

Record No. _____

INVENTORY FORM FOR NOMINATED PROPERTIES

Name of Property: Arlington Apartments

Owner: Walter Kolb Date: 1986

Address: 309 Arlington St.

Owner's address: 3059 N. 124th St., Brookfield

City: Waukesha

County: Waukesha (133)

*160 NRHP Certification

(a) _____ (b) _____

(c) _____ (d) _____

165 NRHP Certification Date

(a) _____ (b) _____

(c) _____ (d) _____

*170 Thematic or Multiple Resource Nomination Name

Historic Resources of Waukesha MRA

180 NRHP List Name Arlington Apartments

*200 Level of Significance local

*190 District Classification N.A.

*210 Applicable Criteria C (Architecture)

*215 Criteria Considerations

*220 Area of Significance

Architecture

230 Period of Significance 1928

60 Verbal Boundary Description Lot 2 and 29' of

eastern portion of Lot 3, Davis and

Hiesleitners subdivision. Property

measures 69' x 147'.

70 USGS Quad Map Waukesha

80 UTM Coordinates (Format: 99/999999/999999)

16/399600/4762040

85 Listed Acreage less than one acre

340 Review Board Date October 1986

One Contributing Building

*use code tables for response

INTENSIVE SURVEY FORM

Record No. _____ Property Name: Arlington Apartments

LOCATION

* 10 County Waukesha
20 City or Village Waukesha
30 Civil Town -
35 Unincorp. Community -
40 Location 309 Arlington Street
Town-Range-Section (Format: 9999W-99)
50 -
55 Quarter Sections (Format: NW-NW) -
60 Verbal Boundary Description Lot 2 and 29'
60 of eastern portion of Lot 3
60 Davis & Hiesleuitners subdivi-
60 sion, City of Waukesha

PROGRAM REVIEW

250 Tax No. - Compliance No. -
* 270 A or D Grant -
275 Covenant/Easement Dates -
* 320 Ownership Private
* 330 Lead Agency -
335 Local Agency -

SURVEY

90 Photo Codes -
100 Survey Map -
110 Map Code -
120 Reconnaissance Surveyor -
130 Reconnaissance Survey Date -
* 140 Intensive Survey Name -
150 Intensive Surveyor Sharon Crawford
152 Surveyor Affiliation -
155 Intensive Survey FY 1986
* 235 Survey Eval. Eligible
* 237 Survey District Classification -
* 240 Survey Level of Significance Local
* 243 Survey Evaluation Criteria Architecture
245 Proposed District -
280 NHL Date _____
290 HABS No. _____ 300 HAER No. _____
* 305 Local Designation (date) _____
320 Local District _____
315 Associated Archeological Site(s) _____
315 _____

dry mount
photograph
here

* use code tables for response

Number

Street 309 Arlington Street

Record No. _____

Address 309 Arlington Street

ARCHITECTURE

450 Construction Date [source] 1928

460 Date(s) of Alterations/Additions [source]

460 -

480 Builder [source] -

* 490 Designer Type (a) Architect

490 (b) _____ (c) _____

500 Designer Name [source] (a) G. Zagel & Bros.

500 (b) _____ (c) _____

* 510 Style or Form Tudor Revival

510 _____

* 520 Building, Structure, Object or SiteType

520 Building

* 530 Wall Material Brick

* 532 Trim Material Concrete stone

* 535 Foundation Material -

* 537 Roof Material -

* 540 Interior Visited Y

* 550 Structural System [source] -

* 560 Plan Configuration Rectangular

* 570 Number of Stories three

* 580 Roof Shape flat

590 Additional Description _____

590 _____

590 _____

590 _____

* 620 Condition good

* 650 Related Buildings _____

650 _____

650 _____

HISTORY

430 Current Name Arlington Apartments

435 Current Function Apartments

440 Historic Names [source] Arlington Apts.

440 _____

440 _____

660 Assoc. Individuals [source] (a) -

660 (b) _____

665 Dates Assoc. [source] (a) -

665 (b) _____

670 Assoc. Events [source] (a) -

670 _____

670 (b) _____

670 _____

675 Dates of Events [source] (a) -

675 (b) _____

680 Historic Functions [source] (a) Apartments

680 (b) _____

685 Dates of Functions [source] (a) 1928-present

685 (b) _____

* 687 Cultural Affiliation -

688 Cultural Subgroup -

*use code tables for response

7. DESCRIPTION Condition:good / Altered / Original site

The Arlington Apartment building is a three story red brick block with a parapet roof line and Tudor Revival architectural features. The building faces north on Arlington Street overlooking the open space of a school playground. The dimensions of the building are approximately 109 x 46', and it is centrally sited on its 147 x 70' lot, allowing air and light into windows on the sides and back as well as the front. There is a cement driveway along the west side of the building and grass with low-growing shrubs around the other three sides.

The bi-laterally symmetrical facade is divided into three parts: a slightly recessed central section with a prominent gable-front stone-faced entry, and two projecting side wings. The fenestration of the side wings is in sets of three windows on each of the three floors. The tall round-arched first floor windows have a wrought iron railing at their base. The second story windows are plain rectangles, six-over-six, double-hung, with a stone sill, similar to the rest of the windows in the building. All windows appear to have the original wooden sash. At the third story level, false timber ends appear to support the front and sides of the slightly overhanging gable-front stucco and timbered facade. The triple windows at this level are centered in the decorative timbering, over a balcony-like wrought iron railing similar to that of the ground level.

The central front entry is five steps above sidewalk level, up a double curved stairway with wrought iron railings. The heavy wooden door divided into 15 panes of leaded glass is recessed beneath a tudor arch in the lannon stone entry. The gable roof of the entry is tied to the two side wings by a pent roof extended over exposed timber ends. Both the gable and pent roofs are covered with slate shingles. A stone belt course, matching the window sills, separates the third story from the crenelated roof. Centered above the third floor level just below the roof edge, a large decorative terra cotta tile has been set into the brick. Differential coloration in the bricks along the upper edge indicates that repairs have been necessary at some time. Other than that, the building appears to be intact, and is in excellent condition.

Inside, the public spaces of the building have also been well maintained, with no loss of integrity. A small entry vestibule has a mailbox and buzzer for each of the 18 apartments. Access to the building is secured by a locked inner door, also wooden with small-paned windows. The two front apartments open directly from the inner lobby. A second glass-paned door with wrought iron grillwork separates the inner lobby from the hallway leading to the remaining four apartments on this floor. All doors and archways in the building are tudor arched. False timbers cross the ceiling of the inner lobby, which features rough-surfaced plaster and dark stained oak woodwork. An open stairway with a wrought iron railing rises from the lobby to the second and third stories. Each of the upper stair halls is similar in plan to the lobby, with direct access to the two front apartments and a glass door separating it from the rear apartments. At the top level, a skylight provides natural light and air circulation. In the public

areas, most wall sconces and ceiling light fixtures are original; a few have been replaced with fixtures of a similar design.

8. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the peak of Waukesha's popularity as a mineral springs resort, industrial development was discouraged because it was thought that industries would detract from the city's appeal as a summer resort. After the turn of the century, however, the springs era declined, and local businessmen established an Association of Commerce to encourage industries. The actions of the Association were successful, and the 1920s were a time of great industrial development and growth for the city. The Association of Commerce recognized that housing for workers was an important aspect in attracting industrial growth, and as early as 1922 a special committee was appointed to look into the housing question. Within a short time they succeeded in encouraging local builders to begin increasing the supply of low-cost worker housing.¹

When James B. Mahler, a Milwaukee Real Estate Agent began construction of a \$60,000, 18 unit apartment building in 1928, it was an indication of just how successful Waukesha's development had been. For this building was not to be low-cost housing for workers, but elegant apartments with the most modern and luxurious appurtanences, including a controlled central heating system and incinerator, and shower baths and Frigidaire refrigerators in each apartment.² The architectural style chosen was Tudor Revival, fashionable nation-wide during the 1920s. Although it was the style of choice for numerous³ private residences then being constructed in Waukesha, this is the only Tudor Revival apartment building in the city.

James Mahler hired the Milwaukee architectural firm of George Zagel and Brother. The Zagel brothers were third generation Milwaukeeans whose father and grandfather had been stonemasons. George apprenticed with Milwaukee architect, John W. Menge, Jr. from 1909 to 1913 before establishing his own firm with his younger brother, Ferdinand, as his assistant. Both brothers enlisted in the Army in 1917. While serving in Europe, George applied for and received his architect's license with the state of Wisconsin, and the Army sent him to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts for special drafting courses that had been set up for Americans. Later, he studied in Germany. Upon their discharge from the service in 1921 the Zagel brothers returned to Milwaukee and re-established their architectural practice as George Zagel and Brother, although Ferdinand was not state-registered as an

¹ "Start Move to Enlarge City Housing: The Association of Commerce Takes Steps in Activity for more Houses," Waukesha Freeman 5-25-22; "House Building Germ is Starting Work in Town: Businessmen Step to Front as Necessity is Made Apparent for Waukesha," Waukesha Freeman 6-23-22.

² "Begin Work on New Apartment: Modern Building Site at Grand and Arlington," Waukesha Freeman 9-6-28.

³ The Waukesha City Planning Department estimates that there are over 100 Tudor Revival residences in Waukesha.

architect until 1932. The firm joined the Wisconsin Society of Architects that same year. The partnership continued until 1974, when Ferdinand died. It was quite successful and prolific, averaging 60 buildings a year during the 1920s. An estimated 1300 to 1500 buildings constructed before 1950 have been attributed to the firm, whose projects included commercial buildings, bungalows, and both small and large apartment buildings.⁴

Zagel-designed buildings reflect the Beaux Arts influence in their lavish use of decorative detailing, balustraded window balconies, and Roman arches (usually in pairs or triples). Zagel buildings tended to combine these features with Tudor, Mediterranean, and Chateausque details. Most of their buildings are of brick with stone trim and either red tile or parapet roofs. Shaped gables, corner quoins, leaded glass windows, arched entrances, and decorative wooden eaves brackets are common Zagel features. Their interiors often combine heavily textured plaster with dark woodwork. Despite their fanciful features, Zagel buildings have the appearance of sturdiness, and are, in fact, well-built, with such quality materials as lannon stone, slate, and copper flashings that have stood the test of time. The apartment building at 309 Arlington Street is quite subdued, compared with some other Zagel buildings in Milwaukee, but it does show the characteristic Zagel touches: arched windows and doors with leaded glass, balustraded windows, and the decorative use of lannon stone and slate. Interestingly, a building nearly identical to it had been constructed in Milwaukee in 1927 (on Cramer Street between Park and Bellevue).⁵

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Arlington Apartment building is an excellent example of the way architecture reflects the attitudes and aspirations of an era. Built during a housing boom brought on by an influx of industries to Waukesha, the building was erected in a spirit of optimism for continued development. The Great Depression dampened that spirit, and by the time construction began again after World War II, architectural trends had changed. It is likely that were it not for the Great Depression, a number of similar apartment buildings would have been constructed in Waukesha, as they were in nearby Milwaukee. The intervention of the Depression and then the Second World War left the Arlington Apartments as a singular example of what might have been a trend, had the timing of historical events been different.

The Arlington Apartment building is representative of the work of George Zagel and Brother in its mix of architectural styles and the quality of workmanship. The leaded glass windows, slate roofing tiles, and copper flashings are materials more commonly associated with expensive private housing than with apartment dwellings. The high quality of workmanship and

⁴ Biographical information on the Zagel brothers is from an unpublished document by Susan Wirth (5300 W. Garfield Avenue, Milwaukee), who has made a study of the firm and their buildings in Milwaukee. Articles quoting Wirth have appeared in the Milwaukee Journal, 11-30-1983, and the Milwaukee Sentinel, 7-10-1982.

⁵ Copy of photo and blueprint provided by Susan Wirth.

materials undoubtedly contributed to the building's very high degree of architectural integrity, both on the exterior and in the public areas inside. It is because of its singularity and integrity that this building is architecturally significant in its local context. As the only Tudor Revival apartment building in Waukesha, it is an architectural remnant that still projects an aura of prosperity and refinement, and thus reflects a clear image of its time and place.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

City of Waukesha Building Permit #286, July 23, 1928.

City of Waukesha Assessor's Reports, 1931-1963.

"A flair for fanciful architecture," Milwaukee Sentinel 7-10-1982.

"Begin work on new apartment: Modern building site at Grand and Arlington," Waukesha Freeman 9-6-1928.

"House building germ is starting work in town: Businessmen step to front as necessity is made apparent for Waukesha," Waukesha Freeman 6-22-1922.

"Start move to enlarge city housing: The Association of Commerce takes steps in activity for more houses," Waukesha Freeman 5-25-1922.

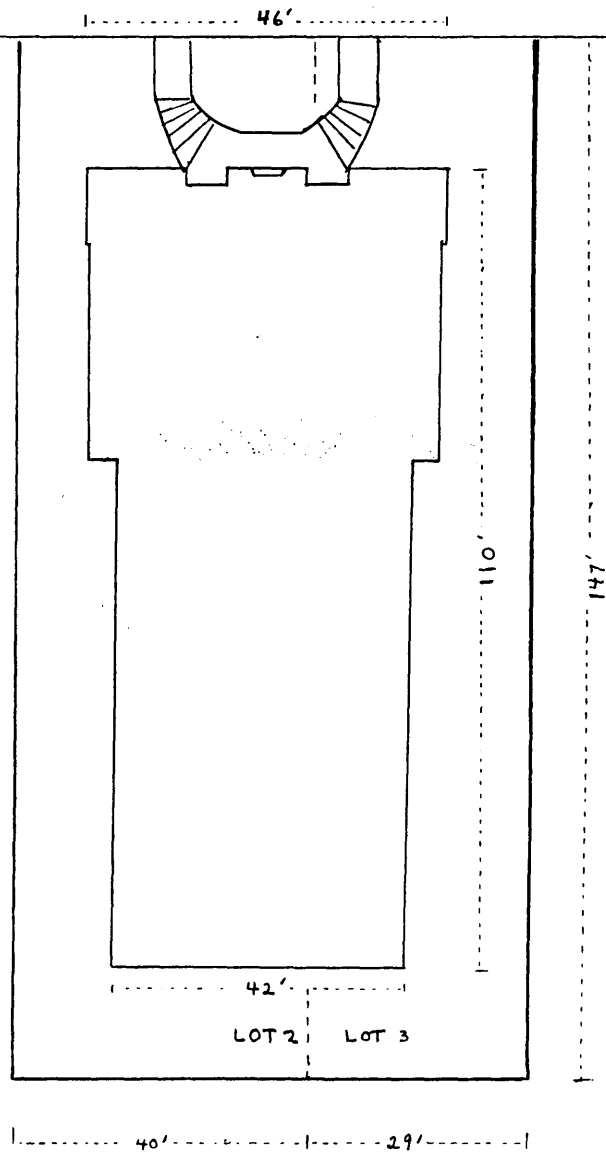
"The lure and the lore of a bungalow," Milwaukee Journal 11-20-1983.

Wirth, Susan, unpublished bibliographical sketch of Zagel brothers and their work.

ARLINGTON APARTMENTS
MAP TAKEN FROM CITY ASSESSOR'S REPORTS
NO SCALE



ARLINGTON ST.



11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sharon D. Crawford

organization consultant to City of Waukesha date 10/1/86

street & number 5 S. Kenosha Drive telephone (608) 233-5627

city or town Madison state Wisconsin

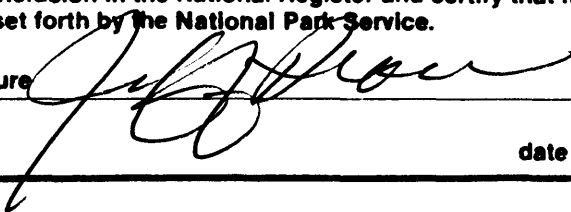
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title

date Nov. 24, 1986

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration