

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received **DEC - 8 1983**

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Weckbaugh House 5DV719

and/or common Weckbaugh-Willbanks Residence

2. Location

street & number 1701 East Cedar Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town Denver n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Denver code 031

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Roger Willbanks

street & number Box 5793

city, town Denver n/a vicinity of state Colorado 80217

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Denver Assessment Division--City and County of Denver

street & number 1445 Cleveland Place

city, town Denver state Colorado

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Inventory of Colorado has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Ongoing federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Denver state Colorado

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on a large estate encompassing _____ acres, the Weckbaugh House is one of few examples of residential architecture of this level of significance dating to the Depression era. Of the Norman Chateau style, the house is perhaps the outstanding example in Denver. It was constructed in 1930-33, and designed by one of the most prominent Denver architects of the period, Jules Jacques B. Benedict. Elaborately detailed both on the exterior and the interior, the resident is characterized by an irregular floor plan with wings situated at various angles to the main block.

The two and one-half story structure possesses seven bays on the front facade, including a series of semi-circular windows on the right wing. Face brick in Flemish bond with travertine quoins incase the double-thick walls. Travertine quoins accentuate the chimneys and angles of a bay tower of two stories on the west. Additional travertine was employed in a broad band which runs parallel with the eaves and with the base of the house.

The very steeply pitched hipped slate roof features a conical tower by one of five chimney stacks on the front slope. Of the remaining chimneys, all are double stacks joined and capped with decorative sculptured chimney pots. One is situated off-set left center on the bottom of the front slope. (It is engaged and extends to the ground.) A third is on the front slope of the west wing, off-set to the left. To the rear of the building are visible the remaining two chimneys. The chimneys often rest on a plinth base and hold a bond of travertine.

On the second level, front facade, right wing, are two hooded dormers, with oval windows. The facia is travertine. The eaves of the pyramidal hipped tower possesses a highly ornate cornice resting on carved brackets. The windowheads on the first level are flat in shape or semi-circular. Windows flanking the entry are encased with plain moulding over a travertine lintel.

The right wing at the first level, with a string of four semi-circular windows, is joined by engaged carved travertine columns and brackets. Flush travertine panels lie below. The tower windows are also supported by carved travertine brackets and crowned with semi-elliptical moulding; panels face the facade below. The second level windowheads, which are semi-elliptical, project from the facade. The carved floral designed trim is topped with a large finial, supported by modillions. Engaged pilasters surround the modillions.

The windows are supported by decorated lugsills with panels below. The eaves of the wings break to surround windows that rise above the vertical plane. A small Gothic window, second level of the right wing, has a decorated lintel and moulded lugsill and is flanked with engaged pilasters.

The semi-circular main door is centered on the front facade. The door is accentuated with carved moulding above the brackets which join carved engaged columned pilasters. Four leaded glass, highly ornate Gothic windows, in a carved travertine moulded embrasure edged in quoins, are just below the gable peak.

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The west wing contains a second level balcony which is recessed; an adaptation of French Gothic, combined with some English Gothic motifs. Many of the exterior details are similar to those on the house of Jacques Coeur, Bourges (1443).

Double doors of curved glass and decorative ironwork open onto the entrance hall, the focal point of which is a grand curving staircase with ornate hand-wrought iron balustrade and a wide landing with medieval windows depicting the four seasons. The entry also features flooring of grey Georgia and white Alabama marble with green marble trim, plaster mouldings trimmed in 14k gold leaf, arched French doorway with garden access, and a powder room with concealed bar--a reminder of the days of Prohibition.

In the living room, large formal French doors open to a garden setting. Important features include multi-wood parquet floors and a multi-colored marble mantel and trumeau, an over-the-mantel technique combining both mirrors and paintings, which was taken from a French chateau. Adjoining the living room are a music room and a conservatory, featuring French doors, floors and trim of marble, and a stark white marble fountain in the center.

Highlighting the formal dining room is a ceiling decorated with plaster mouldings imported from Italy. Also included in this room are multi-wood parquet flooring in a ribbon pattern, and French doors which open to a covered and tiled outdoor dining area.

Also on the main level are a library, paneled with curved French walnut and accompanying marble-floored powder room, and a breakfast room with hand-painted mural walls, marble floor and a small fountain.

Located on the second floor is a two-room, two-bath master suite, which includes a fireplace, hand-painted murals, and a balcony. Both baths feature Art Deco design, one in black with terraced sunken bath and gold fixtures. Comprising the remainder of this floor are three connecting bedrooms and a spacious bedroom suite with balcony and adjoining game room, three Art Deco baths and a sewing room.

An Art Deco ballroom, featuring an extensive use of black marble and mirrors, fireplace, marbled floor and original fixtures, is found on the basement level, as are a game room, three-bedroom servant's quarters and a three-car garage.

The residence also includes a fourth-story tower room.

A formal garden abundant in rose bushes, an informal garden with a waterfall, a variety of native trees and bushes, a reflecting pool, and a bronze and marble Italian fountain lend an air of quiet gentility to the grounds which surround and complement the main residence. A stone retaining wall with built-in gardener's cottage and wrought iron fencing add to the elegance of the landmark estate.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1933 **Builder/Architect** Jules Jacques B. Benedict; architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Of the few mansions remaining in Denver, the Weckbaugh House is among the most significant. Elaborately detailed on the exterior and the interior, the residence is perhaps the most outstanding example of the Chateausque in the city. It was constructed in 1930–1933 and designed by prominent Denver architect Jules Jacques B. Benedict.

The Weckbaugh House is situated on a 1.7 -acre landscaped estate near the historic Country Club District.¹ The house was built by Ella Mullen Weckbaugh, eldest daughter of one of Denver's most prominent commercial giants and philanthropists of the late 19th century, John K. Mullen. Mr. Mullen, a native of County Galway, Ireland, came to Denver in 1871 at the age of twenty-four. Within four years he had started his own flour mill business which prospered and grew. In 1882 he began construction of the Hungarian Flour Mills and installed the first roller mills west of the Missouri River. The Hungarian process was the first to produce true white flour in the Denver region. In 1885 the Colorado Mining and Elevator Company was organized with Mr. Mullen as general manager, and in 1887 he became president. His interests continued to expand until, in 1911, the company was operating ninety-nine mills, elevators and warehouses in six states. Mr. Mullen also engaged in other enterprises, notably land and cattle.

In his later years, Mullen became known for his generosity in supporting community projects, such as the J. K. Mullen Home for the Aged and the J. K. Mullen School for Boys.

In 1874, Mullen married Miss Katherine Smith. They had four children; Ella, May, Katherine, and Edith. In 1896–98, Mullen built a residence for the family at 896 Pennsylvania. On the adjacent lot and on two lots across the street, he built three houses for his daughters as they were married. Of these four houses, only the one at 450 East Ninth, which was constructed for Ella, remains. She resided there until the completion in 1933 of the house at 1701 East Cedar Avenue.

In 1903 Ella Mullen married Henry Weckbaugh. They had two children, John Kernan and Eleanor. After Ella's death in 1970, Eleanor Weckbaugh resided at the estate until her death in 1977. The residence passed through several hands until it was acquired by Roger Willbanks, who purchased it with the goal of completing a full restoration.

The architect of the house was J. J. B. Benedict (1879–1948), a well-known local architect who was responsible for the design of many public, commercial and residential buildings, such as the Highland Park and Littleton public library buildings, the City Park gardens, the Washington Park pavilion and gardens, and the Mountain parks.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 1.7

Quadrangle name Englewood

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Zone | Easting | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | |

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| Zone | Easting | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | Easting | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Description: A part of Block 18, Shackleton Place Subdivision (See map 3 with boundaries delineated). Justification: Included is the residence and the landscaped estate under present ownership, consisting of 1.7 acres.

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

state n/a code county code

state n/a code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nan Haines (Edited by: Gloria Mills, October 1983, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation)

organization Historic Denver date October 10, 1974

street & number 1701 Wyncoop, Suite 200 telephone

city or town Denver state Colorado

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 Barbara Solier

title State Historic Preservation Officer date November 30, 1983

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

Beth Grosvenor date 1/16/84
for Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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Although there are several "grand" houses dating to the period 1900-1935 remaining in Denver, few could properly be placed within the mansion category. Of buildings of that scale, the Weckbaugh House is distinctive in being the most impressive example of the French Norman Chateau style. The design and quality of the detailing is outstanding and exceptional within the state as well as the city of Denver. Among the many notable details of the house include the entrance element with its carved mouldings and ornate Gothic windows; heavily ornamented pediments of the second floor windows; the decorative chimney pots; and the iron balconies of the second floor. Prominent among the interior features include a grand curving staircase with ornate hand-wrought iron balustrade in the entrance hall, marble floors in the entry and living room, and a multi-colored marble mantle in the living room.

**United States Department of the Interior
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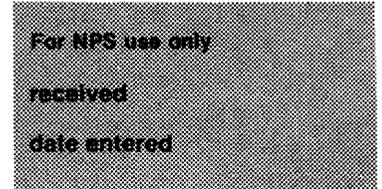
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Weckbaugh House
Denver County, Colorado

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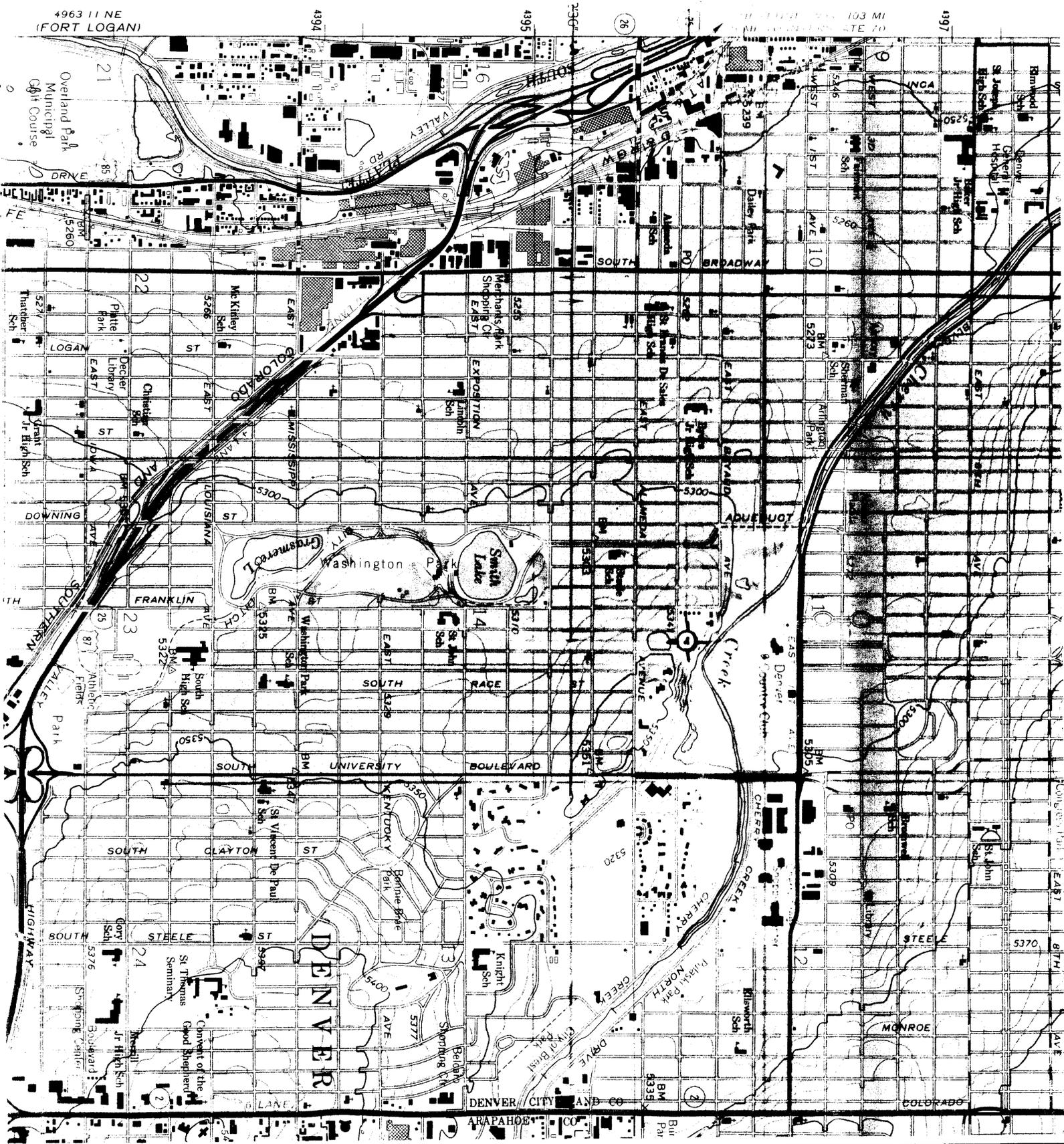
Davis, Sally and Baldwin, Betty. Denver Dwellings and Descendants. Denver:
Stage Books, 1963

Stone, Wilbur Fisk, Editor. Stone's History of Colorado. Chicago: S. J. Clarke
Publishing Co., 1918, p. 535.

Information provided by Roger Wilbanks, 1983.

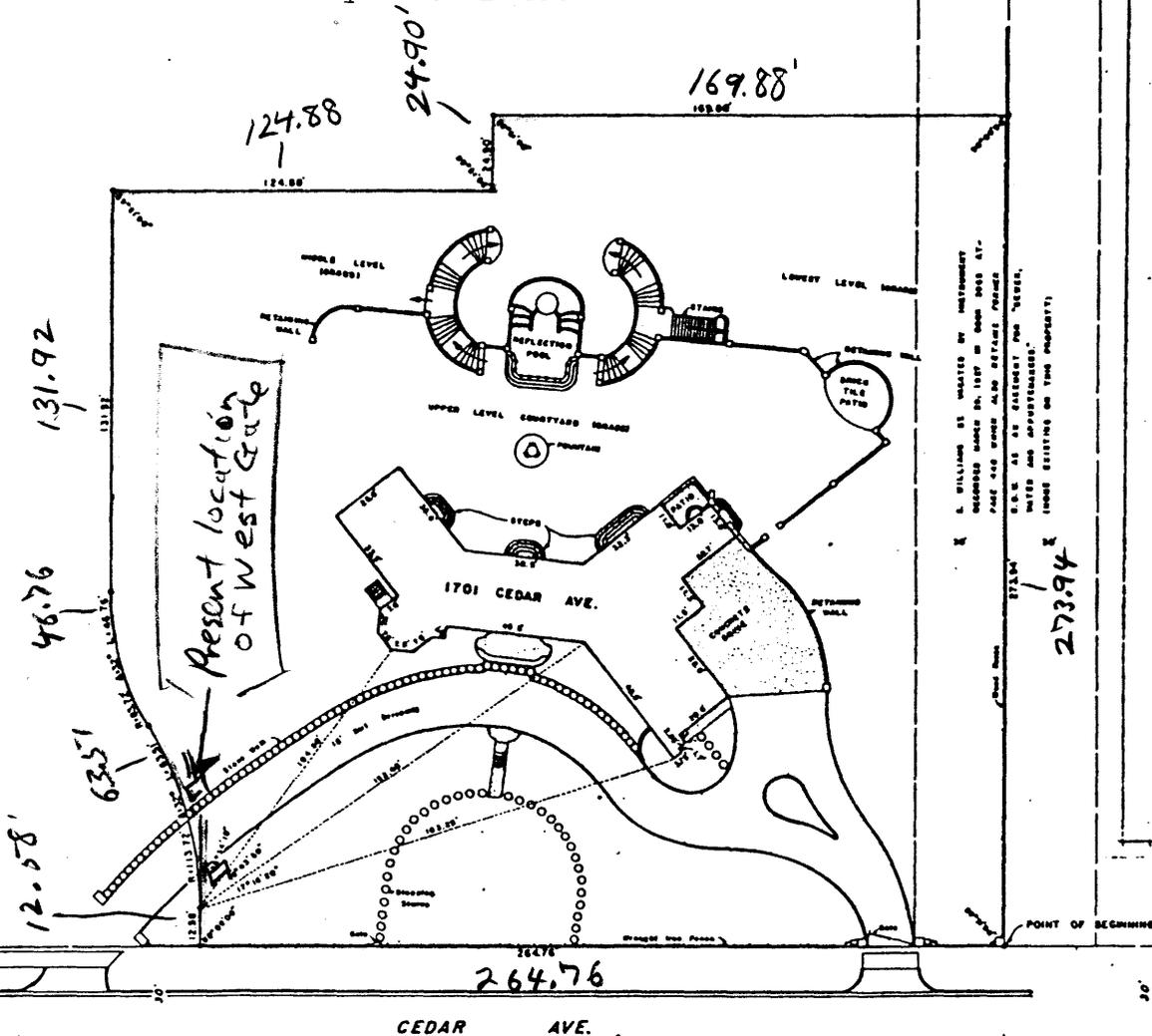
Weckbaugh House
Denver County, Colorado

Map 1
UTM References: 13-502885-4395550
Englewood Quad



Weckbaugh House
Denver County, Colorado

Map: from Deed Abstract, 1979' 
Nominated area shown by blue line.



CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY:

This is to certify that on August 15, 1979, a survey was made under my supervision of that part of Block 18, Shackleton Place Subdivision according to the official City and County of Denver re-survey plat, together with the contiguous one half of S. Williams St. vacated by Ord. 28, 1927 on the east side and together with the alley within said Block 18 vacated by Ord. 62, 1921, all being in the City and County of Denver and more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the point of intersection between the North line of Cedar Ave. and the centerline of said vacated S. Williams St.; thence North along said centerline a distance of 273.94 feet; thence on an angle to the left of $89^{\circ} 51' 00''$ a distance of 169.88 feet; thence on an angle to the left of $90^{\circ} 09' 00''$ a distance of 24.90 feet; thence on an angle to the right of $90^{\circ} 09' 00''$ a distance of 124.88 feet; thence on an angle to the left of $90^{\circ} 09' 00''$ a distance of 131.92 feet to a point of curvature; thence along a curve to the left having a radius of 83.72 feet and a central angle of $32^{\circ} 00' 00''$ an arc distance of 46.76 feet to a point of reverse curvature; thence along a curve to the right having a radius of 113.72 feet and a central angle of $32^{\circ} 00' 00''$ an arc distance of 63.51 feet to a point of tangency; thence along the tangent to the last mentioned curve a distance of 12.58 feet to a point on said north right-of-way line of Cedar Ave.; thence on an angle to the left of $89^{\circ} 51' 00''$ and along said right-of-way line a distance of 264.76 feet to the point of beginning. Containing in all an area of 75,607 square feet or 1.7357 acres, more or less, and the 2-story brick residence with basement and attached garage at 1701 Cedar Ave., was found to be located entirely within the boundary lines of the above described property as shown on this plat. The location and dimensions of all buildings, improvements, encumbrances and rights of way in evidence are known to me and encroachments by or on the premises are accurately shown on this plat shall not be need to establish alignment for boundary fences or walls.

S. WILLIAMS ST. VACATED BY INSTRUMENT RECORDED MARCH 20, 1927 IN BOOK 1000 AT PAGE 440 WHICH ALSO SETS ALEYS THEREIN. S.A.C. AS AN ALLEY AND "VEGETABLE GARDEN AND ADJUTANTAGES". SEE BOOKS EXISTING ON THIS PROPERTY.



| REVISIONS | IMPROVEMENT SURVEY | |
|--|--------------------|--|
| November 3, 1979 | | |
| | | |
| A part of Block 18, Shackleton Place Subdivision and part of vacated S. Williams St. and vacated alley all in the City and County of Denver, State of Colorado | | |
| Scale 1" = 30' | By J.R. Sales | Date August 15, 1979 |
| J. W. WILLIAMS & ASSOCIATES, INC. Consulting Engineers 1400 E. 14TH ST. ENGLEWOOD, COLORADO | | Sheet 1 of 1 Drawing No. 2357-20 |