National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

1. Name

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nd/or common Schneider	Triangle	
	erty is bounded by Washington Circle, New Hampshire reet, 22nd Street, and L Street, all in the NW quad	
	iched list of the city not for publication	
ity, town Washington	Walter E. Faunt vicinity of ^N ·A· congressional district Congressman	ro
tate District of Columb	bi&ode 11 county District of Columbia code 001	
3. Classification	n	
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city, town Washington,

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7. Description

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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Thomas F. Schneider, one of Washington's most important late-nineteenth/ early-twentieth century architect/builders, designed the rowhouses of Schneider Triangle in his personal interpretation of the popular Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque Revival styles. The twenty-two houses (twenty-one remain), built in 1889, stand as a virtually unaltered example of an imaginative and successful adaptation of Victorian residential architecture to the 1791 L'Enfant plan for the Federal City. Every house within the complex was individually designed to be distinctive, while at the same time containing elements that contributed to a unified whole. Schneider achieved a remarkable balance of variety within a cohesive entity through the application of rich and differing detail and the consistent use of materials, facade heights, and building vocabulary. The resulting group of houses stand as a reminder of the once-residential character of Washington Circle and is an excellent example of this city's Victorian heritage.

The following descriptive narrative was included as part of an application submitted by Don't Tear It Down in August 1978, for historic landmark designation for Schneider Triangle:

These rowhouses were built with common walls and shared a small inner courtyard which evidently was designed only to provide light and air. Because of their close spacing, the street facades were emphasized and the round turrets, highly articulated chimneys, dormers covered by flat, gently sloping slate roofs, and grouped windows under segmental arches appear in various combinations about this peculiarly shaped "triangular" block. One senses that Schneider sculpted these houses to fit the land he was developing. Strategically located, they enjoyed such urban amenities as proximity to the business district, fire protection, water and sewage service, paved streets, and street lights. They are clearly a unified architectural articulation and may be considered to be a homogeneous whole whose balance and specific nature depend upon the successful fusion of all the parts of which it is composed. Their most significant value results from the interaction of all the elements comprising them.

Twenty-one of the original twenty-two rowhouses are still standing. They encircle the entire block with a single gap where the twenty-second house once stood (house number 3). The houses are uniformly 36 feet high and each is built of the same materials bearing the same proportional relationship of brown ashlar stone to pressed red brick. Each facade is treated individually with at least one oriel, bay or turret and a varying arrangement of fenestration. This block of houses has a tremendous cohesion accomplished through the similarity of architectural detail.

Today many of Schneider's buildings are gone, and it is fortunate that most of the houses of Schneider Triangle have been recently renovated. As recently as 1975, the outlook for these houses was bleak. At that time, although the street facades were in reasonably good condition, the attrition wrought by absentee ownerships could be seen in boarded up windows and doors. Those houses which were lived in were occupied largely by transients and

8. Significance

1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic X agriculture architecture art commerce communications	community planning	Iandscape architecture Iaw Iterature	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1889	Builder/Architect Th	omas F. Schneider	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Joint Committee on Landmarks of the National Capital has designated the Schneider Triangle as a Category II Historic Landmark which contributes significantly to the cultural heritage and visual beauty and interest of the District of Columbia. This architectural and urban landmark was designed in 1889 by Thomas F. Schneider, one of Washington's most important and influential late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century architects and builders. The houses (21 of the original 22 remain standing) express Schneider's personal interpretation of the nationally popular Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque Revival styles and rank among his most sophisticated designs. These buildings are a rare and highly successful example of the adaptation of the middle-class Victorian residential form to the irregularly-shaped city squares created by the diagonal and grid streets radiating from a major circle of the L'Enfant Plan.

In the years after the Civil War, Washington experienced a population and building boom. As people poured into the city the need for housing increased. Development moved west and north from the center of the city and speculative building flourished. Architect-builder Thomas F. Schneider designed and built the 22 houses in the Schneider Triangle for John W. Paine on a speculative basis. This type of speculative residential building preceeded the turn-of-the-century development of once suburban areas, such as Mount Pleasant and Cleveland Park. The houses in the Schneider Triangle were designed to appeal to professionals and civil servants requiring spacious dwellings both reflective of their social position and convenient to urban amenities such as fire protection, water and sewer services, paved streets, and street lights, and to their places of employment.

The focal point of the Schneider Triangle was originally, as it is today, Washington Circle, a major element of the L'Enfant Plan. The Circle is an important open space at the intersection of Pennsylvania and New Hampshire Avenues, also major elements of the original plan for the city. The equestrian statue of George Washington at the center of the Circle was sculpted by Clark Mills and dedicated on February 22, 1860. It was the second equestrian statue in Washington at that time. Until the construction of the K Street underpass in the early 1960's, the park was a unique example of Victorian landscaping. Much of the Victorian residential neighborhood around Washington Circle has gone the way of the Victorian landscaping; many late-nineteenth century buildings have been lost to more contemporary development. The Schneider Triangle, however, remains as a virtually intact reminder of the late-nineteenth century residential neighborhood that once surrounded Washington Circle.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached list (Form FHR-8-300)

10. **Geographical Data** Quadrangle name Washington West, D.C.-MD-VA **UMT References** Quadrangle scale 1:24000 1 8 3 22 2 80 43 0 7 8 00 Zone Zone С D Ε G Η Verbal boundary description and justification The Schneider Triangle occupies Square 53, Lots 1-22, in the District of Columbia. by L Street, N.W., on the east by 22nd Street, N.W., on the south by K Stre N.W., in the southwest by Washington Circle, and on the west by New List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N.A. state code county code state code county 11, **Form Prepared By** code name/title Anne H. Helwig, Architectural Historian District of Columbia organization Historic Preservation Office May 1980 date street & number 1325 G Street, N.W. 724-8653 telephone Washington city or town District of Columbia state **State Historic Preservation Officer Certification** 12. The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: national __X_ 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. State Historic Preservation Officer signature Director, D.C. Department of עת Housing and title Community Development date

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Attachment for Present Owners and Addresses

Except where indicated, the owner lives at the address listed in Schneider Triangle. Ownership information is from the D.C. Assessor's Office.

Lot	Premise Address	Owner's Name & Mailing Address (if different from premises address)
1	1000 22nd Street, NW	Robert G. & Billie J. Webster 627 F Street, NW Washington, DC 20004
2	2201 K Street, NW	Rena B. Gerber 2915 Connecticut Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20007
3	2203 K Street, NW	Rena B. Gerber 2201 K Street, NW Washington, DC 20037
4	2205 K Street, NW	John B. & Helen K. Conaghan 8802 Tally Ho Trail Potomac, Maryland 20854
5	2207 K Street, NW	John B. & Helen K. Conaghan E. Burns McLindon, Trs. 10800 Cripplegate Road Potomac, Maryland 20854
6	2209 Washington Circle, NW	Paul & Dina Stathes 13217 Bellevue Street Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
7	2211 Washington Circle, NW	William W. & Joanne C. Nicholson
8	2213 Washington Circle, NW	James R. Hunter & Robert Brian Lingenfelter
9	1001 New Hampshire Avenue, NW	Carl L. Vacketta
10	1003 New Hampshire Avenue, NW	Michael W. & Helena S. Moynihan
11	1005 New Hampshire Avenue, NW	John & Josefina B. Waterson
12	1007 New Hampshire Avenue, NW	Royce Lanier

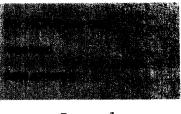
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Lot	Premise Address			ling Address emises address)
13	1009 New Hampshire Avenue, N	W Sarina Rosaria Floria & Ange 19 Meadow Road Pennsville, No	10 A. F1d d	oria
14	1011 New Hampshire Avenue, N	W Gerald M. Wall	let t e	
15	1016 22nd Street, NW	Edwin P. & Ba: Box 176 Upperville, V:		Wilson 22176
16	1014 22nd Street, NW	Henrietta K. N	Walden	
17	1012 22nd Street, NW	Dorothe Walsh c/o Tom Farqui 304 Independer Washington, D	har nce Avenu	ue, NW
18	1010 22nd Street, NW	Louise Taylor		
19	1008 22nd Street, NW	Richard F. Fi 3210 N Street Washington, D	, NW	7
20	1006 22nd Street, NW	Barbara Dixon	Lutzker	
21	1004 22nd Street, NW	Daniel L. & M	arianne A	A. Spiegel
22	1002 22nd Street, NW	Robert A. Man 5425 Indian H Oxon Hill, Ma	ead High	vay 20016
800	of Res 27	United States	of Amer:	ica

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borders in "room to let" accommodations. Fires and other vandalism were frequent. The westward expansion of commercial highrise development and the excellent location of the Schneider Triangle made it appear that redevelopment of the site was inevitable.

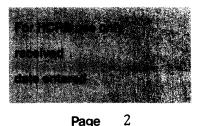
Revitalization of the block did occur in 1976. Instead of demolition, however, most of the houses have been purchased and renovated as luxury residences. This change came about when a large number of the houses, assembled under a single ownership, were purchased by a firm which intended to renovate and resell them. Subsequent renovation of other individually owned houses has followed. Thus, Schneider Triangle will retain not only its cohesive nineteenth-century architecture, but is single-families residential function as well.

For the past 86 years, Schneider Triangle has been an integral part of the Washington community. Today these houses provide a vital contrast to modern architecture. As substantial Victorian buildings, these houses successfully preserve many of the attributes and historical associations of the late nineteenth century. Schneider Triangle is an excellent example of nineteenth century architectural style and urban design. It is the work of one of the most active architect/speculators of the time. In its scale, details, and use of materials, it is typical of the best rowhouse construction in Washington in the 1880's. Although many architects of the period were building groups of houses of unified design, Schneider Triangle is a tour de force in this respect. It fills the entire slopping triangular block between New Hampshire Avenue, 22nd Street, and Washington Circle. Each house varies within the unified overall scheme. Those on the circle and the avenue are more elaborate, befitting their more prestigious locations. Special emphasis is given to those houses which form the corners of the complex. It is this careful exploiting of an unusual and difficult site that makes Schneider Triangle exceptional when compared to Washington rowhouse architecture of this Its importance is further enhanced by the fact that it has period. remained essentially intact while most of the surrounding neighborhood has been redeveloped as high-rise offices and apartments.

The general mood of this residential block has been achieved through architectural combinations of the Queen Anne and Richardsonian Romanesque styles. The buildings are similar in that each has a rusticated brownstone basement, three upper stories faced with red pressed brick (set in stretcher bond) and a roof of slate. Although similar in overall design quality, no two of the houses are alike. Each has a degree of uniqueness rendered by the varied application of segmental and relieving arches, pediments and gablets, diminutive turrets, full-scale towers, and an assortment of relief design in hammered tin and terra cotta. The complexity of massing in these facades changes accordingly. Those most decorative (bordering on New Hampshire Avenue and Washington Circle) have a greater interpaly of planes; there are more oriels, corbelled Continuation sheet

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chimneys, acroteria, and string course moldings. Those houses with less design quality (generally those on 22nd Street) achieve their Victorian cohesiveness more simply. The fenestration seems more standardized, the roof styles are less dramatic, and the projecting bays vary slightly from square to cut-away. Less applied design is apparent; rather the emphasis is on plan and structure.

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Aside from similarities in material and detail, the buildings have further visual continuity. This has been achieved by the continuation of several string course moldings (egg-and-dart, multiple rib, and simple convex) along the entire block's facade. In addition, the fenestration maintains a certain evenness; absolute regularity is prevented by the gradual decline in topography as one gets further from the Circle. The roof line, set at 36 feet, also reflects integration despite this slopping of terrain and the variety in eave designs.

The one important exception to the visual continuity is evident on the K Street frontage where lot #3 is vacant. A building was removed from this spot several years ago as a result of fire damage. The structure's presence is suggested, however, by the interrupted string courses from buildings #2 and #4.

Of the 21 standing rowhouses, three will be discussed as representative examples of Schneider's ability to utilize similar detail yet achieve different effects.

<u>1006 22nd Street, N.W.</u> Square 53, 1ot 20

This is a three-story, red pressed brick building which rests upon an ashlar brownstone basement. Its facade is distinquished by a two-story projecting bay with cut-away corners. Atop this, the third floor rises to a slate mansard roof interrupted by a small gablet on the left and a tin-framed pediment on the right.

Design is limited almost entirely to the 3rd floor and roof levels where terra cotta tiles, pellet moldings, and hammered tin designs punctuate the brick surface.

The building's primary windows have segmental arches over simply incised wooden frames. The fenestration is even and of two types: double sash, and double sash with fixed transom.

Verticality is emphasized by the very tall and thin windows in the sides of the projecting bay. This emphasis, however, is balanced by the numerous string courses (five on the first floor) which link this building with its neighbors.

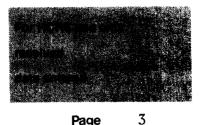
The entrance (to the left of the projecting bay) is framed by a romanesque

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arch of pressed brick and delineated carefully by convex molding.

Many of the designs employed in the facade are of the pre-fabricated, mass-produced variety that Schneider was known to use.

2213 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Square 53, lot 8

Located at the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and Washington Circle is one of the larger structures in the Schneider Triangle. Like the others, it is three stories of pressed brick, has an ashlar brownstone basement, and rises to a slate mansard roof.

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It is unique for its variety in facade design. The New Hampshire Avenue side is accented by a two-story, squared-corner projecting bay, an elaborate terra cotta tile pediment with finial, and two-story corbelled chimney. Egg-and-dart moldings link this facade with that of the Circle.

The corner of the building boasts a massive, full-height rounded tower which is capped with a conical slate roof and finial. The tower is embellished extensively with terra cotta tiles and a denticulated cornice.

The Circle facade is more simple; its only decoration is that rendered by the relieving arch windows (which are ubiquitous on this building), rusticated brownstone entrance, and double set of head-high colonettes. As in the other houses, the doorway is recessed.

1011 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W. Square 53, 1ot 14

This building is perhaps the most interesting and elaborate of all. Its general shape is triangular and undoubtedly fashioned by Schneider to fit this odd corner lot.

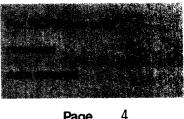
Again, the basic materials are pressed brick, ashlar brownstone, and slate. The height of the building varies from the standard $3\frac{1}{2}$ stories to 4 stories due to the occurence of a garret room in the projecting rounded tower.

The 22nd Street facade was asymmetrically planned. There are two unusual bay windows (1st and 3rd floors) with a set of simple double hung windows separating them. The third floor oriel evolves into a bell gable which interrupts an elaborate spanse of brick molding.

Between this vertical line of windows and the corner tower there are some narrow vertical lights and a two-story corbelled chimney.

The corner tower is particularly unusual; it is rounded for its full height on the 22nd Street side, but only from the second floor up on the New Hampshire Avenue side. When viewed from this angle, the first floor appears

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flat. The tower rises to a fourth floor garret which boasts a horizontal band of six clerestory windows of twenty-five lights apeice. Above this is a conical slate roof with rounded finial.

The New Hampshire Avenue facade is basically symmetrical. Adjacent to the corner tower are two projecting bays which have been separated by a recessed entrance. Above the entrance is a balcony elaborately decorated with floral tiles, arched windows, and string course moldings. A fire escape is a later addition.

The bay to the left of the entrance projects for two stories. Above that the third floor rises to a steep, heavily tiled pediment with finial. The other projecting bay, to the right of the entrance, rises a full three stories to a denticulated cornice and slate, hipped roof.

Decoration is applied more heavily and less formally to this building than to the others discussed.

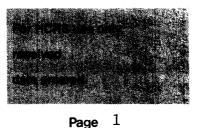
In each of the above examples, certain additional characteristics are shared with the other 18 buildings. The rear walls, which face a small interior courtyard, are virtually void of detail. There are very simple arched windows, common (not pressed) brick, and no moldings. Furthermore, most of the residences have their chimneys on the interior side, hidden from the street. They are squat and exhibit only simple corbelling for adornment.

The external changes made to these rowhouses over the years have been nonstructural and relatively minor. Prior to 1976, changes consisted mostly of general deterioration and the addition of fire escapes to some of the rooming houses. Between 1976 and 1978, approximately 16 of the houses on Schneider Triangle were renovated and modernized. This has renewed the property and brought about its reintegration into the surrounding community. The houses have been strengthened structurally and have been adapted to meet modern needs and requirements. In some instances an effort has been made to preserve elements of the original interiors, but generally the modernization has changed the interiors considerably. The exteriors of the buildings have been altered by painting the pressed brick in several instances, the occasional addition of a greenhouse, and, at the center of the lot (and thus hidden from the street), the addition of wooden deck porches. 2213 Washington Circle has a roof top deck which provides a view both of the Triangle and of the city of Washington. From this vantage point it is possible to see that skylights have been added to all the renovated houses. Those houses which have not been renovated appear to be in relatively good condition.

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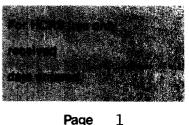
The architect from whom this group of houses takes its name was one of the most prolific of Washington's late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century architects. Thomas F. Schneider (1859-1938) did much to influence the appearance of the growing city. Schneider was the son of a German printer who immigrated to Washington. His obituary in the Star on June 10, 1938, states that he "learned the building trade by the old school apprentice method." Schneider spent eight years working for the noted architectural firm of Cluss and Schulze. As a speculative builder, he was known as one of the pioneers in apartment and residential building in this city; he is credited with building some 2,000 houses and about 25 hotels and apartment buildings. Among Schneider's most notable structures are the Cairo Hotel (1894), the rowhouses on the 1700 block of Q Street, N.W. (1889-1892), and the buildings at the National Park Seminary in Glen Echo, Maryland (1894). The sheer numbers and the distinctive stylistic features of Schneider's buildings helped define the character of many of Washington's late-nineteenth century neighborhoods. Schneider's personal interpretation and mixture of the Queen Anne and Richarsonian Romanesque Revival styles popular at the time was often enlivened by an abundance of fanciful finely-carved decorative features. Schneider used architectural elements to unify groups of houses while at the same time, providing variety to each facade. A continuous stringcourse, for example, might run the length of the row, while varied fenestration, bays, and decorative elements would provide visual interest and richness.

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The polychromy and textural patterns on the brick and ashlar stone facades of the remaining 21 houses in the Schneider Triangle reflect this facility with architectural elements as well as the prevailing Victorian tastes of the late nineteenth century. Each facade is varied within the confines of the overall unified scheme. This unusual group of houses has been an integral part of the Washington Circle neighborhood for the past 90 years. They stand as evidence of a by-gone era and as a contrast to the more recent high-rise structures that have proliferated in the Washington Circle area. The substantial Victorian houses in the Schneider Triangle have successfully preserved many of the attributes and historical associations of the late nineteenth century. This group of houses successfully meets, and has continuously met, human needs in an urban setting since its construction.

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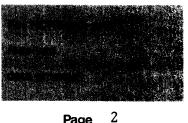
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Interviews:

- National Archives and Records Service, October 21, 1975: Dorothy Provine
- National Capital Planning Commission, October 16, 1975: Suzanne Ganschinietz, Architectural Historian Robert Cousins, Dept. Asst. Director of Federal Policies
- National Register of Historic Places, October 2, 1975: Felicia Furman Sally Oldham
- Commission on Fine Arts, October 22, 1975: Sibley Jennings, Architect Sue Kohler, Historian
- Columbia Historical Society, October 10, 1975: Perry G. Fisher, Librarian
- John Earnshaw, Independent Researcher on Schneider Triangle, October 17, 1975