NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

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 detenational detenational detenational detenational detenational 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.

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

1. Name of Property
cathedral Mansions Apartment Buildings other names/site number
2. Location
street & number <u>2900, 3000, 3100 Connecticut Ave., N.W.</u> not for publication <u>N/A</u> city or town Washington vicinity <u>X</u> state District of Columbia code <u>DC</u> zip code <u>20008</u> county <u>N/A</u> code <u>N/A</u>
3. State/Federal Agency Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that thisX 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 propertyX meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationallyX statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.) **Tablet L. Mallett Date** 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 for additional comments.)
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form Cathedral Mansions Apartment Buildings Washington, D.C.

Apartment	Buildings	in	Washington,	D.C.	1880-1945

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attick Andrews	Date of Action
nature of Keeper	
nature of Keeper	
apply)	

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

Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C. 1880-1945

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6. Func	tion or Use	•				
Historic Cat	c Functions: DOMEST COMMEN		egories f	rom ins	structions) multiple dwelling specialty store restaurant	
Current Cat		RCE	gories fr		tructions) multiple dwelling specialty store restaurant	
	ription			-		
Archite		URY REVIVAL	•	tegorie	es from instructions)	
: :		categories f CONCRETE SLATE BRICK DECORATIVE			stone	

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

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Washington, D.C.
Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C. 1880-1945

Statement of	f Significance
Applicable Nat	ional Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the fying the property for National Register listing)
<u>X</u> A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
В	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<u>x</u> c	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction 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 Consi	derations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)
A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
В	removed from its original location.
с	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.
Areas of Signi	ficance (Enter categories from instructions) ARCHITECTURE
Period of Sign	ificance 1922-1924
Significant Da	tes <u>1925</u>

Washington, D.C.	ns Apartment Buildings	1880-1945	Page 5
_	on (Complete if Criteri		e)
Cultural Affilia	tion		
Architect/Builde	r <u>Harry Wardman</u> Eugene Waggaman		
	ent of Significance (Expinuation sheets.)	plain the significan	ace of the property on
SEE CONTINU	ATION SHEET		
9. Major Bibliog	raphical References		
Previous documer preliminary requested. previously previously designated recorded by recorded by	tation on file (NPS) determination of indiv listed in the National determined eligible by a National Historic Land Historic American Build Historic American Engineer of Additional Data aric Preservation Office agency may nament	ridual listing (36 C Register the National Regist dmark dings Survey # neering Record #	FR 67) has been er
10. Geographical	Data		
_	rty 7.28 acres		
UTM References	Place additional UTM re	ferences on a conti	nuation sheet)

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) Square 2106, Lots 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 3, 10.

Zone Easting Northing

Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) The boundary includes the Cathedral Mansions Apartment Buildings.

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11. Form Prepared			
	Eve Lydia Barsoum / Arc	hitectural Historia	in
organization	D.C. Historic Preserva	ion Division	date <u>June 30, 1994</u>
street & number _	614 H Street, N.W.	teler	phone <u>(202) 727-7360</u>
city or town	Washington	state <u>D.(</u>	<u>. zip code 20001</u>
Additional Docume	ntation		
	ing items with the comp	leted form:	
Continuation Sheet	ts .		
A Sketch map numerous reso Photographs Representativ	7.5 or 15 minute series; for historic districts ources. We black and white photo (Check with the SHPO or	and properties havi	ing large acreage or
Property Owner			
name <u>Cathedral N</u>	em at the request of the Mansions South: Distric 4837 Wisconsin Avenue Washington	ct Intown Properties	Limited telephone D.C. zip code 20005
street & number city or town	nsions Center: Columbi 5301 Wisconsin Avenue Washington	N.W. state	telephone
street & number city or town	Park: Cathedral Park Co 3100 Connecticut, N.W Washington	state	telephone D.C. zip code 20008

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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The three buildings which comprise Cathedral Mansions Apartment Buildings are representative of the Grand Garden Apartment Building sub-type. They are located on a sloping, irregular shape, seven acre site. The site is bounded on the south by Cathedral Avenue, on the west by a network of public alleys, on the north by Devonshire Place, and on the east by Connecticut Avenue--opposite the National Zooligical Park. Cathedral Mansions South is located at 2900 Connecticut Avenue, Cathedral Mansions Center is located at 3000 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Cathedral Mansions North (now known as Cathedral Park) is located at 3100 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. There are 492 apartment units in the complex and the many wings of the buildings defined a number of landscaped courts. Thus, the open space requirement as set forth by the 1920 zoning law became a valuable and aesthetically appealing amenity. The landscape plan at Cathedral Mansions was designed to complement the three buildings which differ in form and detail but are all representative of the Classical Revival style. Each building employs a steel and concrete structure and is faced in red brick with limestone trim. principal facades of the three buildings face Connecticut Avenue. Although the main courtyards of Cathedral Mansions Center and Cathedral Mansions North are no longer visible from the Avenue, they remain an amenity for the tenants. unaltered courtyards of Cathedral Mansions South provide green views for the residents and contribute significantly to the open space on Connecticut Avenue.

Cathedral Mansions South:

The footprint of Cathedral Mansions South is an irregular V-shape with several projections. The main wings define the principal courtyard which is comprised of grass and a few evergreens and opens onto Connecticut Avenue. The wing which runs along Cathedral Avenue includes four projections which create three small courtyards which open onto the Avenue.

The building has five stories plus a basement. The amount of exposure at the basement level varies due to the sloping ground. The red brick walls, laid in seven course common bond, are divided into three portions. The basement level is terminated by a wide, limestone beltcourse. The sections which include walk-out basement units incorporate a rusticated base formed by the projection of every seventh course of stretchers. The middle portion is terminated above the third floor by a plain frieze and large cornice, both of limestone. The fourth floor is a full-story which is defined with a small, limestone cornice. The outside corners have limestone quoins. The roof is a tall hip-roof with hip-roof dormers, all of which are covered with slate.

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The basic window module is a six-light, metal, casement window set below a four-light, metal, fixed window. The module is arranged in groups of one, two, and three.

There are three entrances to Cathedral Mansions South. One is located in the center bay of the Cathedral Avenue facade. It is approached by a short flight of stone steps and a landing with a simple metal railing. The original doors and transom have been replaced. The door surround is limestone and incorporates a pair of pilasters with Vincenzo Scamozzi's rendition of the Ionic capital. These support a curved pediment which is broken at the bottom. The tympanum features the words "Cathedral Entrance." Another entrance is situated near the end of the Connecticut Avenue elevation. It is located at the base of a semi-circular stair tower. The entrance is marked by a limestone veneer which extends for two levels. The pair of doors is located at grade and framed by two lanterns and two casement windows beneath two-light, fixed windows. The limestone at this level is rusticated. The limestone at the second level has a smooth finish. This level repeats the a:b:a pattern. Its central element is an arched opening comprised of two casement windows set beneath an arched window. The basic window module is used for the side windows. The words "North Entrance" are located below the arched window. Doric pilasters separate the windows and support a plain frieze, cornice, and broken, triangular pediment. The main entrance is situated at the corner of Cathedral and Connecticut Avenues. It is approached by steps located at the street corner which are defined by planting beds and two fieldstone pedestals which are linked by a cast iron arch. A walk leads to another set of stairs which is framed by flagstone retaining walls and planting beds. The pair of doors aligns with the center of the semi-circular arcade comprised of Doric piers. The wood doors have twelve-lights. The segmental wall incorporates pairs of eight-light, wood-frame windows set beneath pairs of six-light, wood-frame windows.

The interior has remained essentially unchanged. The lobbies at the two secondary entrances have simple details and provide access to an elevator and stairs with ornamental metal railings. The main lobby is more elaborate. There is a semicircular vestibule, a small office, elevator, and stairs with an ornamental metal railing. There is also a small reception room with wainscot, crown molding, and a coffered ceiling. There are 152 apartments in the building. The rooms are large and have panelled doors and simple moldings. Many apartments have a separate dining room, sunroom off the living room, and alcoves. Some first floor apartments have private patios.

Cathedral Mansions Center:

The residential portion of Cathedral Mansions Center has a U-shape with projections at regular intervals. Originally, the ends of the "U" were linked by

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a one-story colonnade with a central arch that led to a formal garden. The colonnade was enclosed for commercial purposes in 1925.

The residential block has five stories and is comprised of red brick with limestone trim. The apartments are accessed by entrances located at the ends of the "U." These end walls are identical. They are eleven bays wide and divided The lower level is defined by a limestone into three horizontal zones. stringcourse which aligns with the second-story, limestone window sills. fifth, sixth, and seventh bays project approximately three feet at the ground floor and have a limestone veneer. A pair of doors is located in the sixth bay, in between two bullseve windows and beneath a small ballustrade. The first and eleventh bays also feature a limestone veneer and a ballustrade, which is separated from the second-story window by the stringcourse and aligns with the ballustrade in the sixth bay. The middle zone includes the second- through fourth-floors. Each bay incorporates one opening with a pair of six-light, metal, casement windows set beneath a pair of four-light, metal, fixed windows. All of the second-story windows have limestone, hood-moldings. The other windows have a limestone sill. This section is terminated by a plain frieze and cornice of limestone. The fifth-floor constitutes the upper zone which has a stucco finish, repeats the window module, and has a small limestone cornice. A slate, truncated hip-roof with dormers crowns the building.

Cathedral Mansions North:

Cathedral Mansions North has an irregular V-shape with several projections. The wings define two sides of a landscaped courtyard which is now enclosed by a brick wall which runs along the Connecticut Avenue front set-back line.

The five-story building is faced in red brick with limestone trim (the brick has been painted to match the limestone) and has a gable roof. The main entrance is located at the end wall of the southern wing which is twelve bays wide. elevation presents a symmetrical form which references the traditional sixteenth century French classical residence with its hierarchical five-part facade: central pavilion, two end pavilions, and two linking segments. The fourththrough ninth-bays represent the figural central pavilion. Its base incorporates a limestone veneer and three arched openings. The central arch functions as the doorway and the side arches have fixed windows. The three arches are framed by four Doric pilasters and a full entablature which extends the length of the "central pavilion." The entablature projects slightly above each capital. just the frieze projects above the centerline of each arch; it features a stylized flower and its location makes reference to a keystone. The portions of the frieze which extend from the outside pilasters to the edges of the limestone veneer feature a stylized vine. The "central pavilion" is defined on the second-through fourth-floors because they project one brick course. The windows in the fifth

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through eighth bays at the second floor are surmounted by triangular, limestone pediments and are linked by limestone panels which feature a sunflower. The "central pavilion" is crowned by a large triangular pediment which has a brick tympanum and is outlined by a narrow, limestone moulding. At its center is an oval window surrounded by scrolls, fruits, and leaves.

The first- and twelfth-bays represent the figural end pavilions. These bays are approximately twice as wide as the other bays. Their brick base is defined by limestone quoins and a limestone stringcourse which aligns with the first-floor cornice on the "central pavilion." Their second story windows also employ the triangular, limestone pediments. The top of the "end pavilion" is denoted by a hip-roof dormer which aligns with the windows below. The two "linking segments" are formed by the second and third bays and the tenth and eleventh bays. Their bases incorporate a smooth limestone veneer which is terminated by a limestone stringcourse. The upper section of the segments do not incorporate any form of elaboration.

In 1974, Cathedral Mansions North was renovated and converted into condominiums. All of the original windows and the slate roof were replaced. The 170 apartments were substantially altered. Moreover, its name was changed to: Cathedral Park.

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Cathedral Mansions was constructed from 1922 to 1924. Its Permits to Build cite Harry Wardman and Eugene Waggaman as the architects. The developer was Harry Wardman, Washington's most prolific developer. During his career, Wardman built more than 5000 rowhouses, 400 apartment buildings, twelve office buildings, and eight hotels. Cathedral Mansions was his largest apartment building. When completed, it was reportedly the largest apartment complex south of New York. At the time, the complex was an innovative response to Washington's recently adopted zoning law (1920). Its numerous wings and projections, as well as its siting and landscaping, represent an early and creative attempt to turn the zoning restrictions into advantageous selling points. The success of Cathedral Mansions influenced a number of large apartment complexes in the late-1920s and 1930s, especially along Connecticut Avenue.

Harry Wardman was born in 1872 in an industrial town in England. As a child, he worked for a short time in a textile mill. After emigrating to the United States, Wardman apprenticed himself to a carpenter in Philadelphia. He moved to Washington, D.C. in 1895 and listed himself in the city directories as a carpenter. He constructed his first residences, six detached frame houses in the Brentwood neighborhood, with a partner in 1897. Wardman established his own business in 1899 and quickly acquired a reputation as a reliable contractor. By 1903, he was constructing apartment buildings in addition to rowhouses which constituted the bulk of his work throughout his career. By 1907, he was recognized as a rich man.

Wardman's formula for success never varied. Wardman always employed competent and sometimes brilliant chief architects: Albert H. Beers, from 1904 until his death in 1911; Frank Russell White, in the late 1910s; Eugene Waggaman, during the early-1920s; and, Mihran Mesrobian, after 1926. Wardman used high quality materials and methods of construction. He was quick to introduce new building types to Washington, such as the rowhouse flat and the set-back rowhouse with porch. Wardman's genius was his ability to anticipate the needs and desires of each economic level and provide all with high quality and amenities within market constraints and the need to make a profit.

Washington adopted its first comprehensive zoning law in August 1920, four years after the renowned New York City regulations. The Washington law was a by-product of the District of Columbia's hiring of Harland Bartholomew, a noted city planner, to assist in developing a comprehensive plan. Washington's zoning regulation created three types of districts: Use, Height, and Area. There were three divisions within the Use District: commercial, industrial, and residential—without a density distinction. The complex definition of the Use District

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included the regulation of side and rear yards as well as courtyards. Height Districts of 40- (three stories), 55-, 85-, and 110-feet were established. Area Districts restricted ratios between the building footprint and lot size. In Area District "A," buildings could occupy 40% of interior lots, 50% of corner lots, and 60% of triangular lots. These percentages increased in Area District "B," "C," and "D." The ratios were 90% for interior lots and 100% for corner and triangular lots in the most dense urban areas.

These regulations created an entirely new set of constraints for builders. Upon their enactment, developers were forced to seek new formulas to achieve profits on apartment building construction. Clustered apartment buildings, like Wardman's Woodley Park, could no longer be built in residential areas. Wardman quickly determined how to add the zoning law into his formula for profit. The equation had to employ a suburban setting in addition to the height and density requirements of the zoning regulations.

Cathedral Mansions was one of Wardman's early attempts to understand the ramifications of the zoning law. The first building constructed in the complex was Cathedral Mansions South. The name used on early plans for this building was "Five Courts Mansion." It was choosen by the Wardman, probably for its association with elaborate apartment buildings which had complimentary landscape plans in England known as "mansions." Although Waggaman was listed on the building permit as an architect, the initials "M.M." appear on a December 1922 drawing for this building. Thus, Cathedral Mansions South may be one of the first projects in which Mihran Mesrobian participated.

Mihran Mesrobian was an Armenian born in Turkey. He received his architectural training in the Beaux-Arts tradition in Istanbul. Mesrobian reportedly made arrangements to emigrate and work for Wardman before leaving Turkey during a renewal of Armenian persecution by the Turks. Mesrobian began working for Wardman in 1921. By 1926, he had become Wardman's chief architect. Mesrobian's designs include Wardman Tower, many Woodley Park residences built by Wardman, Sedgewick Gardens, and the Dupont Circle Building. Mesrobian designed many of Washington's most exuberant Art Deco buildings, some were for Wardman before he declared bankruptcy in 1931.

The Permit to Build for Cathedral Mansions South was filed in May 1922. However, at this time construction was well under way as a result of a temporary permit issued on March 15. (The plat was filed February 7, 1922.) The initial construction work involved a substantial amount of regrading, because this part of the eight-acre site was originally forty feet above Connecticut Avenue. An April 11, 1922 letter from Wardman to the building inspector indicated that the building had been redesigned and that the structural plans for the north wing were not yet complete. The amount of change is not known. The exterior of the

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building is a simplified version of the original drawings, differing only in detail. A May 27 Evening Star article indicated that 125,000 tons of earth were being excavated to prepare the site for construction. Illustrations show the foundation and first-floor of the Cathedral Avenue wing and steam shovels still destroying the hill. Construction proceeded rapidly over the summer, and the building was subtantially complete by September.

Excavation began on Cathedral Mansions North on June 10, 1922. It was originally known as "Klingle Mansions" because of its proximity to the Klingle Bridge. Again, construction began under a series of temporary permits. The Permit to Build was filed on September 9. The building was completed in August 1923.

The third Permit to Build was filed on April 12, 1923 for Cathedral Mansions Center. This building was originally known as "Jewett Mansions." It was named after Jewett Street which began directly across Connecticut Avenue; this roadway eventually became the main entrance to the National Zoo. Cathedral Mansions Center was essentially complete by March 1924.

The Cathedral Mansions complex also included a public dining room, garage, and service station, the latter situated in the alley behind the center building. Beginning in 1925, the three buildings were listed in city directories as "Cathedral Mansions North, South, and Center." They were known as such until 1974 when Cathedral Mansions North was converted into condominiums and renamed Cathedral Park. In June 1925, the owners petitioned to rezone the colonnade at Cathedral Mansions Center from residential to commercial use. The request was granted and the openings in the colonnade were filled. By 1926, the commercial tenants included a grocery store, delicatessen, pastry shop, barber shop, beauty shop, drug store, and valet shop.

Cathedral Mansions gained immediate popularity and had a long waiting list of potential tenants. Its success influenced a large and distinguished number of apartment buildings, such as Tilden Gardens (1927-29), the Broadmoor (1928), Woodley Park Towers (1929), and the Kennedy-Warren (1931-35).

In the late 1920s, Cathedral Mansions became involved in Harry Wardman's tangled financial affairs; he was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1931. The complex changed owners frequently, sometimes only on paper. Nevertheless, Cathedral Mansions continued to be popular. By the 1960s, their reputation declined. In 1964, Cathedral Mansions Center was sold to Norman Bernstein. He remodelled the commercial establishments and converted some of the apartments into offices. In 1974, Cathedral Mansions North was sold to Matthew Mezzanotte. He enclosed the courtyard, remodelled the building, and converted it into a condominium. Cathedral Mansions South was purchased in the early 1960s by the Calomiris family and remains mostly unaltered.

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- D.C. Permit to Build #7922, April 29, 1922. Located at the National Archives.
- D.C. Permit to Build #8595, May 17, 1922. Located at the National Archives.
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- D.C. Permit to Build #11424, May 18, 1923. Located at the National Archives.
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS	Reference	Number:	94001037	Date	Listed:	9/9/94

<u>Cathedral Mansions Apartment Buildings</u> DC Property Name: County: State:

<u>Apartment Buildings in Washington, DC, MPS</u> Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

As submitted, this nomination form had selected Criterion A and C and Architecture as an Area of Significance. A technical correction is made to the nomination form to add Community Planning and Development (to reflect the selected Criterion A). Also, the Period of Significance is extended to 1925 to include the Significant Date noted on the form. The SHPO concurs in these amendments.

DISTRIBUTION: