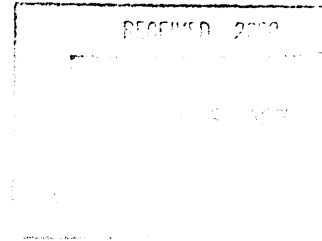


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sovereign Hotel

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 205 Washington Avenue

not for publication

city, town Santa Monica

vicinity

state California

code CA

county Los Angeles

code 037

zip code 90403

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

buildings

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources Within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

0

buildings

0

0

sites

0

0

structures

0

0

objects

1

0

Total

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:) _____

Edson H. Boell

10/24/97

Boe

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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)

Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Stucco

roof Terra Cotta

other Decorative cast concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located two blocks from the Pacific Ocean on the northern end of downtown Santa Monica, the Sovereign Hotel is situated on the northeast corner of Washington Avenue and Second Street. Five stories high and an approximate "L"-shape in plan, the Spanish Colonial Revival apartment building is a reinforced concrete structure finished in stucco. Partial shed, gable, and hipped gable roofs along main facade parapet lines are finished with red clay barrel tile, and serve to disguise the primary flat roof of building located behind them. The fifth floor rises near the southwest corner of the building to create a square tower-like form. A hipped roof lantern caps the main hipped roof of this tower. Below the tower, on the southwestern corner of the building, is a shallow fifth-floor terrace. A similar terrace is subtracted from the southeast corner of the building.

The principal mass of the building runs east to west with the primary facade facing south. An entry courtyard, elevated slightly above sidewalk level, is enclosed between two wings which project from the east and west ends of the primary facade. The wing to the north extends to the sidewalk edge and property line, defining the basic "L"-shape of the Sovereign's plan. The wing to the south extends less than half this distance, leaving the southwestern corner of the courtyard open to permit a view down Washington Avenue to the ocean in the distance. A low wall, composed of simple iron rails which span stuccoed masonry piers with rusticated caps, encloses the courtyard. A decorative urn sits atop each pier. One story pavilions, connected to both wings at the perimeter of the courtyard, serve as formal entry gates to this outdoor space. The entry pavilions have arched openings which spring from square piers with simple capitals. A narrow cornice band trims the flat roofs of the pavilions. Metal lamps are suspended from long chains at the center of ceiling cross-vaults within these structures. Concrete entry steps are sheltered within the pavilions.

Main facade fenestration on the Sovereign is highly irregular. Opening reveals are generous; units are typically wood multi-light casements. Larger windows often have transoms; arched windows have arched upper lights. While individual bays of windows are occasionally symmetrical in their general arrangement, most implied symmetries are broken by small changes in composition. Window openings vary in form and size, enhancing bay asymmetries. The subtraction of arched, recessed balcony areas in some areas and addition of metal rail or solid stucco wall balcony enclosures provide other compositional elements. Attic level oriel windows are centered on several bays. Cross-hatched masonry screens or metal grilles cover some window openings. Recessed porches with wide, arched openings are stacked in a continuous vertical column which occupies nearly half the northern wing's courtyard facade.

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Sovereign Hotel
Los Angeles County, California

Pilaster framing around fifth floor windows on the front elevation of the main building provides organization to the upper portion of this facade. While most of the building has a simply molded cornice, an elaborate corbeled arch cornice wraps the roof line of the southeast tower. Additional applied ornamental elements around the front entry doors include a squared frame of dog-tooth molding which surrounds the front door, two shields within this frame on each side of the door, and a rectangular foliated plaque centered above it on the second floor. A roof sign, placed atop the southwestern tower, consists of a metal rectangular box with painted letters reading "Sovereign Hotel." When it was originally installed in the 1960s, the letters were transparent and illuminated from behind.

In 1937, a two-story Annex wing was attached to the northern, rear facade of the Sovereign Hotel. This simple, wood frame structure is finished in stucco and has a flat roof. Large, three-bay, wood casement windows, with fixed central panes and single-light, double-hung sashes to either side, are the most common window type in the annex wing. These windows, as well as secondary single-light, double-hung units, vary widely in size. One enters the annex through the main lobby of the Sovereign, where a monumental stairway marked by streamlined, wood newel posts bisects a second floor "library" area which serves as the connection between the main mass of the original building and the annex. Directly west of the stair and library, a narrow, rectangular court separates the addition from the original building. Entry to first-story apartment units of the annex occurs through individual front doors opening on to the court, while second-story units are located off a double-loaded corridor.

The main entry to the building is through a pointed-arched doorway located directly adjacent to the eastern wing, on the primary facade of the building. The arch frames original double entry doors of wrought iron and glass.

The Sovereign features a large lobby with a beamed ceiling. An area to the west is elevated above the rest of the lobby and screened by an arcade and wrought iron railings. The building's interior is composed of 86 units, a combination of single, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom suites. All are accessed from double-loaded corridors with coved ceilings. Each individual entry door has a small obscure glass window screened by a scrolled wrought iron grille. Within each unit, kitchens have been restored according to intact examples, featuring ceramic tile countertops, two-basin sinks of enameled metal, and single-panel wood cabinets. Glass front cabinets flanking the passage between the kitchens and dining areas divide the two spaces. Bathrooms have also been restored to their original appearance, and dressing areas which adjoin bathrooms in the single units feature built-in cabinets.

The Sovereign was heavily damaged in the 1994 Northridge earthquake and subsequent rainstorms. A certified rehabilitation was completed in 1996. Alterations to the Sovereign were made for the purpose of seismic retrofit and repair of earthquake damage. All original windows were replaced with exact replicas. On the courtyard facades, a few window openings were closed for seismic strengthening, with deep reveals left to indicate the former presence of the windows. The building is significantly intact otherwise, from its setting and profile to its details, configuration, and materials.

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Sovereign Hotel
Los Angeles County, California

Kurt Meyer-Radon and his brother, Hans, were partners in their own architectural firm, Meyer-Radon Bros., in the 1920s. There is anecdotal evidence that they worked on homes in Santa Monica and Beverly Hills, but no specific houses can be attributed to the firm. The brothers dissolved their firm in 1929, the year the Sovereign was built. Kurt continued working as an architect in Los Angeles through at least 1937, as shown in the City directory. He died in Santa Barbara County, California on September 20, 1962 at the age of seventy-seven.

The exterior of the Sovereign Hotel is remarkably intact. It retains all of its original character-defining features, which include cast-stone ornament, decorative metal work, and red tile gable roofs. On the interior of the building, apartment plans and corridor configurations remain largely intact. Entry doors to units and stairs are original. Kitchens and bathrooms have been restored according to intact examples.

The Sovereign is an excellent example of the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style popular in Southern California and Santa Monica during the 1920s. It is a rare example of the luxury apartment hotel building type unique to this era, and appears eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C.

9. Major Bibliographical References

American Institute of Architects/Los Angeles Chapter Tour Brochure, "Beach City Living: The Apartment and Condo Life." 1995

Building permit, as recorded in *Southwest Builder and Contractor*. November 16, 1929.

Gleye, Paul. *The Architecture of Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: Rosebud Books, 1981.

Johnson Heumann Research Associates. *Santa Monica Historic Resources Inventory, 1985-1986*.

Lee, Portia. *Application for Landmark Designation Sovereign Hotel*. Undated. Available from the City of Santa Monica.

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Charmont Apartments, 1/31/96.

Roth, Leland M. *A Concise History of American Architecture*. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.48 acre

UTM References

A

31	361320	376240
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

D

Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots M, N, and O, Block 49 of the Town of Santa Monica, in the City of Santa Monica.
Parcel No. 4292-023-010.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is the historic lot on which the building was constructed.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christy Johnson McAvoy

organization Historic Resources Group

street & number 1728 Whitley Avenue

city or town Hollywood

date 3/10/97

telephone 213-469-2349

state CA

zip code 90028

Additional Documentation

Sanborn Map, 1950

Black and white photographs (17 total; size: 5"x7")

Property Owner

Susan Connally
Sovereign Restoration Partners
P.O. Box 5652
Kingwood, TX 77325

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Documentation

Sovereign Hotel
Los Angeles County, California

Photographs (17 total)

1. Photographer: Jennifer Minasian, Historic Resources Group
Date: November 1996
Location of original negative: Historic Resources Group, 1728 Whitley, Hollywood, California 90028.
View: Northeast; southwest elevation
***Please note that the photographer, date, and location of original negative are the same for all 17 photographs.**
2. View: North; roof sign on west tower
3. View: Northeast; partial south elevation
4. View: Southwest; north facade- new multipane windows
5. View: North; south facade- corbelled concrete balconies and wrought iron
6. View: East; planters and paving in main courtyard
7. View: East; planters and paving in side courtyard to the west
8. View: North; concrete balconette, entry to balcony
9. View: North; lantern, flanking entry door to lobby
10. View: West; lobby, south entry door
11. View: Southwest; lobby
12. View: East; corridor terminating in metal baluster of lobby
13. View: East; second floor- stairway, turned balusters, unit entry door
14. View: Southwest; third floor- stairway #1
15. View: North; unit 102 entry door with original metal work
16. View: South; unit 501 kitchen
17. View: hardware, typical doorknob

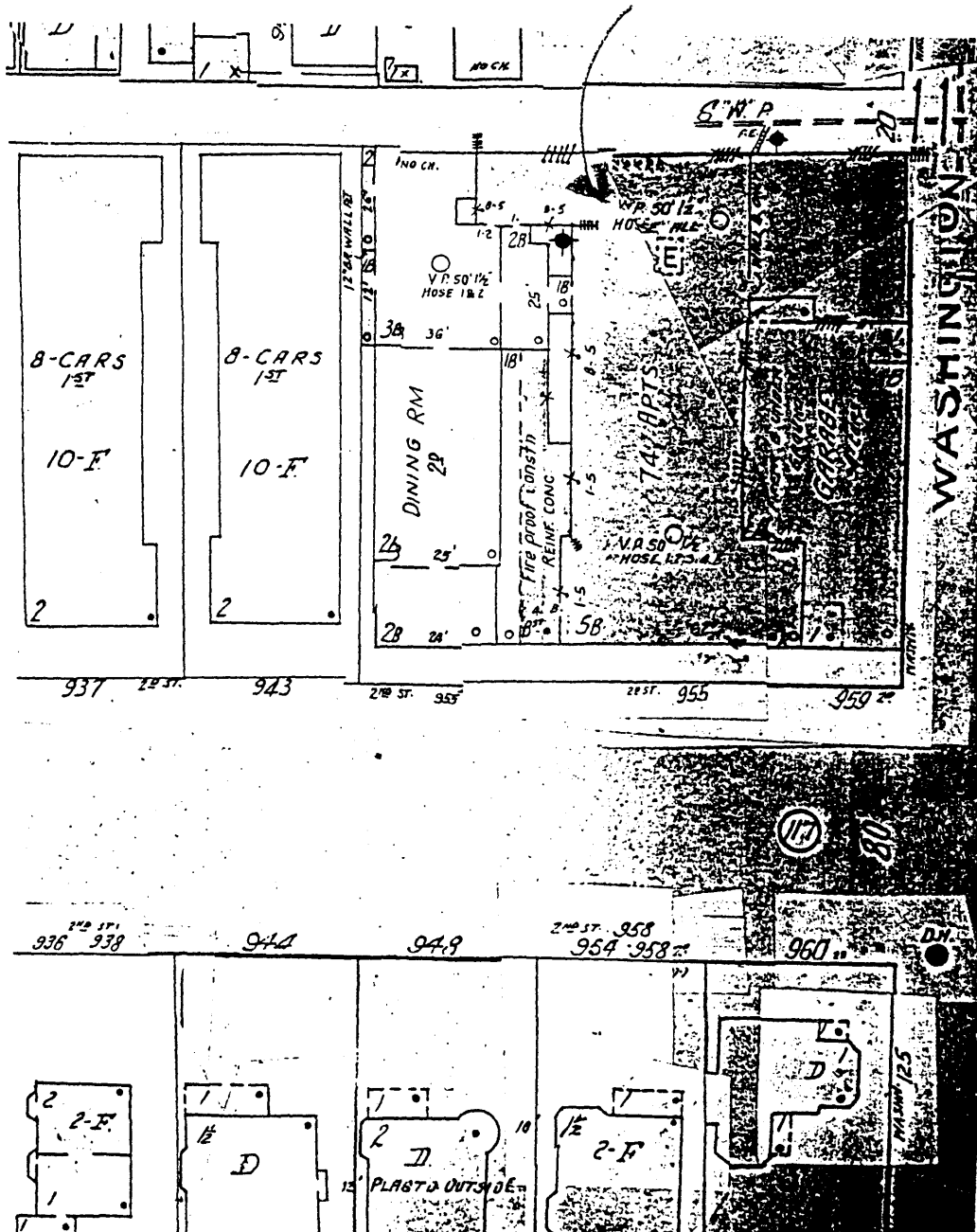
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Sovereign Hotel
Los Angeles County, California

Sanborn Map, 1950



Scale: 1" = 50 feet