-599-0159

city or town West Des Moines state IA zip code 50266-6505

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Narrative Description

Site Description

The Bryn Mawr Apartments building is located in Iowa's capital city of Des Moines, located in south-central Iowa. The Des Moines' commercial district grew up on either side of the Des Moines River, which runs diagonally through the historic downtown area from the northwest to the southeast. The state capital building is situated on the east side of the river, in an area now referred to as the East Village. The central core of the historic downtown is situated west of the Des Moines River. The Bryn Mawr Apartments building, at 511 29th Street, is situated in a predominantly residential neighborhood located approximately one-mile west of the downtown commercial area.

Bryn Mawr Apartments is sited on a 0.215-acre parcel on the east side of 29th Street between Grand Avenue on the south and Ingersoll Avenue on the north; 29th Street being a relatively narrow roadway at just 50-feet wide, with mature trees forming a vegetative canopy over the street (Image 1). Ingersoll and Grand Avenues are both major east-west thoroughfares connecting the downtown area to residential development – the character of that residential development having changed over time.

The immediate area within which the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is located is a mix of apartment buildings and commercial properties. 29th Street is predominantly residential, with both historic and non-historic apartment buildings located on either side of the street. A three-story, 24-unit residential building (2902 Grand Avenue) constructed in 2002 is located on the west side of 29th Street, adjacent to Grand Avenue, with the ca.1917 three-story, 21-unit Ingersoll Apartment building located at the opposite end of that side of the block. Grand Avenue resources are predominantly residential with numerous apartment buildings located along it. Those resources include the ca.1917 single-family dwelling immediately south of Bryn Mawr and multiple historic apartments buildings dating to a construction period similar to that of the 1918 Bryn Mawr Apartments building and representative of the city's westward expansion in the early years of the 20th century. In contrast to the primarily residential character of Grand Avenue, Ingersoll Avenue to the north of Bryn Mawr is predominantly commercial in character, with both historic and non-historic properties located along the roadway.

The parcel upon which the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is situated has a 60-foot frontage and a 156-foot depth; the 46-foot by 112-foot apartment building being located near the north and west property lines with a small grassy yard abutting the building on the south and paved parking stretching along the south and east property lines (Figure 2). The property parking is accessed via a driveway directly from 29th Street into the south parking lot. Secondary access is available via a paved driveway running the length of the building on the north to connect to the east parking area. The site itself slopes from west to east and from south to north, allowing for increased basement-level window heights on the rear (east) and north elevations of the building.

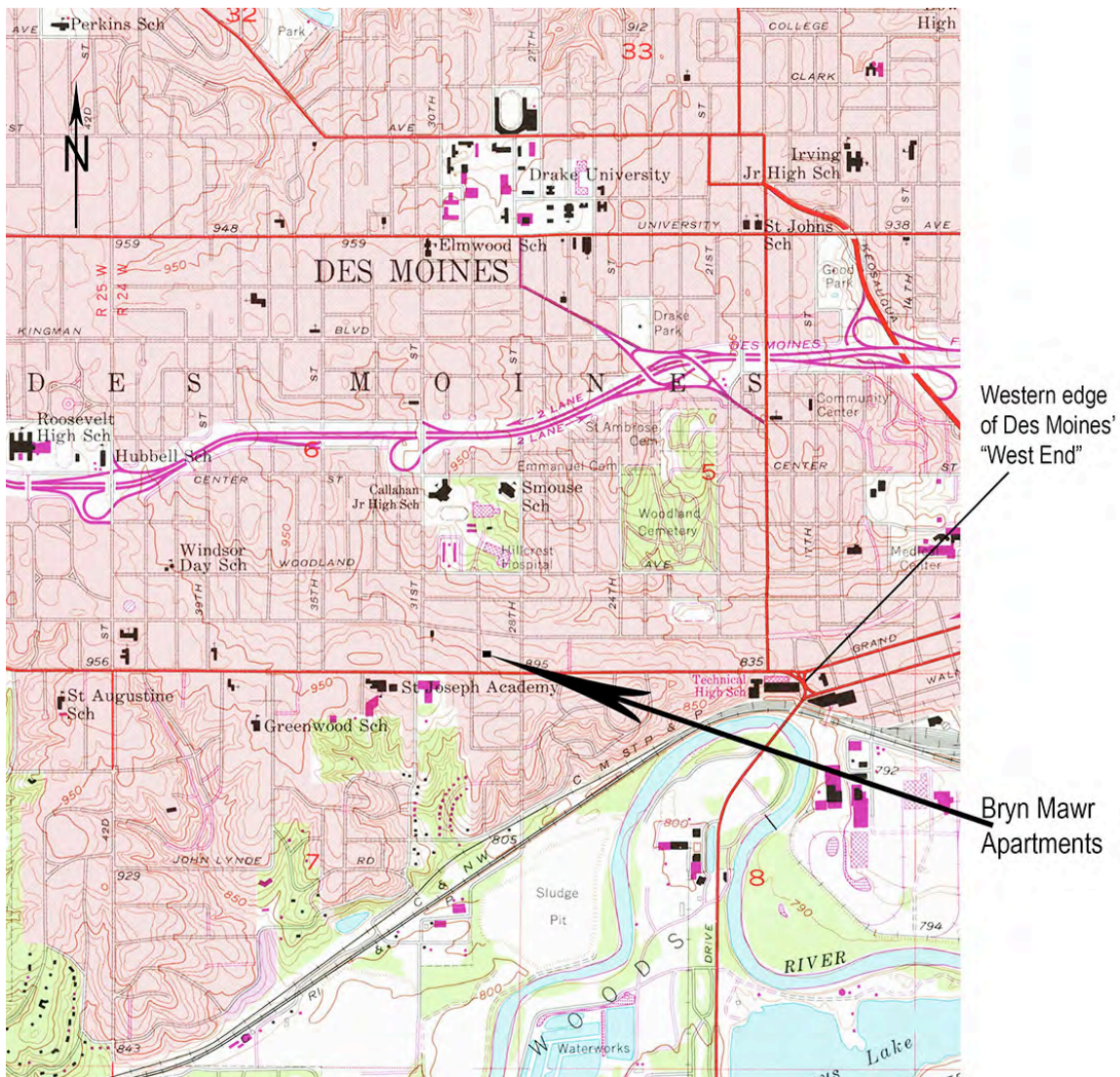
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Figure 1. 7.5 Minute USGS Topographic Map – Des Moines SW Quad - 1956



(SOURCE: <https://store.usgs.gov/>)

The location of the Bryn Mawr Apartments is indicated, as is the approximate location of the western edge of the downtown commercial area known as the “West End.”

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Image 1. Site View



(Image by AKAY Consulting – 12/29/2015)

View of Bryn Mawr Apartments, looking northeast across 29th Street.

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Figure 2. Aerial Map - 2016



(SOURCE: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Des+Moines,+IA>. Accessed 10/01/2016.)

The location of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is indicated.

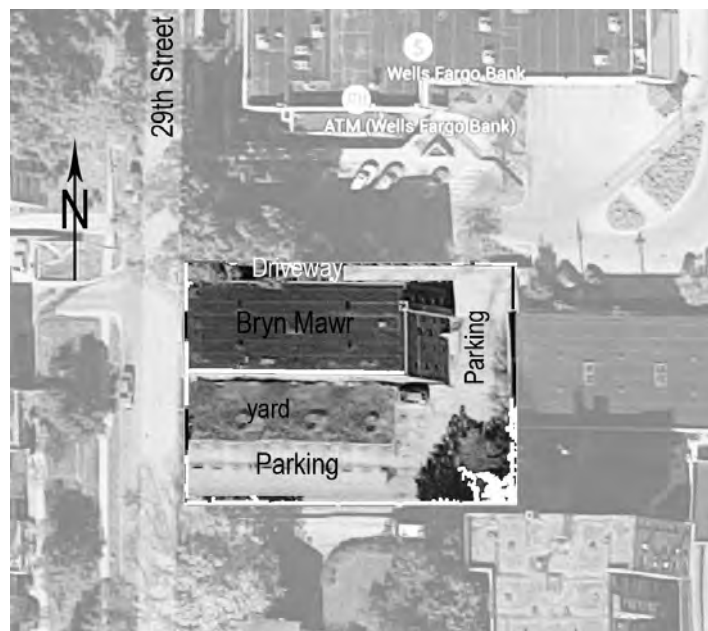
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Figure 3. Site Map – 2017



(SOURCE: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Des+Moines,+IA>. Accessed 10/01/2016)

The site makes note of the location of parking areas and the driveway.

Property Description

Bryn Mawr Apartments is a three-story, rectangular brick building with design elements expressive of the early 20th century Classical Revival (Image 2). The 60- by 156-foot building is constructed on a clay tile block and brick foundation and has a flat roof. The building houses a total of 26 efficiency units – eight on each of the upper floors and two in the basement (one of the two is not historic) – arranged around a central corridor. The building retains a generally high level of historic integrity both inside and out, making it an important representative of the property type specific to the period of construction.

Exterior

The exterior of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is visually defined by its rectangular form, flat roof, abundant windows, and judicious use of classically derived design elements. Its red brick, laid in a Flemish

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bond and utilizing contrasting masonry, is a strong element of the building's visual character. Bryn Mawr's façade (west elevation) features the primary entrance, a mix of fenestration, classical design elements, and a raised parapet. The entrance is located in the center bay - its location and importance emphasized by the stacking of classically inspired elements. The entrance itself utilizes a cast stone surround with pilasters supporting a lintel entablature – all classic design elements. A simple name plaque of cast stone with incised lettering noting "Bryn Mawr Apartments" is integrated within the surround. Stacked above the entrance surround is a Palladian inspired window (marking the staircase landing between the first and second floors) and a circular window with decorative "keys" marking the third story.

Image 2. Exterior View



(Image by AKAY Consulting – 12/29/2015.)

View of the façade (west) and north elevations of the Bryn Mawr Apartments, looking southeast across 29th Street.

A classically inspired, cast concrete and brick cornice runs the width of the façade, then turns at the corners where it transitions to brick corbel courses along the side elevations. The horizontal line of the cornice is reiterated by a narrow, cast stone sill course under the third floor windows. A stepped parapet finishes the façade wall.

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In its arrangement, the façade fenestration underscores the building's classical character. Common to the Classical Revival style is the arrangement of windows with five across the upper floor and four (plus the entrance) on the ground floor.¹ Although, atypically, the windows are not aligned horizontally, they are aligned vertically. In this manner, they retain the sense of restraint and order exemplified in classical styles.

The north and south elevations of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building are identical to one another in materials and window arrangement. As noted in the façade description, the elevations are red brick set in a Flemish bond with a sill course of contrasting color running under the third floor windows and a series of corbel courses serving as a cornice. This cornice is a continuation from the cast stone and brick cornice of the façade, and uses brick that is a light color reiterative of the cast stone. The sill course is of the same brick.

The arrangement of the fenestration of the north and south elevations is dictated by the interior plan. As a result, the rhythm of the window placement is irregular within one floor, but in vertical alignment between floors. With the exception of two windows on each floor (marking the location of the bathrooms), the windows are of consistent size, shape, and configuration. All use a segmental arch header of soldier brick courses, a brick sill of rowlock bricks, wood frames and sashes, and an 8-over-8 light configuration. The bathroom windows are the same, but smaller in height and width, and using a 3-over-3 light configuration.

The rear (east) elevation is similar to those described. However, the elevation does not incorporate a cornice, which is terminated at the point it turns onto the rear elevation from the side elevations. The sill course, however, continues across the rear elevation. Further, the fenestration of the rear elevation is arranged around the central staircase, which features large windows at the landings between floors and a door at ground level. Windows are set in pairs on either side of the central bay – one full-sized window being paired with one small bathroom window. The pairings are aligned vertically between floors. A brick chimney, visible from ground level to a point some six-feet above the roofline, is situated between the window pairings on the north half of the rear elevation.

Although no historic images have been identified for reference, the exterior of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building clearly retains its 1918 appearance, with all key stylistic details and historic windows (the exterior storms being non-historic) retained. Although the masonry is in need of repointing and repair, the sole alteration on the exterior appears to be replacement of the parapet cap.

Interior

The interior of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is visually defined by the arrangement of units along a central corridor. A total of 24 units – eight on each floor – line the hallways of the first through third floors,

¹ Cyril M. Harris, *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998), 65.

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the doors to the units creating a visual rhythm down the length of the hallway. Two apartments are located in the basement, one of which did not function as a unit until some time after 1960. With that one exception, the interior plan of the building remains as constructed.

Primary access to the interior of Bryn Mawr is made from the façade (west) entrance. A small vestibule is situated just inside. The vestibule features a hexagonal tile floor with a Greek key border in contrasting color, wood paneled wall (to approximately six-feet), and a brass panel of door buzzers arranged by apartment number. An interior door provides access from the vestibule to the interior stairwell.

As noted, the layout and appearance of floors one through three are identical, each being visually defined by the placement of living units along a central corridor (Figure 4). The central corridor runs the length of the building from the staircase at the front (west) to the staircase at the rear (east). The corridor is approximately 10-feet wide, with plaster walls and ceiling. The oak strip flooring remains intact (although carpeted on the first floor) with baseboards, crown molding, door trim, and doors (with hardware) also retained.

The apartment units are of two types – those located in the corners and those in the middle of the building. While some variation in the floor layout exists between the two types, all units are efficiencies with a combined sleeping/living space, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, small dressing area adjacent to the bathroom, and closets. Historically, each had a space-saving bed in the sleeping/living space (a wide, shallow closet marks the location of the former space-saving bed).

Each corner unit (four on each floor) is 480-square feet, with the sleeping/living space situated in the corner, the dining room and kitchen to the north or south, and the bathroom on the corridor side. The corner units have the benefit of more windows than the middle units. The corner units retain plaster walls, oak strip flooring, baseboards, crown molding, oak trim, and double-hung, wood windows with original light configuration (8-over-8). Although some significant damage has occurred in some units, the bathrooms remain generally intact with an undersized tub, hexagonal tile floors, and subway tile walls with plaster surface above. Most toilets and sinks have been replaced.

Each middle unit (four on each floor) is 450-square feet, with the sleeping/living space situated in the middle of the unit with the dining room on one side, and the bathroom on the other. The units retain plaster walls, oak strip flooring, baseboards, crown molding, oak trim, and double-hung, wood windows with original light configuration (8-over-8). Although some significant damage has occurred in some units, the bathrooms remain generally intact with an undersized tub, hexagonal tile floors, and subway tile walls with plaster surface above. Most toilets and sinks have been replaced.

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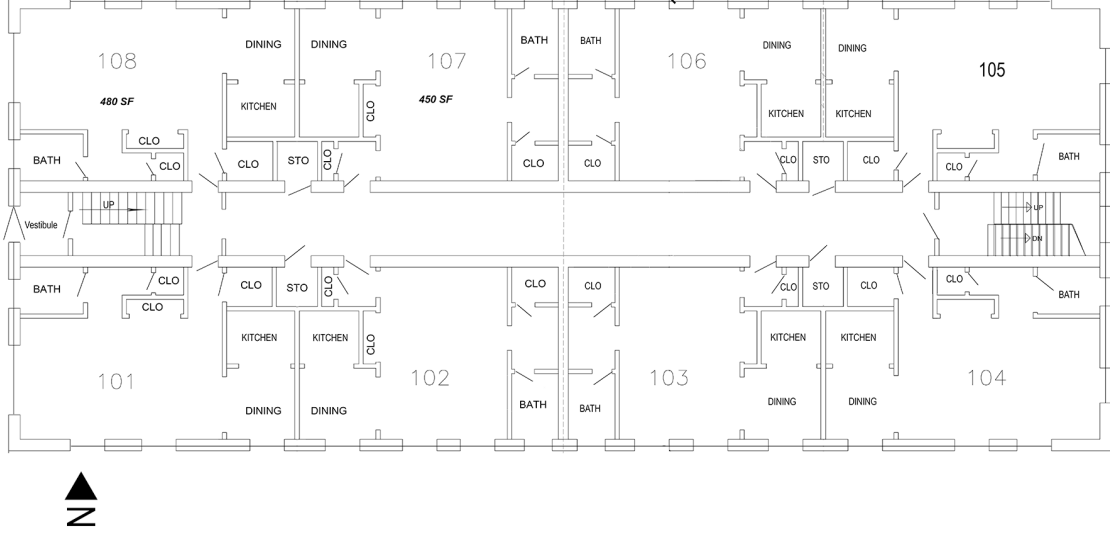
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Two apartment units, the furnace room, former coal room, laundry room, and a workroom are arranged along the central corridor in the basement (Figure 5). The apartments (one of which is a late 20th century renovation) are similar in layout to those of the upper floors. The furnace room and workroom are unfinished spaces and the laundry room is minimally finished.

Figure 4. Floor Plan – Typical Floors 1-3



(Base Floor Plan Courtesy Newbury Living – 2015)

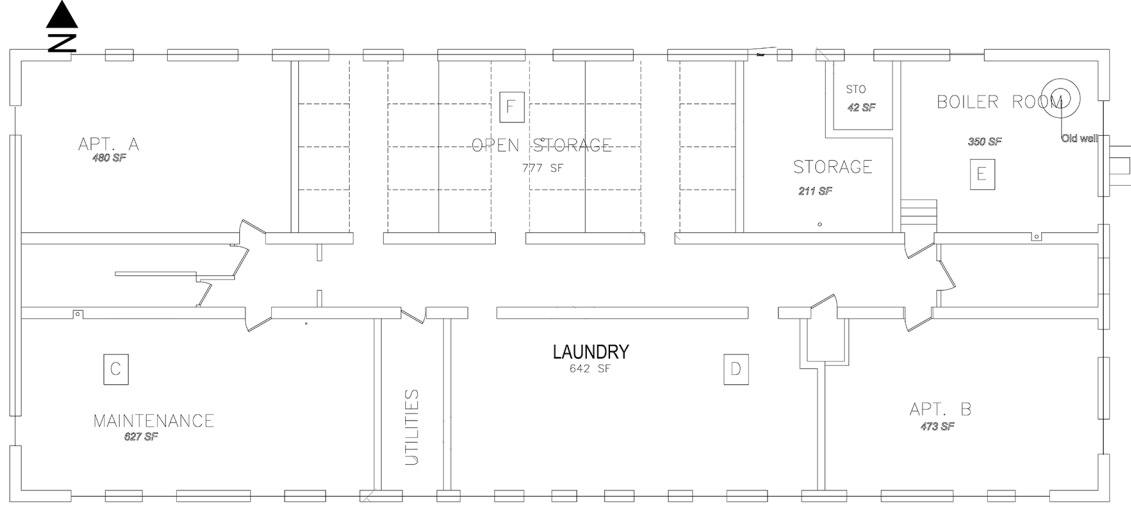
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Figure 5. Interior Floor Plan – Basement



(Base Floor Plan Courtesy Newbury Living – 2015)

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Integrity Discussion

The Bryn Mawr Apartments building retains a very high level of historic integrity as it relates to all seven aspects of integrity: location, setting, association, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

Because Bryn Mawr remains on its original site, the level of integrity as it relates to *location* is high. The building is sited on its original 0.213-acre parcel with the historic street setback intact.

Retention of a narrow street with a mature tree canopy results in a high level of integrity as it relates to historic *setting*. At the time of its construction, the building's setting was described as "... on a large plat of ground, covered with beautiful trees, [which] will insure its occupants plenty of light, air and shade."² It should be noted that some degradation of site integrity has resulted from the paving of the south and west yards. Although historic fire insurance maps provide no indication that the parking existed adjacent to the building, the proliferation of the automobile in the years immediately subsequent to the apartment building's construction suggest that parking would indeed have been a necessary amenity. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that some surface parking was part of the early site, thereby diminishing the negative impact of the existing parking lot.

The 1918 Bryn Mawr Apartments building was constructed in a residential neighborhood of properties dating to a similar construction era as Bryn Mawr. Generally speaking, the blocks surrounding Bryn Mawr Apartments (particularly along 29th Street and Grand Avenue) retain their historic residential composition, with buildings representative of the era of growth and development to which Bryn Mawr is associated remaining in place. Although some later, high-density residential construction has occurred, integrity of historic *association* remains very good. Further, the resource retains its historic association to the route of the city trolley line along Ingersoll, which was central to residential development moving outward from the city's historic core.

As a resource considered eligible for registration under Criterion C, integrity of *design, workmanship, and materials* are of paramount concern and the integrity of each of those is very high. Exterior details and materials remain nearly fully intact, significant in that their retention underscores the building's Classical Revival style. Retention of the historic form (without additions or alterations), fenestration (exterior storms being a non-historic addition), and classically derived decorative details result in a very high level of integrity of design, workmanship, and materials on the building's exterior.

Further, the interior of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building retains a very high level of integrity of design and materials, with no alterations made to the historic floor plan and minimal alterations made to the interior

² *Des Moines Register and Leader*, November 3, 1918.

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units – the post-1960 renovation of a basement space to a living unit being the only significant alteration and that is minimized by its location in the basement. Overall, the retention of the historic floor plan, the arrangement of living units flanking a central corridor, oak strip flooring and trim work, and historic windows result in a very high level of historic integrity of design, workmanship, and materials on the building's interior. Historically, each unit was heated by radiators, which are being replaced as part of the historic rehabilitation underway.

The interior retains the historic elements that define it as an apartment building representative of the "kitchenette apartment" that was popularized during the First World War. Except for the actual beds that were historically mounted in living room closets, the units at Bryn Mawr retain the features that define them as "kitchenette apartments." Further, historic finishes, which were considered important elements of comfortable apartment living, are retained except in the instances where deterioration from water infiltration has occurred (confined to bathrooms).

Bryn Mawr also retains a high level of integrity as it relates to *feeling*. Because the apartment building retains a very high level of integrity as it relates to the previous qualities, a resident of the building during the Period of Significance would readily recognize the resource today, easily making their way through the building to find their apartment remaining very much today as it was when they resided there.

FUTURE PLANS

An historic rehabilitation of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is currently underway. The rehabilitation involves updating of the resource for continued use as apartment housing. As an historic tax credit project, the historic rehabilitation is following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, with the work respecting the character-defining features of the historic building while introducing features demanded by a new era of city-dwellers.

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8. Statement of Significance

The Bryn Mawr Apartments building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The resource is locally significant as a very well preserved example of a World War I era apartment building of the “kitchenette” type. Bryn Mawr was constructed in the early years of the city’s apartment boom. It is representative of the effort to increase profit on residential construction by eliminating the number of rooms in each unit. That approach created what was coined the kitchenette apartment. Designed by the Des Moines firm of Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, Bryn Mawr Apartments represents the quality of design work typical of the firm. Further, the building stands as an important example of a specific property type within the portfolio of an historic architectural firm that is widely cited as Iowa’s most significant.³

In addition, the resource is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A. The building is locally significant in its historic association with the impact of transportation on residential development in the growing city. In the 1890s, the Des Moines Street Railway Company extended a line along Ingersoll Avenue from the city’s downtown west to Greenwood Park (now Polk Boulevard). The 1918 extension of the Crocker Street line from Ingersoll Avenue to Center Street and onward only enhanced the convenience of travel from downtown to the expanding residential neighborhoods, thereby facilitating continued growth.⁵ While investors were influenced by a variety of factors required to ensure a profit, proximity to a streetcar route was a major factor in the determination of location. That assertion is evidenced by the common practice of highlighting the amenity of convenience in their advertisements for new tenants.⁶

As a property type, apartment buildings began to appear in Des Moines in some number during the early years of the 20th century. A variety of apartment building types⁷ were constructed in Des Moines between 1910 and 1920, the number rising dramatically from 65 properties in 1910 to 133 in 1915, 149 buildings in 1916, and 179 in 1919. The outward push of residential development (facilitated by the establishment of the streetcar system) and the limitations placed on resources during the First World War, rendered the apartment building an important housing option in Des Moines. A number of examples appeared in newly developing and re-developing residential areas, including those west of the city’s downtown commercial area, particularly along Grand and Ingersoll Avenues.

³ Barbara Beving-Long and Ralph Christian, “The Architectural Legacy of Proudfoot & Bird in Iowa, 1882-1940,” National Register of Historic Places MPDF, November 1988.

⁵ “Des Moines City Railway,” *Electric Railway Journal* Vol. 51, No. 6 (1918): 300. City’s

⁶ William C. Page, “The Ayrshire Apartments,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1996: 8.11.

⁷ The term “flats” was used in city directories and news accounts to describe multiple-family buildings through about 1915. Beginning in 1916, city directories listed such properties under the category of “apartments.” There is little or no obvious difference between buildings bearing the different descriptors. As an example, the 1913 Motzer Flats at 1353-1355 W. 9th Street (NRHP “West Ninth Streetcar Line Historic District”, 1989) bears a strong resemblance to Bryn Mawr Apartments constructed five years later.

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Labor and material shortages during the war years impacted building construction of all types and forced builders to create ways to construct more economically in order to remain profitable. It was those limitations that resulted in the “kitchenette apartment” – its diminished size responding to the need for economy of construction as well as to the lack of domestic labor available (formerly considered necessary for larger scale homes).

Recommendations for the economization of construction costs appeared in trade magazines such as *American Builder*, which offered specific guidance about building on a small scale for the purpose of saving materials and labor. The dual-use living room/bedroom (made possible by the use of a space-saving bed) with a dining room/kitchen was at the core of the modern apartment building; this two-room unit became known as the “kitchenette apartment.” With such a design, it was projected that the builder could save \$1,000 per eliminated room. The sales pitch was that with the kitchenette apartment “the home builder of today is building at pre-war prices.”⁸

At the time of its construction, one local newspaper described Bryn Mawr’s 24 units as each having “a large living room, dressing room, dining room, kitchenette, and bath” – precisely those elements that define it as a kitchenette apartment and which tie it to the developments that came out of the need to build more economically. Also indicative of the modern apartment, each unit at Bryn Mawr had a service hall with “a specially designed package delivery system,” a telephone, ironing board, and a dedicated storage space in the basement. The building’s location was described as “convenient and delightful; while its situation, on a large plat of ground, covered with beautiful trees, will insure its occupants plenty of light, air and shade.”⁹

The absence of a citywide survey and evaluation of resources of this property type and construction era hinders a fully informed comparative analysis. However, in a series of National Register nominations completed in the late 1990s (subsequent to the 1994 “Towards a Greater Des Moines” reconnaissance survey of Des Moines), public historian William C. Page established the context for the significance of apartment buildings in association with the historical transportation corridors and the ensuing development. Although those nominations were confined to resources located in North Des Moines, they establish a precedent for registration related to that association. The document also notes the significance of the apartment building as a property type that emerged in the 1910s and 1920s, stating specifically that the apartment building is representative of an important community development pattern in Des Moines’ history and is illustrative of how the proximity to a transportation corridor (i.e. streetcar line) encouraged denser residential development.¹⁰

⁸ “How to Build at Pre-War Prices,” *American Builder* Vol. 29. 1919: 75-78.

⁹ *Des Moines Register and Leader*, November 3, 1918.

¹⁰ William C. Page, “The Ayrshire Apartments,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1996: 8.11.

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The 1998 MPDF “West Ninth Streetcar Line Historic District” provides a similar context for understanding the impact of the city’s streetcar system on residential development, including the construction of apartment buildings. That document identified three apartment buildings in West Ninth Historic District, each constructed within five years of Bryn Mawr Apartments. Although the document does not include an evaluation of the apartment building interiors for comparative analysis, it does underscore the historic significance of the property type.

With those documents as precedent, when considered individually, as well as relative to other comparable apartment buildings in the city (including, but not limited to those in close proximity), Bryn Mawr retains a high level of historic integrity and remains a significant example of the property type.

The Period of Significance and Significant Date for the Bryn Mawr Apartments building is 1918, the year the building was placed in service. The placed in service date marks the most significant window of historic association as it relates to the resource’s role as a representative of a specific type of apartment building introduced in response to prevalent pressures and trends of the time.

Historical Context

The years just prior to and during the First World War saw increased demand for housing in the city of Des Moines. The apartment building came into play during this period, with concentrations appearing west of the city’s downtown commercial area, particularly along Grand and Ingersoll Avenues. The extension of the city’s streetcar system along Ingersoll Avenue and stretching west and northwest to expanding residential areas played an important role in facilitating the construction of housing, including apartment buildings. In addition, labor and material shortages during the war years impacted construction with the apartment building as a property type evolving in response to those conditions. With builders looking for ways to construct more economically in order to remain profitable the “kitchenette apartment” came into use– its diminished size responding to the lack of domestic help available and the need for economy of construction.

The Emergence of the Apartment Building

The expansion of Des Moines’ residential areas begin in the early 1880s – growth made possible by the extension of infrastructure and streetcar service from the city center. The site of the Bryn Mawr Apartments building, located just inside the eastern boundary of what was historically known as Greenwood Park, is associated with what has been described as the first substantial residential growth to the west. Greenwood Park stretched from 28th Street on the east to 42nd Street on the west, with Grand Avenue running through its center. From the early days of its development, residences lined Grand Avenue from border to border in

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Greenwood Park.¹¹ Today, many of those residences – some of the largest and grandest in the city – have been lost to later development, including construction of World War 1 era apartment buildings.

As a property type, the apartment building became more fully developed during the early years of the 20th century. Preceded by the boarding house and then the flat, apartment buildings became a popular form of multiple-family housing in the years just before and during the First World War. This trend is apparent in Des Moines, with the city directory of 1905 recording two “apartment buildings” and 20 boarding houses in their business section. The directories illustrate the transition to the term “flats” with 133 flats located in the city in 1910 and 133 found there in 1915.¹² Most of these first multi-family buildings were located on the west side and near the downtown, with most occupied by the “well-to-do.” The Portwell-Wellsport, the Colonade, and the Lexington were all located west of the downtown in present-day Sherman Hill.¹³

By the spring of 1915, local newspapers were reporting on the “epidemic” of apartment construction. That description may have been hyperbole - understandable, given that until that time Des Moines housing was defined by its single family living. However, the number of apartment buildings or flats had more than doubled in the five-year period from 1910 to 1915. The rise in multi-family housing was reported in April of 1915, with the *Register and Leader* noting that, “Previous to this spring there have been unusually few apartment houses and flat buildings here, compared with cities similar in size to Des Moines” with larger apartment buildings constructed “relatively close in.”¹⁴ The period from 1915 through 1919 saw the number of apartment buildings continue to rise, with construction continuing at a strong pace through the early 1920s (Table 2).

The increase in population recorded between 1910 and 1920 (Table 1.) reflects, in part, the establishment of the Thirteenth District Army Cantonment at Camp Dodge, preparations for which were underway in the early summer of 1917. The decision to establish a cantonment at Camp Dodge was not universally welcomed, though local news sources did much to promote the potential for a positive impact on the city, specifically focusing on the economic benefits. Although the City would invest \$532,000 in construction costs at Camp Dodge, one newspaper projected the economic impact at \$27,395,000.¹⁵ An additional positive impact was, that with the 40,000 soldiers came an estimated population increase of 10 percent or some 10,000 family members of soldiers stationed at Camp Dodge. Add to that some 80,000 visitors to the city and the positive outlook, including an increased demand for housing, seemed undeniable.¹⁶ Growth in white

¹¹ James E. Jacobsen, “Greenwood Park Plats Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. January 23, 2013: 8-65.

¹² *Des Moines City Directory* (Des Moines, IA: R.L. Polk & Co., various).

¹³ “Community Preservation Plan,” 1994: 45.

¹⁴ *Des Moines Register and Leader*, April 25, 1915.

¹⁵ *The Des Moines News*. “Coming of Soldiers Here Means \$27,395,000 For Des Moines, With an Expenditure of Only \$532,000.” August 19, 1917: 16.

¹⁶ *The Des Moines News*. “Coming of Soldiers Here Means \$27,395,000 For Des Moines, With an Expenditure of Only \$532,000.” August 19, 1917: 16.

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collar business opportunities in the city’s downtown, particularly in fields such as the insurance industry, also likely contributed to the expanding demand for apartment living in close proximity to that growing employment sector.

Table 1. Des Moines Historical Population by Decade¹⁷

Year	Population	% Increase
1890	50,093	--
1900	62,139	24%
1910	86,368	39%
1920	126,468	46.5%
1930	142,559	12.7%
1940	159,819	12.1%
1950	177,965	11.4%

Material and labor shortages during the war would create significant impediments to construction in the city – or so was the speculation by contractors and builders in early 1918. The situation was expected to impact single-family home construction for “persons of moderate means.” In contrast, loan associations believed the increased cost of living related to both rentals and commodities would drive the demand for home ownership and result in increased construction of single-family housing. As lenders, the loan associations were in a position to significantly impact that possibility. Despite the frozen ground, in the early months of 1918, foundations were already being dug by both private property owners and by investors “for renting purposes.”¹⁸

The early predictions for record construction during 1918 were born out. Despite the many challenges of the time – including material restrictions, labor shortages, and an influenza outbreak – the total of building valuations for the year 1918 far exceeded that of any previous year. With the records still being compiled in late December, it appeared that the aggregate numbers would approximate \$4,500,000 compared to \$2,640,469 for 1917. Those numbers do not reveal the underlying fact that only two-thirds as many building permits were issued in 1918 as the year prior, indicating that the cost and/or scale of building was the driving factor in the 1918 increase.¹⁹

Newspaper accounts make specific note of improvements along the city’s major thoroughfares of Grand and Ingersoll Avenue, noting that wartime restrictions on construction had a greater impact on the former than the latter. This was particularly true in the section of Grand Avenue situated within the downtown district (as

¹⁷ “Total Population for Iowa’s Incorporated Places,” Iowa Data Center, <http://www.iowadatacenter.org>. Last accessed 01/26/2017.

¹⁸ *Des Moines Sunday Register*, “Home Building Keeps Up. Effect of War on Construction of Residences Problematical.” January 06, 1918: 1.

¹⁹ *Des Moines Sunday Register*. “Year’s Building Breaks Records Despite the War.” December 29, 1918: 1.

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far west as 10th Street) where most improvements were re-development (i.e. remodeling) versus the new construction being seen along Ingersoll Avenue. Despite the number of “new and handsome apartment buildings” construction along Ingersoll Avenue, newspapers reported that those in the real estate industry indicated the area was in the need of many more.²⁰

Table 2. Des Moines City Directory Listings for “Apartments”²¹

Year	Number of Apartment Buildings
1905	2
1910	65
1915	133
1916	149
1917	149
1918	n/a
1919	179
1920	185
1923	223
1924	219
1925	224
1930	279
1935	287
1944	308
1950	342

As Table 2 indicates, multi-family buildings were available in the city in the years before the First World War (1914-1918). However, the table also illustrates that their numbers increased dramatically between 1910 and 1923, reflecting the impact of multiple factors at play during that period including the population increases shown in Table 1.

Trade journals focused on the issues related to the challenges of construction during the war years. Many, including the *American Builder*, offered specific guidance about building on a small scale for the purpose of saving materials and labor. The primary method of achieving traditional, big-house comfort at a smaller scale was the elimination of the “old-fashioned” parlor, noting that in a modern home, the rooms were required to be useful at all times. The sitting room –the family gathering place - replaced the parlor and became known

²⁰ “Two Avenues Have Been Making Good In Building Lines,” *Des Moines Sunday Register*, November 03, 1918: 24.

²¹ The listings found in the Business Directory section of the city directories use the term “flats” in both 1910 and 1915, but by 1916 that term had ceased being used to describe the property type.

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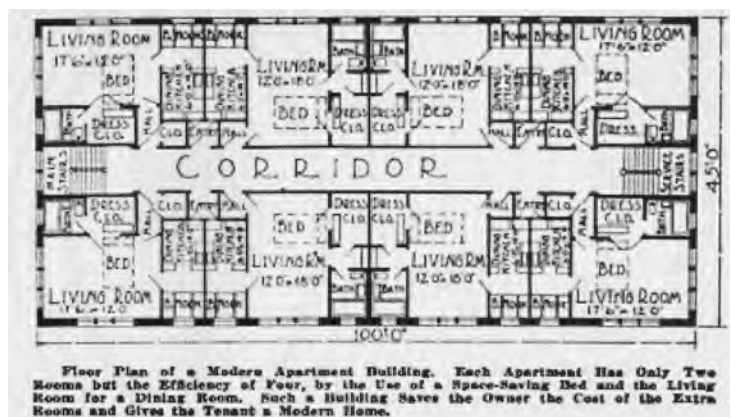
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as the living room. To maximize the living room’s usefulness, the modern apartment building made use of the space 24 hours a day by incorporating a “space-saving bed” so the room could also serve as the bedroom. In this way, it was projected that the builder could save \$1,000 per eliminated room – that is how “the home builder of today is building at pre-war prices.”²⁵ Variations of this approach found their way into the apartment buildings constructed in Des Moines during the war years.

In this setting of diminished availability of labor and materials and an increased desire for manageable spaces, new ideas to spark building were developed. Advertisements for new construction materials, building plans, and space-saving gadgets designed for modern living filled the pages of *American Builder* in 1919. The kitchenette apartment, billed as a “real factor in the modern building,” was a practical solution to the demand by investors that builders construct apartments yielding a greater return on their investment and the call for living arrangements that did not require domestic help – a “servant-less home.”²⁶

Modern Builder described the “modern kitchenette apartment” as consisting of a living room, dressing closet, bath, and kitchenette – the kitchenette being a combination kitchen-dining room. The kitchenette apartment was designed with two primary rooms instead of four – the benefits being that only two rooms had to be furnished and cleaned (the servant-less house) and the cost of constructing two rooms rather than four was substantially less, which meant greater profit for the investors.²⁷

Figure 6. Floor Plan of a “Modern Apartment Building” – 1919



(Source: *American Builder* Vol. 27. 1919)

This plan for a modern apartment building is one of many published in period trade magazines. In particular, this example illustrates the use of the kitchenette-style layout.

²⁵ “How to Build at Pre-War Prices,” *American Builder* Vol. 29. 1919: 75-78.

²⁶ “The Modern Space Saving Idea. Kitchenette Apartments Popular,” *American Builder* Vol. 29. April 1920: 120.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

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Figure 7. Floor Plans of Kitchenette Apartments – 1920



(SOURCE: *American Builder* Vol. 29, April 1920: 120)

Although some variety in floor plans existed, each featured a convertible living room-sleeping space with space-saving bed and a combination kitchen-dining room. The units at the Bryn Mawr Apartments are nearly identical to the first plan presented here.

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The conversion of the living room to a sleeping space was another character-defining component of the kitchenette apartment. That metamorphosis was made possible by the use of a space-saving bed. Although perhaps most familiarly referred to as a “Murphy bed,” space-saving beds were marketed by numerous companies including Lachman Wall Beds and Portal Wall Beds.²⁸ By placing the folding bed in a closet, hanging it from a door jamb, or incorporating it into a piece of furniture, a single room could function as both a living room and a bedroom. The spacing-saving bed originated in California in the years prior to the war for use in small apartments. Only later did it become a solution to the construction challenges faced during the war years.²⁹

Figure 8. Space-Saving Bed – 1920



(Source: *American Builder* Vol. 27, April 1920: 122)

The space-saving bed.... hidden away during the day (left) and lowered into the room for sleeping (right).

The Murphy Door Bed Company capitalized on the demand for a servant-less home and reduced construction costs by advertising their product as a savings to apartment builders. The company noted specifically that, by eliminating the bedroom, the builder made “two room, ‘Murphyized apartments’” which reduced housework for the occupant and allowed the builder to charge more for units that cost less to build. The Wm. H. Walter Company, which constructed an apartment building in Gary, Indiana, touted their savings saying that by changing the building plans to a two-room apartment design they “... saved about

²⁸ Advertisements, *American Builder* Vol. 27, July 1919: 107 and September 1919: 108.

²⁹ “How to Build at Pre-War Prices,” *American Builder* Vol. 27, July 1919: 76.

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\$3,000 in the construction of the building and increased income by about 20%.” The contractor also stated that they were able to increase the rent because of the “tasty arrangement made possible by the Murphy Beds and the reduction in the housework and furnishings.”³⁰

Figure 9. Advertisement for the Murphy In-a-Dor Bed – 1919



(Source: *American Builder* Vol. 27, 1919)

The Murphy Door Bed Company capitalized on the demand for a servant-less home and reduced construction costs by advertising their product as a savings to apartment builders. The company encouraged builder to “Murphyize” the units – meaning to utilize a Murphy bed to save space.

³⁰ Advertisement, *American Builder* Vol. 27, July 1919: 109.

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Despite the rather remarkable numbers reported at year-end, residential construction did suffer in 1918. Permits issued in 1918 for apartments included the Kendall apartments at 53rd and Ingersoll (\$55,000), 2815 Grand Avenue (\$65,000 - J.P. Condon), 21st and Grand (\$50,000 - Lafayette Improvement Co.), 519 4th Street (\$35,000 - Kraetsch & Kraetsch), 732 40th Street (\$30,000 - Charles Weitz), and, to the Harrison Investment Co., a permit in the amount of \$25,000 for an apartment at 511 29th Street (Bryn Mawr).³¹

Bryn Mawr Apartments

Bryn Mawr Apartments, designed by the Des Moines firm of Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, was constructed in 1918, entering the city's residential scene near the leading edge of the building trends that were developing during the First World War. As noted, construction in Des Moines remained reasonably strong in 1918, though residential construction lagged behind that of other types. Bryn Mawr was one of a handful of apartment buildings constructed in the city that year.

A permit in the amount of \$25,000 was issued to the Harrison Investment Company for 517 29th Street. Although the building number for this permit is incorrect, collaborating evidence shows that the permit was for construction of the Bryn Mawr Apartments.³² According to the Des Moines city directory, William B. Harrison, with an office at 416 in the Clapp Block, was a rural and city real estate and investment broker.³³ The design prepared by Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson is clearly influenced by period trends, its form, interior layout, and amenities being similar to those appearing in trade magazines such as *American Builder*. Aside from the stylistic details used on the Bryn Mawr façade, the apartment building depicted in a 1919 advertisement (Figure 09) is very much like the design for Bryn Mawr.

Bryn Mawr was neither the first nor the last apartment building designed by Proudfoot & Bird. Over the course of its 40-year history, the firm (in its various permutations) was responsible for the design of at least 30 apartment buildings.³⁴ Like Bryn Mawr Apartments, the Rawson Apartment portion of the Hallet Flat-Rawson & Co. Apartment Building (1915, extant) was of the kitchenette type, incorporating Murphy beds and dressing areas adjacent to the bathroom.³⁵ The 1915 Jefferson Apartment Building (extant) was also efficient in size and amenities, the newly opened apartments being equipped with "magically disappearing in-a-dor beds" and myriad conveniences that "combine all the homey seclusion of a separate house without the inconvenience of servants."³⁶ Also in Des Moines are the Motzer Flats (1914, extant), the Norman

³¹ *Des Moines Sunday Register*. "Year's Building Breaks Records Despite the War." December 29, 1918: 1.

³² *The Des Moines Register*, "Year's Building Breaks Records Despite The War," December 29, 1918: 1 and Des Moines Office of Building Permits, September 8, 2015.

³³ *Des Moines City Directory*, 1920.

³⁴ Beving-Long, E-2.

³⁵ William C. Page, "Hallett Flat-Rawson & Co. Apartment Building," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2000: 7-4.

³⁶ "The Jefferson Apartments," *The Register and Leader*, July 22, 1915: 6.

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Apartments (1908, extant), and the Butler Apartments (1915, extant).

By November of 1918, Bryn Mawr Apartments was nearing completion and its builder touted it as “one of the most modern apartments buildings in the city.” To that end, Harrison Co. stated that the “location is convenient and delightful; while its situation, on a large plat of ground, covered with beautiful trees, will insure its occupants plenty of light, air and shade.” The building’s interior was likewise modern, with each of its units featuring “a large living room, dressing room, dining room, kitchenette, and bath.” The units also had a service hall with “a specially designed package delivery system,” a telephone, and an ironing board. The basement included dedicated storage space for each unit and a “fully equipped laundry.” These modern amenities were enhanced by the “fireproof” construction (clay tile block, poured concrete, and brick) and what the architects claimed was a building that was as “nearly soundproof as it is possible to make such a building.”³⁷

Figure 10. Architect’s Rendering – 1918



(SOURCE: “New Apartment House and Hotel Improvement,” *Des Moines Sunday Register*, November 03, 1918.”

This architect’s rendering appeared in the *Des Moines Sunday Register* just as the building was being completed. The sketch documents the historic appearance of the building and the setting as well as suggests the relevance of transportation to the modern housing of the day.

³⁷ *Des Moines Register and Leader*, November 3, 1918.

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The demand for apartments continued in subsequent years. In contrast to the early apartment buildings, which were typically constructed on the city's west side and just north of the downtown, by 1920 apartment buildings had followed the streetcar lines to the west, rising along Grand and Ingersoll Avenue.³⁸ After World War II, population growth resulted in the rezoning of the north side of Ingersoll Avenue for multi-family use. The rezoning opened the door on the transition of the Ingersoll Avenue corridor to commercial and high-density residential property types.³⁹

The apartment building as a property type came into play in Des Moines in the years just prior to and during the First World War, with concentrations appearing along Grand and Ingersoll Avenues west of the downtown commercial area. Labor and material shortages during the war years forced builders to find ways to construct more economically in order to remain profitable; the "kitchenette apartment" with its two-room configuration was developed to address the challenges of the time. Bryn Mawr Apartments was in every way an example of that specific apartment type and it remains today an important example of the response of the building trade to wartime conditions.

By Way of Comparison

The City's 1994 "Community Preservation Plan," which recognized the significance of the apartment building as a property type in the history of the city's growth, included among its recommendations for further study a survey and evaluation of the city's apartment buildings. Unfortunately, that work has not been undertaken. In order to provide a point of comparison for Bryn Mawr, this nomination has relied on previous nominations of relevant properties (e.g. The Ayshire) and the results of reconnaissance survey of apartment buildings located in the area along Grand and Ingersoll Avenues stretching six-blocks to the east (23rd Street) and to the west (35th Street) from Bryn Mawr. Because part of the case for significance specific to Bryn Mawr relates to its historic association with the Ingersoll Avenue streetcar line, a comparison with properties whose construction was also tied to that association is appropriate. Although this comparison does not address interior elements or retention of historic integrity of the interior, some reasonable comparisons to Bryn Mawr can be made based solely on scale, form, stylistic references, and level of historic integrity specific to building exteriors.

³⁸ "Des Moines Community Preservation Plan," City of Des Moines, 1994: 45.

³⁹ *Des Moines Tribune*, February 21, 1950.

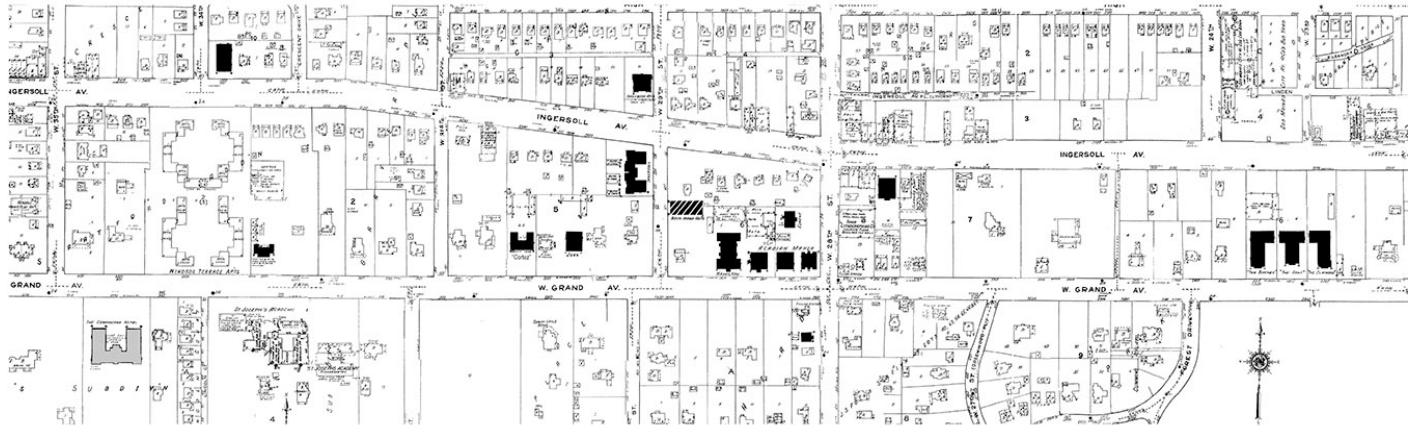
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Figure 11. Comparative Map of Historic Apartment Buildings (1917-1939)



(SOURCE: Sanborn Co. Fire Insurance Map, 1920Rev.1950)

As the map above indicates, a number of apartment buildings are located in a two-block area around Bryn Mawr (marked in stripes). Including Bryn Mawr Apartments, a total of 13 apartment complexes with a total of 17 buildings are located in the 12-block stretch of Grand and Ingersoll Avenues. Only one of those constructed between 1917 and 1929 is non-extant – the Commodore Apartment Hotel (bottom left - shaded) was located on the site now occupied by the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

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Table 3. Comparables – (1910-1929)

Construction Date	Apartment Historic Name	Address	Construction Material	Stories	Units	Status/ Integrity Issue
1916	The Ingersoll	532-536 W. 29 th St.	Brick	3	36	Extant
1916	The LaValetto (The Eugene) 1922	516-518 W. 28 th St.	Brick	3	7	Extant
1917	The Condon (Acadian Manor)	2801-2803 Grand Ave.	Brick	4	13	Extant
1918	Bryn Mawr	511 W. 29 th St.	Brick	3	25	Extant
1919	The O'Malley	432-434 W. 28 th St.	Brick	3	4	Extant
1921	The Crouch	2714 Ingersoll Avenue	Brick	3	15	Extant New Wdws
1922	(Acadian Manor) 1922 "construction"	2807-2809 Grand Ave.	Brick	4	n/a	Extant
1918	New Condon (Acadian Manor)	2815-2817 Grand Ave.	Brick	3	16	Extant
1919	The Inglewood	2901-2903 Ingersoll Avenue	Brick	4	15	Extant
1921	The Cortez	3007-3009 Grand Ave.	Brick	4	13	Extant Altered
1922	The Commodore	3440 Grand Avenue	Brick	6	120	Non-Extant
1926	Joann	2925 Grand Avenue	Brick	4	18	Extant New Wdws
1929	The Hamilton	2825 Grand Avenue	Brick	4	38	Extant New Wdws

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The Ingersoll at 532-526 W. 29th Street is located across 29th Street from Bryn Mawr. The building is a three-story, brown brick apartment building that first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1916. The building plan is U-shaped with a landscaped courtyard – this feature marks the Ingersoll as a “garden apartment.” The type typically pre-dates the kitchenette apartment. The façade features design details that tie it to the Gothic Revival style.

Image 3. The Ingersoll (1916)



(Image by AKAY Consulting, July 01/2015)

View of the Ingersoll, looking southwest across 29th Street from near Ingersoll Avenue.



Gothic Revival details.

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The **LaValetto** (516-518 W. 28th Street) is a three-story, brown brick apartment building that first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1916. By 1922 the building had become known as The Eugene. The building features a pair of two-story, box bays on the façade, the detailing of which references the Victorian era Stick Style. The building's exterior appears to retain a very good level of historic integrity, remaining an important example of an early-era apartment building. The stylistic influences are particularly interesting and unusual for the building type.

Image 4. The LaValetto (aka The Eugene) - 1916



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

View of the LaValetto (Eugene), looking west across 28th Street.

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The Condon (2801-2803 Grand Avenue) first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1917. Additional buildings were added in 1918 (New Condon, 2815-2817 Grand Avenue) and 1922 (2807-2809 Grand Avenue) – together the grouping eventually became known as Acadian Manor. Newspaper reports note that a building permit in the amount of \$65,000 was issued to J.P. Condon in 1918 for the New Condon (2815-2817 Grand Avenue). The buildings appear to retain a good level of historic integrity on the exteriors, although some evidence of deferred maintenance resulting in masonry damage is apparent.

Image 5. The Condon (Acadian Manor)



(Image by AKAY Consulting, July 01, 2015)

View of the three buildings that comprise what is now known as Acadian Manor, looking northwest across the intersection of Grand Avenue and 28th Street. From right to left they date: 1917, 1918, and 1922.

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Image 6. The Condon (1917)



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

View of the first Condon building, looking north across Grand Avenue.

Image 7. The Condon Buildings (1918 and 1922)



(Image by AKAY Consulting, July 01, 2015)

View of the 1918 (right) and 1922 (middle) Condon buildings, looking northeast across Grand Avenue.

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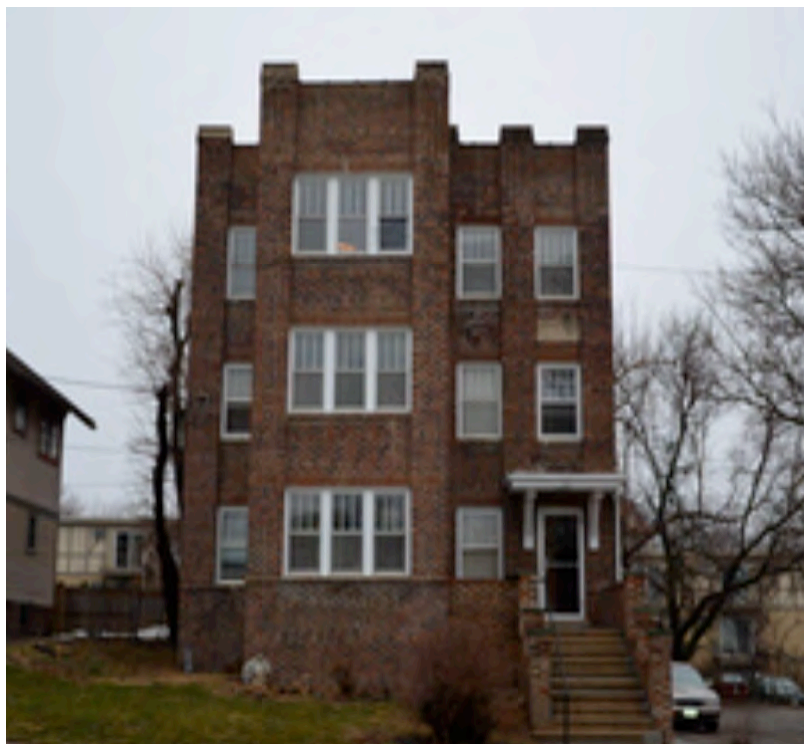
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The O'Malley (432-434 W. 28th Street) is a three-story, brick apartment building that first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1919 (note that no directory for 1918 is available). The building sits on a raised foundation, emphasizing its generally vertical form. The O'Malley is considerably smaller in scale and number of units than the others represented in this area. The building appears to retain a very good level of historic integrity on the exterior, including retention of the historic windows. The building's vertical orientation, raised foundation, and generally compact form stand it apart from other buildings of the same era. A survey of its interior floor plan and amenities would provide an interesting and important point of comparison.

Image 8. The O'Malley (ca.1919)



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

View of the O'Malley, looking west across 28th Street.

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The Inglewood (2901-2903 Ingersoll Avenue) first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1919 (note that no directory for 1918 is available). The four-story, brick building features a shallow U-shape and a deep eave. When constructed, the Inglewood enjoyed a deep setback from Ingersoll Avenue on its south – a setting it retained through the 1950 revision of the fire insurance map (Figure 11). Today, the site and setting are significantly impacted by a post-1950 commercial building that was constructed fronting Ingersoll Avenue – literally in the Inglewood’s front yard. Although that loss of integrity would prevent individual eligibility, any survey of apartment buildings should include the Inglewood because its stylistic expression is far different than the other properties in this area.

Image 9. The Inglewood (ca.1919)



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

Constructed with its façade facing Ingersoll Avenue, a much later commercial building now blocks the view looking north across Ingersoll. With its deep eave, the building’s exterior suggests a Prairie School or Arts and Crafts influence.

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The Crouch (2714 Ingersoll Avenue) is a four-story, brick apartment building that first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1921. The building's façade is highly symmetrical, the fenestration creating a repetitive rhythm across the elevation. The building is nearly devoid of stylistic detail. That is not to say that the Crouch does not provide important information about the evolution of multi-family housing in Des Moines. On the contrary, the stripped down appearance of the façade begs us to question the context for that approach and to see how that context played out on the interior. The building exterior appears to retain a fair level of historic integrity due in great part to the apparent retrofitting of all windows.

Image 10. The Crouch (1921)



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

View of the Crouch, looking south across Ingersoll Avenue.

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The Cortez (3007-3009 Grand Avenue) first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1921. The building is a four-story, reinforced concrete structure with stucco finishing and a flat roof. It is unclear if the tile pent roof is original or a more recent alteration. As a result of non-historic additions and alterations, the Cortez retains a poor level of historic integrity as it relates to setting, design and materials. The property would not be considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing resource to a potential district.

Image 11. The Cortez (1921)



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

View of the Cortez (right) looking northwest across Grand Avenue. As the image shows, little of the building's historic character is retained. The building is now part of a larger, multi-building complex.

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The Joann (2925 Grand Avenue) first appears in the Des Moines city directory in 1926. The building is a four-story brick construction with a façade that is defined by its plentiful, windows – including a series of fixed-paned windows at “attic” level. The building’s historic integrity is significantly diminished by the retrofitting of the windows, which abandoned the original configuration and adopted glazing with in appropriate reflectivity.

Image 12. The Joann (1926)



(Image by Des Moines City Assessor, 2009)

View of the Joann, looking north across Grand Avenue. The replacement of historic windows adversely impact integrity of design and materials.

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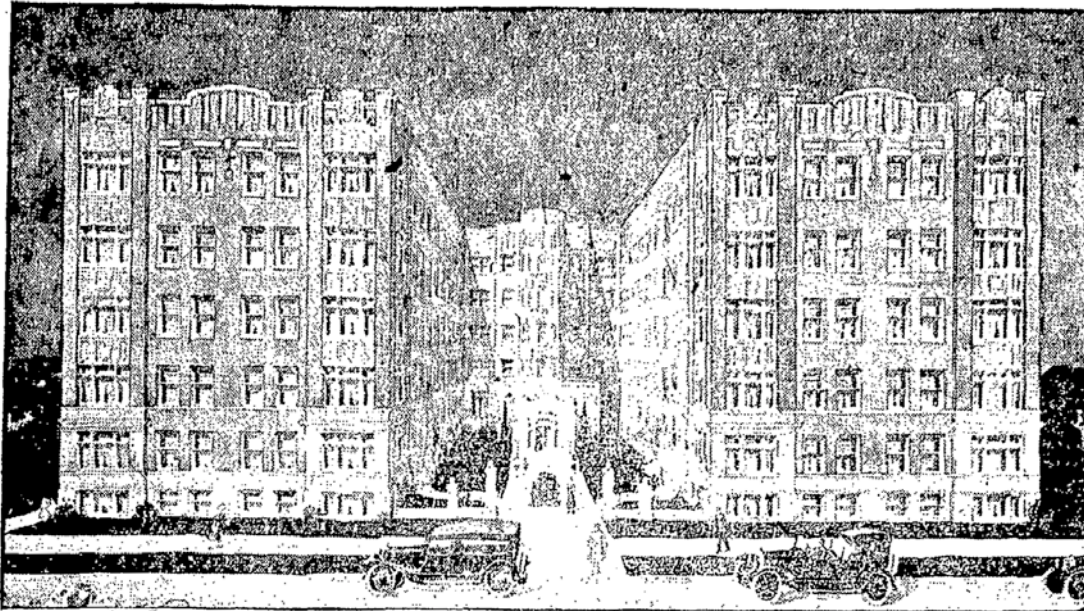
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The Commodore was constructed in 1922 at 3440 Grand Avenue – the site of the “old Fleming Bros. homestead barn.” Newspaper accounts describe the building as a “modern high class residential apartment hotel.” The six-story building was of reinforced concrete, “fireproof in every detail.” The building was U-shaped with an interior garden court to provide abundant light and ventilation. The 120 apartments of varying configurations, with a ground floor lobby, lounge rooms for ladies, smoking room for men, a clerk’s desk, cigar counter, and check-rooms. A large ballroom was located in the basement. Additional amenities included a dining room and kitchen, a breakfast room, maid service, and a tailor – amenities which mark the distinction between an “apartment hotel” and the basic apartment building.⁴⁰ The College of Osteopathic Medicine now occupies the site upon which the Commodore was located.

Image 13. The Commodore (1922) – Non-Extant

New “Commodore” at 3440 Grand Avenue



(“New ‘Commodore’ at 3440 Grand Avenue,” *The Des Moines Capital*, September 17, 1922: 15-A.)

The Commodore was billed as an apartment hotel, meaning that the property’s amenities included dining and maid service – among others.

⁴⁰ “New ‘Commodore’ at 3440 Grand Avenue,” *The Des Moines Capital*, September 17, 1922: 15-A.

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The Hamilton (2825 Grand Avenue) first appears in city directories in 1929. The four-story, red brick building is visually defined by the prominent use of Art Deco elements on its façade. The decorative style is represented in cast, bas-relief elements over the entrance and under the third floor windows. Each of these panels feature typical Art Deco designs; that under the third-floor windows being stylized sun rays. The geometric capitals utilized on pilasters and at the corner recall Egyptian motifs – a typical device of the Art Deco. Large-scale Deco sconces flank the entrance.

The Hamilton appears to retain a high level of historic integrity – the retention of the style-defining elements being critical to integrity of design. It appears that the replacement of the historic windows is a project in the works, with some original windows remaining on multiple elevations and varying floors – an indication that the same configuration was used throughout. The historic windows are unusual in configuration, utilizing a pair of multi-paned jalousie windows within a multi-paned, glazed surround. The overall visual effect is a single, large, multi-paned window within each opening. The replacement of the historic windows adversely impacts integrity of design and materials. However, given the relatively rare use of Art Deco in an apartment building, the Hamilton is likely eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Image 14. The Hamilton (1929)



(Image by AKAY Consulting, July 01, 2015)

The 1929 Hamilton apartment building (located immediately west of the 1922 Condon building) presents a very different visual character than those constructed earlier. The use of contrasting, stylized forms marks it firmly as Art Deco.

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Relevant Cultural Resource Documents

Numerous historical and architectural surveys have been completed in the city of Des Moines, Iowa. Those to provide specific information and context for this nomination include the 2000 National Register nomination by James E. Jacobson, "The Bungalow and Square House: Des Moines Residential Growth and Development," the 2013 nomination by James E. Jacobson "Greenwood Park Plats Historic District," and the 1992 Multiple Property Documentation by William C. Page, "Toward a Greater Des Moines: Early Suburbanization and Development, circa 1880-1920." Multiple individual property nominations, notably Page's nomination of "The Ayshire," also provided context for understanding the significance of the apartment building as a property type in the history of the city. Beving-Long's "The Architectural Legacy of Proudfoot & Bird in Iowa" illuminated the impact made by the firm.

Potential for Historic Archaeology

The potential for historical archaeology was not assessed as part of the present National Register nomination. The presence of paved parking areas suggests the likelihood that the ground disturbance resulting from the construction of those elements may have destroyed localized archaeological resources. However, the paving may have been laid over ground with a minimum of earth movement. In that case, archaeological resources may merely have been encapsulated. Further, some portion of the historic parcel remains unpaved. In the future, any significant excavation and/or grading should take into consideration the possibility that archaeological and/or sub-grade historical resources may remain.

Research Methodology

This National Register nomination utilized the cultural resource documents noted above to gain an understanding of the city's growth and evolution of housing types; important information was gleaned from all of those existing documents. Similar studies of the rise of the apartment building in Kansas City, KS and Omaha, NE provided information about the trend to apartment living on a broader stage.

In addition, identification of period articles about the trends toward apartment living was of great importance. Such articles provided context for the cultural and historical issues that impacted a shift toward apartment living. They also illustrated the specifics of how apartments were laid out to accommodate the lives of their occupants. Resources such as *American Builder*, which are now available in electronic format, are invaluable.

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County and State Des Moines, Iowa

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

LT 10 SEARS PLACE⁴¹

Figure 11. Assessors Parcel Map - 2017



The location of the resource (geoparcels 7824-06-481-002) is noted in broken outline.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the Bryn Mawr Apartments and the site to which the building is historically associated (noted with broken line).

⁴¹ <http://web.assess.co.polk.ia.us/cgi-bin/web/tt/infoqry.cgi?tt=card/card&dp=02001163000000>. Accessed 08/04/2015.

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- Figure 5. Floor Plan – Basement
- Figure 6. Floor Plan of “Modern Apartment Building” – 1919
- Figure 7. Floor Plans of Kitchenette Apartment – 1920
- Figure 8. Space-Saving Bed – 1920
- Figure 9. Advertisement for Murphy Company In-a-Dor Bed – 1920
- Figure 10. Architect’s Rendering of Bryn Mawr Apartments - 1918
- Figure 11. Comparative Map – Historic Apartment Buildings – 1910-1929

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- Table 2. Des Moines City Directory Listings For Apartments – 1910-1950
- Table 3. Comparables (1910-1929)

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- Image 2. View of the façade, looking SE across 29th Street
- Image 3. The Ingersoll
- Image 4. The LaValetto (aka The Eugene)
- Image 5. The Condon – Streetscape looking northwest
- Image 6. The Condon
- Image 7. The New Condon
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- Image 9. The Inglewood
- Image 10. The Crouch
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- Image 12. The Joann
- Image 13. The Commodore
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Bryn Mawr Apartments
511 29th Street
Des Moines, Iowa
Polk County, Iowa
Photographer: Alexa McDowell, AKAY Consulting, Minneapolis, Minnesota
December 29, 2014 and June 26, 2015

Electronic files submitted to property owner, the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office, and the National Park Service.

Photo Key – Exterior Views



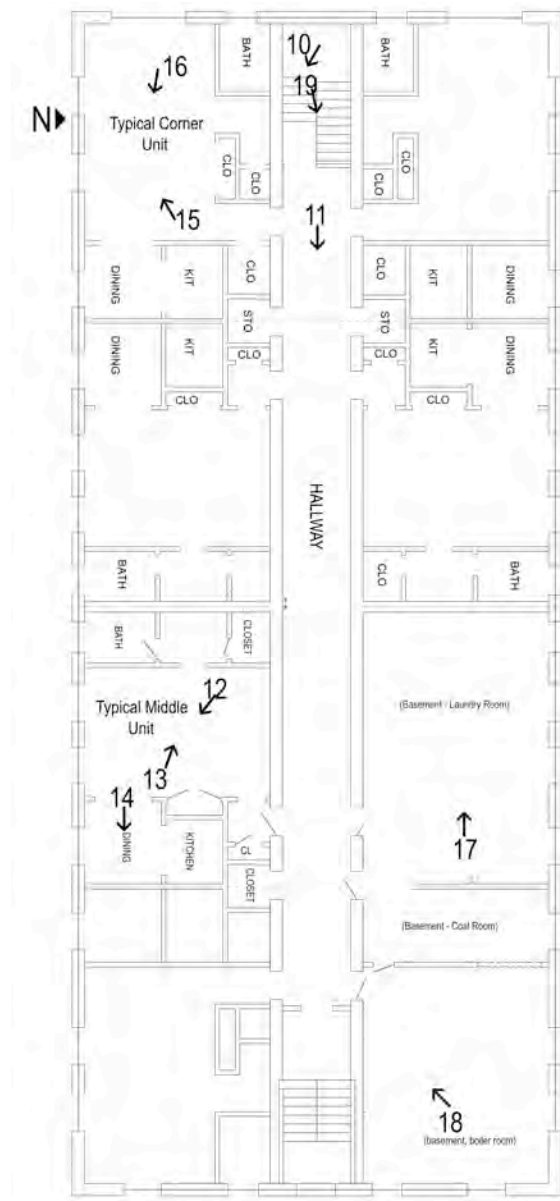
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Photo Key – Interior Views



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Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001. Site: View looking northeast along 29th Street from near Grand Avenue
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0001.tif
- 0002. Site: View looking southeast along 29th Street from near Ingersoll Avenue
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0002.tif
- 0003. Site: View looking west from the middle of the block
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0003.tif
- 0004. Exterior: View of the façade (west) and south elevations, looking NE across 29th Street
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0004.tif
- 0005. Exterior: View of the façade (west) and north elevations, looking SE across 29th Street
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0005.tif
- 0006. Exterior: View of the rear (east) and north elevations, looking SW
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0006.tif
- 0007. Exterior: View of the rear (east) and south elevations, looking NW
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0007.tif
- 0008. Exterior: Detail view of the façade, center bay, entrance and fenestration
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0008.tif
- 0009. Exterior: Detail view of the masonry cornice (SE corner)
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0009.tif
- 0010. Interior: Entrance vestibule
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0010.tif
- 0011. Interior: Typical corridor
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0011.tif
- 0012. Interior: Typical middle unit – view of living room, looking toward dining room
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0012.tif
- 0013. Interior: Typical middle unit – view of living room, looking toward bathroom and dressing area
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0013.tif

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- 0014. Interior: Typical middle unit – view of dining room with kitchen at left
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0014.tif
- 0015. Interior: Typical corner unit – view of living room
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0015.tif
- 0016. Interior: Typical corner unit – view through the living room toward the dining room
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0016.tif
- 0017. Interior: Basement – Laundry Room
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- 0018. Interior: Basement – Boiler Room, looking west to coal room
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- 0019. Interior: Detail view of front (west) stairwell
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0019.tif
- 0020. Interior: Detail view of typical window
IA_PolkCounty_BrynMawrApartments_0020.tif






CORNER
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808 591

CHEVROLET







413 WAA







BRYN MAWR
APARTMENTS

511
BRYN MAWR

























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Bryn Mawr Apartments

Multiple Name:

State & County: IOWA, Polk

Date Received: 8/25/2017 Date of Pending List: 9/19/2017 Date of 16th Day: 10/4/2017 Date of 45th Day: 10/10/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100001699

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 10/10/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus Patrick Andrus Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 10/10/2017

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

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

CHRIS KRAMER, ACTING DIRECTOR

August 18, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmarks
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following National Register nomination(s) from Iowa are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable.

Bryn Mawr Apartments

The Bryn Mawr Apartments building is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The resource is locally significant as a very well preserved example of a World War I era apartment building of the "kitchenette" type. Bryn Mawr was constructed in the early years of the city's apartment boom. It is representative of the effort to increase profit on residential construction by eliminating the number of rooms in each unit. That approach created what was coined the kitchenette apartment. Designed by the Des Moines firm of Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, Bryn Mawr Apartments represents the quality of design work typical of the firm. Further, the building stands as an important example of a specific property type within the portfolio of an historic architectural firm that is widely cited as Iowa's most significant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura Sadowsky
State Historian
State Historical Society of Iowa

Enclosures.



IOWA ARTS
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IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

STATE HISTORIC SITES

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA HISTORICAL
FOUNDATION