NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

APR 21 2009

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National 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 an 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.

1. Name of Property

historic name North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District 173-11409

other name/site number 173-5880-01319; 173-5880-01320; 173-5880-01321; 173-5880-01322

2. Location

street & town 625, 630, 631, and 632 North Topeka Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Wichita N/A vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Sedgwick code 173 zip code 67214

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick Zollner 3/24/09

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner/Deputy SHPO Date

Kansas State Historical Society
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ 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:)

North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

X private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

building(s)
X district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
4		Total

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

Residential Resources 1870-1957 Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling
Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Craftsman
LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival
LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other Concrete

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

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

X **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or 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 Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

☐ **C** a birthplace or 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 Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1926 - 1929

Significant Dates
1926

1927

1929

Significant Persons
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Henrion Construction Company

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.

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 #

Primary location of additional data:

X State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
X Local government
X University (Wichita State University)
☐ Other Name of repository:

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References
(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/4 Zone 6/4/6/8/9/0 Easting 4/1/7/3/1/8/0 Northing

2 / Zone / / / / / Easting / / / / / / Northing

3 / Zone / / / / / Easting / / / / / / Northing

4 / Zone / / / / / Easting / / / / / / Northing

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property.)
Please see Continuation Sheet.

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
Please see Continuation Sheet.

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Rosin, Principal
organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date August 2007
street & number 215 West 18th Street, Suite 150 telephone 816-472-4950
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.
Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title Multiple -- Please see Continuation Sheet.
street & number telephone
city or town state zip code

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

SUMMARY

The North Topeka Apartments Historic District includes a cluster of four purpose-built apartment buildings located at 625, 630, 631, and 632 North Topeka Avenue, just south of the intersection of North Topeka Avenue and Pine Street in Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas. Built within a span of four years, the buildings share common features of design and construction. All are rectangular in plan and two or three stories in height and have brick-clad exteriors and flat roofs with slightly shaped parapets. While the buildings illustrate vernacular interpretations of Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Tudor Revival and Art Deco architecture applied to multi-family buildings, their form and materials also share many traits with Tapestry Brick commercial blocks constructed during the 1920s. One of the buildings (632 North Topeka Avenue) is a Stacked Flats Apartment Building with a single residential unit on each floor. The other three buildings are Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Buildings that house between fifteen and twenty-four residential units organized around a double-loaded corridor. The vaguely commercial-style brick facades of the nominated buildings and their uniform setback from the street distinguish them from the single family homes that dominate the blocks in the immediate vicinity. On the interior, they retain plaster walls and ceilings accented with simple, wood-trimmed window and door openings, stair railings, and newel posts. Despite their many commonalities, the unique exterior of each building reflects speculative development undertaken by individual owners. As a group, these buildings retain intact the features defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Residential Resources, 1870-1957, Wichita"[1] that distinguish them as purpose-built apartment buildings and they continue to communicate information about the context and the period of their construction.

ELABORATION

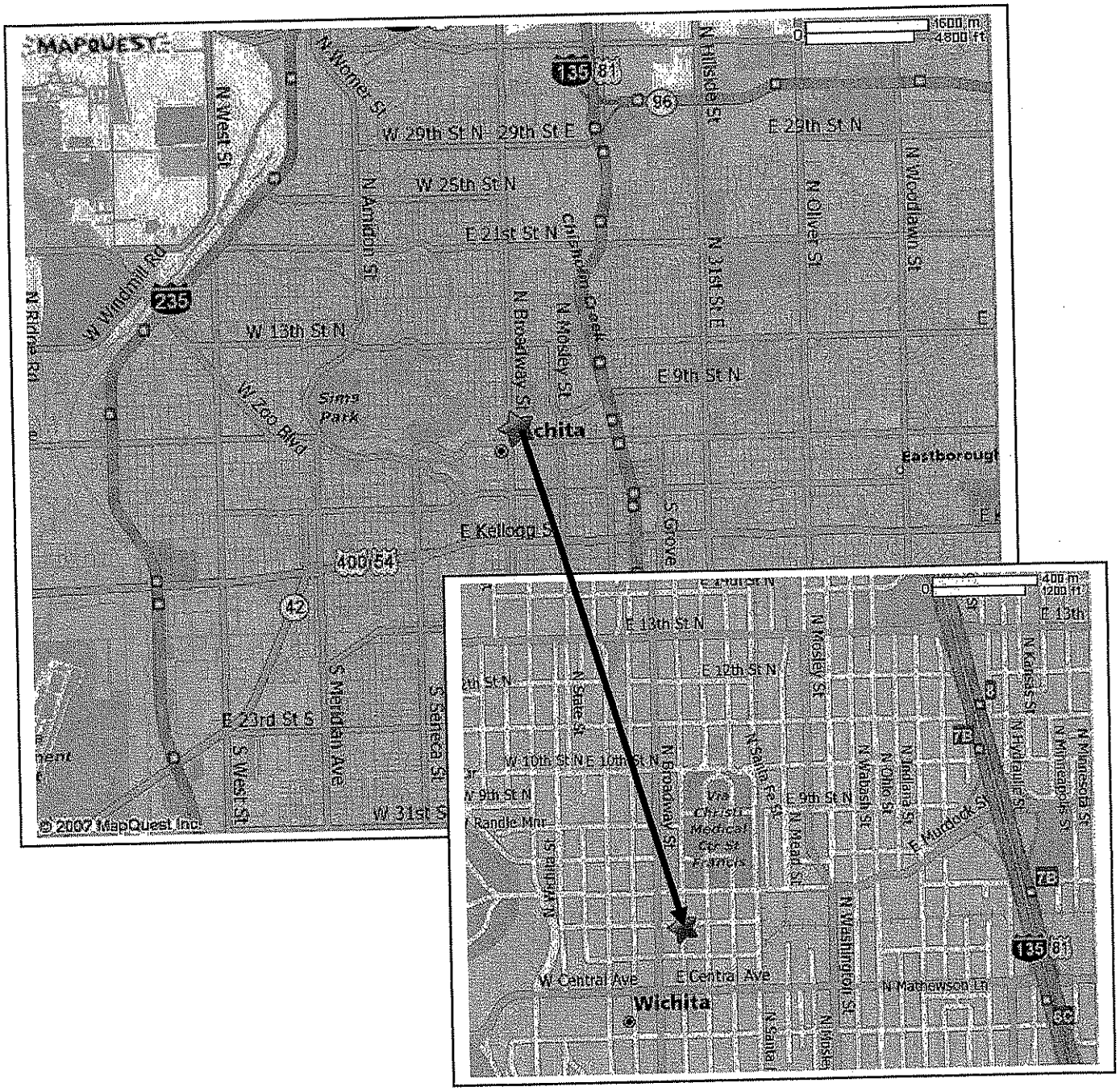
SETTING

The North Topeka Avenue Historic District is located approximately one-half mile north of the Wichita central business district in a neighborhood dominated by modest single family dwellings constructed during the late nineteen and early twentieth century. There are vacant lots immediately north of the District at the corner of Pine Street on both sides of North Topeka Avenue and at the south end of the block on the east side of the street. One block to the west, Broadway is a major north-south commercial corridor. Modern buildings and surface parking lots associated with the Via Christi Medical center dominate the built environment east of Topeka Avenue.

[1] Kathy Morgan and Barbara Hammond, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for "Residential Resources, 1870-1957, Wichita," Draft, (Wichita, Kansas: Historic Preservation Office, Wichita/Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning District, 2007).

LOCATION OF THE NORTH TOPEKA AVENUE APARTMENTS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Source: mapquest.com



In spite of threats from encroaching development, the vicinity of North Topeka Avenue and Pine Street retains many elements of its historic residential streetscape. A narrow concrete sidewalk and a grass easement strip separate the roads from the building lots. Mature trees grow in the easement strips and in many front yards. Few properties have driveways from the street, as garages and parking areas are accessed from the north-south alleys that bisect each block.

INDIVIDUAL BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Weathers Apartments -- 625 North Topeka Avenue

The Weathers Apartments at 625 North Topeka Avenue has a rectangular footprint, a symmetrical three-bay façade with a shaped parapet, and a flat roof. The building presents as two stories on the front elevation, although the raised porch across the front masks a third floor that is partially below grade. Windows for this level are visible on the side and rear elevations at ground level. The Weathers Apartments reputedly was the first residential building in Wichita to incorporate a steel structural frame and concrete floor decks. Its rectilinear form, limestone beltcourse, and six-over-one windows convey very vernacular aspects of Colonial Revival styling to the building.

Dark red brick laid in a running bond covers the front and side walls. The front façade is very flat with minimal ornamentation limited to limestone coping on the porch and the parapet, limestone window sills, a projecting limestone beltcourse at the midpoint of the parapet wall, and a rowlock header course above the windows that is punctuated by a limestone keystone. Small, arched through-wall drains at the front porch also have limestone trim.

A central stair rises from the sidewalk to the recessed open porch that spans the width of the building. Brick cheek walls flank the front stairs, contributing to the building's blocky, monolithic appearance. The building's primary entrance is centered in the back wall of the porch. A secondary entrance centered on the rear (west) elevation provides direct access to the ground floor.

Fenestration is regularly placed around the building. Six-over-one, double-hung wood sashes fill the window openings on all elevations. Plywood presently covers the openings on the ground floor and first floor.

Mae Apartments -- 630 North Topeka Avenue

The two-story Mae Apartments at 630 North Topeka Avenue has a rectangular footprint, a symmetrical three-bay façade, and a flat roof. Blond brick walls rest on a concrete foundation. The extensive patterned brickwork is vaguely Craftsman in style but it also recalls the Tapestry Brick commercial blocks constructed during this period.

The patterned brickwork ornamenting the front (west) façade matches the color and texture of the field brick. Geometric pendants ornament the four engage pilasters that rise from the ground to the top of the parapet, defining three bays across the primary (west) façade. Additional geometric brickwork adorns the wall below the porch openings and the area above the second floor windows. The building also has rowlock courses at the window sills and at the parapet; soldier courses above the porch and window openings; and double header courses on the sills of the porch openings. Small square through-wall porch drains also have articulated brick frames.

A central stair rises from the sidewalk to the recessed open porch that spans the width of the building. The primary entrance is centered in the back wall of the porch. The opening has a non-historic paneled wood door flanked by ten-light wood sidelights. Non-historic metal doors fill secondary entrances on the first and second floor in the center of the rear elevation. From a small landing adjacent to the building, a non-historic metal staircase extends to the ground from the second floor doorway.

Fenestration is regularly placed around the building and includes standard-sized windows interspersed with smaller, bathroom windows on the side elevations. Window openings in the front elevation have nine-over-one double-hung wood sashes, while window openings in the side and rear elevations have one-over-one double-hung wood sashes. Holes have been cut in the brick on the side elevations to install through-wall air conditioners.

<u>The Pines Apartments -- 631 North Topeka Avenue</u>

The Pines Apartments at 631 North Topeka Avenue has a rectangular footprint, a symmetrical three-bay façade, dark, red tapestry brick walls, a concrete foundation, and a shaped parapet. The building presents as two stories on the front elevation, although the raised porch across the front masks a third floor that is partially below grade. Windows for these units are visible on the side and rear elevations at ground level. The Pines Apartments is nearly identical in form and exterior appearance to the neighboring Weathers Apartments, but the incorporation of Carthelite panels, some with geometric Art Deco motifs, in the primary façade distinguishes the Pines Apartments from its neighbor.

Carthelite, a cast stone product manufactured in Wichita, is used in a number of locations on the building. Natural colored Carthelite with a dressed finish covers the base of the front façade and returns onto the first bay of the side elevations. It also covers the front parapet wall in geometric pendants, frames the porch openings, and forms window sills. Art Deco polychrome Carthalite panels punctuate the façade as the lintels above the second story window openings, in an ornamental band at the top of the parapet, and as diamond-shaped elements set in the wall above each porch opening.

A central stair rises from the sidewalk to the recessed open porch that spans the width of the building. The primary entrance is centered at the back of the porch. A secondary entrance is at the center of the rear (west) elevation on the ground floor. Regularly placed on all elevations, fenestration features six-over-one double-hung wood sashes.

632 North Topeka Avenue

The two-story building at 632 North Topeka Avenue has a rectangular footprint, an asymmetrical two-bay façade, a crenellated parapet, and a flat roof. The building's reddish-blond textured brick walls rest on a concrete foundation. A flat roof covers the building. Minimal ornamentation on the front (west) façade includes patterned brickwork of the same color and texture as the field brick on the porch piers and the parapet. Like the Mae Apartments, the brickwork is vaguely Craftsman in style, although the crenellated parapet recalls Tudor Revival architecture. The cumulative effect of form, materials and ornament, like the Mae Apartments, shares much with the Tapestry Brick commercial blocks of the period.

The two-story porch is the main decorative feature. Brick piers at the front corners of the porch rise from the ground to just above the second story. Painted wood railings span the front of the porch on the first floor and the front and sides of the second floor. The short railings have wide, wood plank balusters. Brick cheek walls flank concrete stairs, which are offset to the north side of the porch.

Located opposite the stairs in the north bay of the west façade is the primary entrance. Above the main entrance, a multi-light door opens onto the porch at the second story. Secondary entrances are at the east end of the south elevation on both the first and second stories.

Fenestration is regularly placed on all elevations. One-over-one double-hung wood sashes fill the window openings. Double courses of header bricks form the window sills.

INTEGRITY

Very few changes have been made to the four buildings that comprise the North Topeka Avenue Historic District. They clearly communicate information about purpose-built apartment buildings erected in Wichita's middle class neighborhoods during the early 1920s, particularly Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building and Stacked Flats Apartment Building property types, and they satisfy the registration requirements presented in the MPDF "Residential Resources, 1870-9157, Wichita." The buildings retain integrity of design, as well as their original brick veneer and ornamental accents. Alterations to the primary facades have been limited to the replacement of some exterior doors with metal slab doors for security purposes. Because no photographic evidence has been located, it is unclear if the porch railing at 632 North Topeka Avenue is original. While the size of the balusters

looks somewhat large for a building constructed in the mid-1920s, this possible alteration does not significantly diminish the ability of the property to convey its historic associations or its period of construction. More importantly, 632 North Topeka Avenue adds information to the context of the District as a node of multi-family housing erected within a very short period of time.

SUMMARY

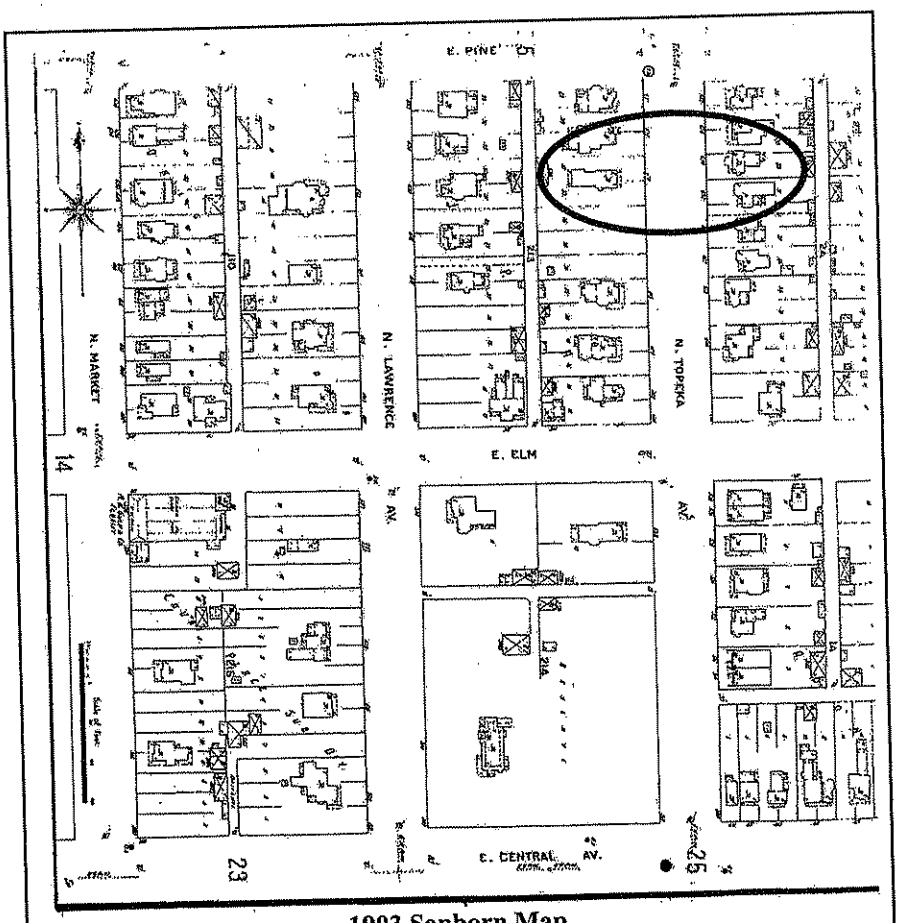
The North Topeka Apartments Historic District encompasses the cluster of four multi-family purpose-built apartment buildings located at 625, 630, 631, and 632 North Topeka Avenue in Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas. The District is locally significant under National Register Criteria C for the area of ARCHITECTURE, as described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Residential Resources, 1870-1957, Wichita." The buildings in the District illustrate two distinct types of purpose-built apartment buildings historically found in Wichita -- the Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building and the Stacked Flats Apartment Building. The Low-Rise buildings (located at 625, 630, and 631 North Topeka Avenue) are two to three stories tall. Each has a single entrance that provides access to a double-loaded corridor flanked by individual apartment units. The two-story Stacked Flat Apartment Building at 632 North Topeka Avenue has one living unit per floor. None of the buildings has an elevator and all retain sufficient architectural integrity to enable identification of their property type. In addition to their exterior brick facades, the buildings retain many original interior finishes, including wood trim and plaster walls and ceilings. The unique features of each building reflect their development by distinct parties. The period of significance for the District, 1926 – 1929, encompasses the first and last construction dates of the four buildings and also parallels the trend for building multi-family housing in Wichita.

ELABORATION

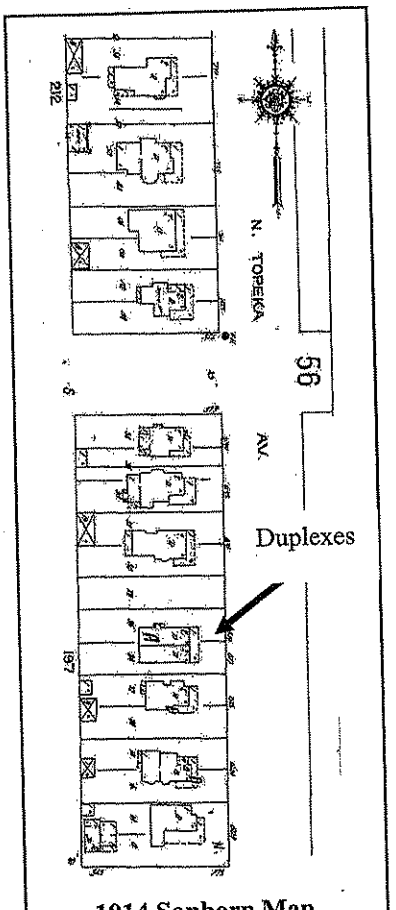
The 600 block of North Topeka Avenue was platted as part of J.P. Hilton's Addition to Wichita, filed in 1872. The original plat shows Hilton's house extant at the corner of Central Avenue and Texas Avenue (later Lawrence Avenue; now Broadway), near Elm Avenue. Proximity to the streetcar lines and easy access to Wichita's commercial and industrial districts made Hilton's Addition a desirable residential area.

By the early twentieth century the lots surrounding Hilton's residence had become a neighborhood of modest single-family houses. The 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map (Sanborn Map) shows a variety of frame dwellings, ranging from one to two-and-one-half stories in height. The houses have irregular footprints augmented by a variety of porches and polygonal bays, features that reflect the influences of the Victorian architecture popular during this period. The lack of consistency in footprints or setbacks also suggests that houses developed incrementally as individuals purchased lots and erected buildings. A variety of small, one-story sheds and slightly larger, one-and-one-half story carriage houses line the alleys at the rear property lines. By this date, most of the lots on the 600 block of North Topeka Avenue are filled. Only a few lots on the west side of the block remain undeveloped.

Ten years later, two Duplexes had been constructed at 617-619 and 616-618 North Topeka Avenue. The 1914 Sanborn Map shows these buildings each having two, side-by-side dwelling units with a shared front porch. They represent the first multi-family development in the immediate neighborhood, although the surrounding area remains overwhelmingly single-family.



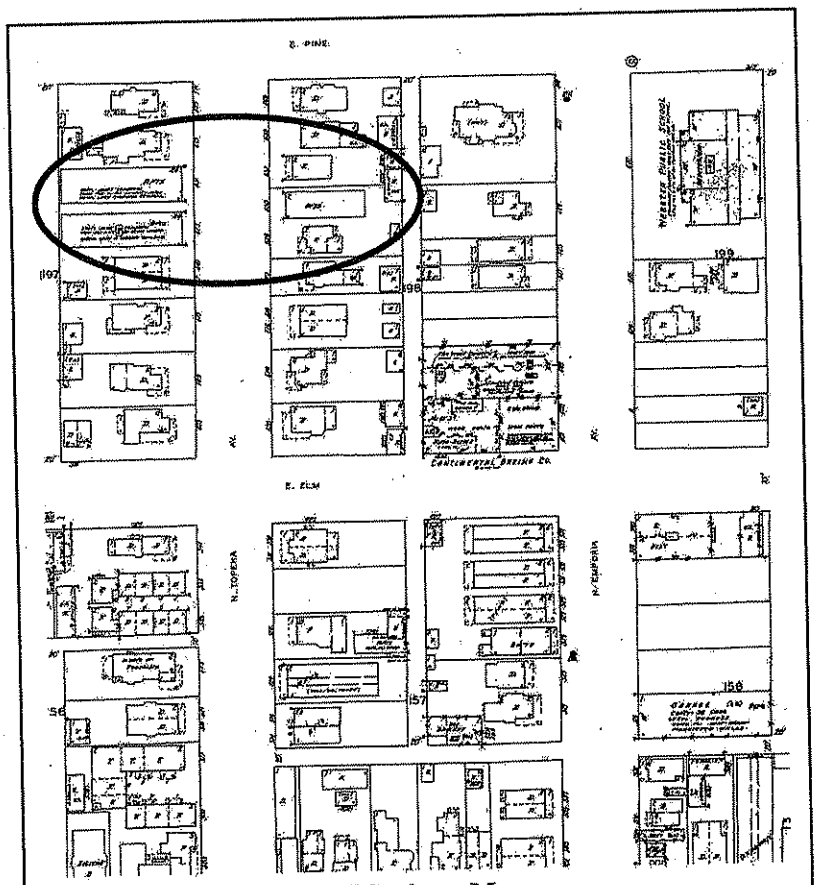
1903 Sanborn Map.



1914 Sanborn Map.

The years between the end of World War I and the start of the Great Depression were a boom period in Wichita. Continuing industrial expansion, especially in the nascent aviation industry, attracted new residents to the city and created a demand for new housing. As the population grew, the city limits expanded in all directions. The dramatic growth, coupled with a desire for safe, sanitary housing and a shortage of building materials and skilled labor triggered an increase in multi-family apartment construction.

The effect of these forces is clearly evident on North Topeka Avenue. The 1935 Sanborn map shows that multi-family buildings have replaced most of the single family dwellings in the blocks immediately south of the nominated District. On the 600 block of North Topeka Avenue, the nominated buildings appear, along with "flats" created from the existing single-family houses at 615 and 622 North Topeka Avenue. All of the out buildings lining the alley are labeled as automobile garages. The same combination of single-family and multi-family housing existed through 1950, the last edition of the Sanborn Map consulted for this nomination.



1935 Sanborn Map.

The design of the nominated buildings reflects popular trends in multi-family housing seen in Wichita and nationwide during this period. Like the buildings in the North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District, apartment buildings from the 1920s typically had brick veneer walls with limestone or cast stone trim applied to fire-proof, concrete or even steel structures. Exterior ornament and interior trim reflected architectural styles of the day. The Art Deco panels applied to an otherwise simple brick exterior at the Pines Apartments are a particularly notable example of this trend. The detailing on the other buildings in the District recalls the Colonial Revival, Craftsman and Tudor Revival residential architecture of the period, as well as the Tapestry Brick designs commonly used for commercial blocks.

From the late 1920s, when the nominated buildings were constructed, through the start of World War II, the District housed a mix of single men, single women, and married couples who worked at a variety of middle class jobs.[2] Many of the women were stenographers employed with a local business or a government agency, sales clerks, telephone operators, beauticians, or teachers. In addition to positions as

[2] Information about tenants comes from Wichita city directories published between 1925 and 1940. They were reviewed at the Department of Special Collections, Ablah Library, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas.

managers, salesmen, clerks, cooks, and newspaper reporters, the men also held jobs in the airplane industry and as welders. The mix of tenants included several musicians and a dance instructor. A number of tenants were listed without occupations, possibly indicating that they were retired. Tenants in the District did not live in the buildings for any length of time. The Weathers Apartments and the Mae Apartments both experienced tremendous turnover between 1930 and 1931. It is possible that the individuals who moved out purchased a house of their own or that they left Wichita during the lean years of the Depression. Wichita's returning prosperity later in the decade and renewed construction of single-family housing is evident in the increasing number of vacant units the city directories list for each building.

WEATHERS APARTMENTS --- 625 NORTH TOPEKA AVENUE

Of the four nominated buildings, the Weathers Apartments at 625 North Topeka Avenue received the most publicity at the time of its construction. *The Wichita Eagle* published one article and two large advertisements about the building, beginning with an announcement for its construction on 9 January 1929 and ending with an announcement for its opening on 11 August 1929. The first article identifies the developer of the $40,000 building as E.G. Weathers and the builder as the Henrion Improvement Company. The "modest" steel-framed, brick-faced building was designed to house twenty-four apartment units. The *Eagle* reported that it was the first major building project started in Wichita in 1929.[3]

Three months later, a full-page advertisement in the Sunday newspaper lauded the "NEW Steel Frame Ever Safe" Weathers Apartments. The ad included a photograph of the building's steel frame and several paragraphs about structural steel prepared by the Ben Sibbitt Iron and Foundry Company, erector of the structure. The account described "Wichita's first steel frame apartment," as "a miniature skyscraper," It praised the practicality and economy of using steel rather the wood for the framing, as steel simplified construction and standardized building components. The structural members were wrapped with STEELTEX [sic], a wire fabric with a waterproof backing that created a four-inch dead air space. This improved insulation and provided a bonding surface for the brick veneer. Over the floor structure, the STEELEX supported a two-inch concrete floor slab. The floor was constructed of a BARJOIST [sic] truss structure that carried plumbing and electrical systems through the building without compromising the structural members. Other local companies identified with the project were Wilson Plumbing and Heating Company, Talbott Decorating Company, Dolese Brothers Co. (stone and cement), Spencer Allen Fuel Company, Gooch Roofing Company, and the Shelley Electric Company.

[3] "Apartment First Major Building Project in 1929," *The Wichita Eagle,* 9 January 1929, 5.

In one corner of the ad, developer E.G. Weathers explained his thinking behind this project:

> In studying the apartment condition in Wichita, we believe, the best building it is possible to construct is what the people of Wichita want and should have.
>
> In this Steel Constructed Apartment with cement floors, we have a fireproof building; that is also mice, roach and insect proof.
>
> This apartment will be equipped with electric ranges, electric refrigerators and soft water. Everything is furnished even down to linen and silverware.
>
> We will have a social room 14 x 41 feet and our aim is to give the people a nice, quiet, refined home.[4]

Just four months later, construction was complete and the building opened to the public for tours. A second full-page advertisement reported,

> The beautiful new Weather's Apartments opening today is the result of careful research into the needs of convenience and comfort demanded by the public. In studying the apartment situation in Wichita, Mr. Weathers came to the conclusion that the best building it was possible to building, was the building Wichitans wanted.[5]

Weathers extended "an especial invitation… to Wichitans to come out today and visit the Weathers Apartments, the latest thing in Apartments."[6] Those who took the tour found twenty-three apartments in the three-floor building and a large common room in the basement. All of the apartments had a living room, a dinette, a kitchenette, a bathroom, and a closet to store clothes and a roll-away bed. The four front units on the upper floors had also had a separate bedroom. In addition to solid front doors, shutter doors at each apartment entrance improved ventilation during the summer. In the basement, the 250-gallon hot water tank was connected to a water softening system. Kitchens had Hotpoint electric ranges and Frigidaire refrigerators. Mr. Weathers was particularly proud of the latter, which "completely eliminates the inconvenience of ice deliveries."[7] Likewise, he justified the more expensive electric ranges because they provided tenants "the most modern advantages in the preparation of food.… The heat insulated oven keeps heat out of the apartment.… Cooking odors are minimized

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[4] "Weathers' New Apartments," *The Wichita Eagle,* 7 April 1929, 13.
[5] "The New Weathers Apartments Opened to the Public Today," *The Wichita Eagle,* 11 August 1929, 19.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

and the walls, curtains and drapes will stay clean much longer."[8] The apartments were also fully equipped with furniture, lamps, linens and silverware.

Enoch G. Weathers

Developer Enoch G. Weathers and his wife Etta first appear in the Wichita city directory in 1926. That year Enoch worked as a salesman and the couple lived at 127 West 14th Street. By the following year, the Weathers had moved to 537 North Emporia Avenue and operated a grocery store across the street at 540 North Emporia Avenue. Following construction of the Weathers Apartments, Enoch and Etta moved their residence to 625 North Topeka Avenue. They managed the apartment building and the grocery store until 1940, when the grocery store closed. The Weathers Apartments remained in the Weathers family through the early 1970s, transferring ownership several times among family members following the deaths of Enoch and Etta.

MAE APARTMENTS -- 630 NORTH TOPEKA AVENUE

The Mae Apartments was the first of the Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Buildings erected in the District. A 1924 building permit identifies Oliver Mourning as the builder/owner of a "bachelor's home" valued at $9,900 at this address;[9] however, the city directory lists no buildings at this address until 1927, at which time the owners were Charles and Iza Hannah. It is unclear if Mourning built the Mae Apartments for the Hannahs or if the permit reflects an earlier, unrealized building project.

Charles and Iza Hannah

Before building the Mae Apartments, Charles and Iza Hannah lived in Wichita at 345 North Chautauqua Avenue. They moved into the Mae Apartments by 1927. City directories identify Mrs. Hannah as manager of the Mae Apartments, while her husband was variously listed as manager of the *Wichita Price Current,* an advertising manager for the *Kansas Legionnaire,* a solicitor, and a traveling salesman.

In 1938, the Hannahs sold the Mae Apartments to Walter and Minnie Edwards. Mr. Edwards also worked as a salesman, while Mrs. Edwards managed the building. The Edwards family owned the building until 1972, when it sold to Charles L. Oliphant.

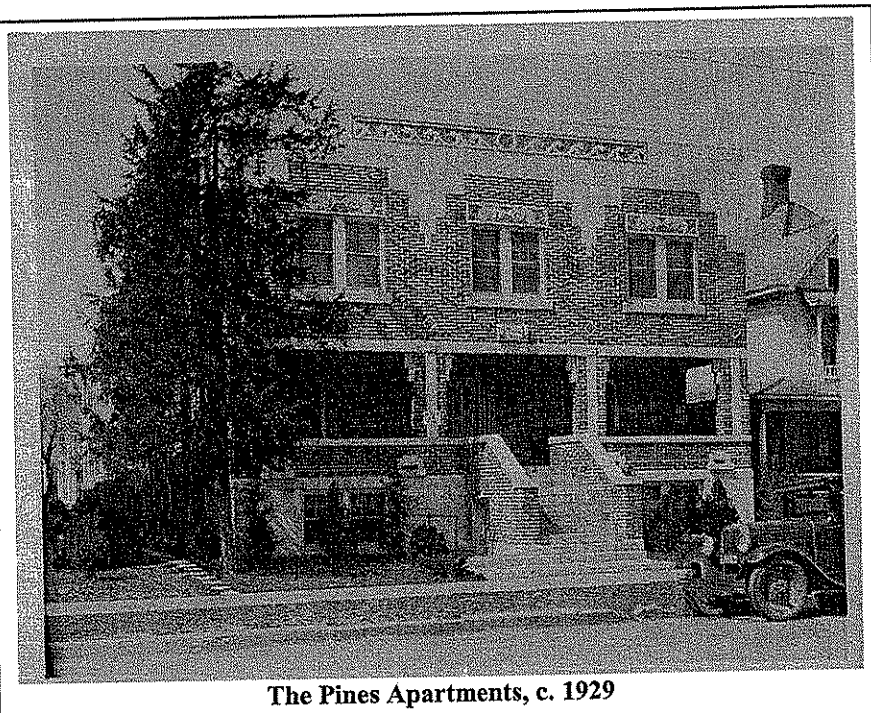
THE PINES APARTMENTS – 631 NORTH TOPEKA AVENUE

After helping Enoch Weathers build the Weathers Apartments at 625 North Topeka Avenue, Walter Henrion erected the 24-unit Pines Apartments on the lot to the north. A building permit records the start of the $40,000

[8] Ibid.
[9] Wichita/Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department, Wichita Historic Preservation Office, Building Permit for 630 N. Topeka, building permit # 17082, 1924.

project on October 29, 1929.[10] Construction of the Pines Apartments did not generate the same publicity as the Weathers Apartments, so it is unknown if Henrion utilized the same steel structural system or offered tenants similar amenities, but the buildings are nearly identical in size, plan, and cost, suggesting that Henrion replicated many aspects of the Weathers Apartments.

A notable and distinguishing feature of the Pines Apartments is the use of Carthalite, a pigmented cast stone, to create stylized Art Deco panels on the building's main façade. Carthalite was manufactured locally by the Cement Stone & Supply Company and by its successor the Lusco Brick & Supply Company. While the company was based in Wichita, its sales agents covered a broad territory that included Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Texas. During the 1920s, neutral white or gray Carthalite was cast into building components (such as lintels, sills, cornices, balustrades, columns, and capitals) and garden furniture (such as benches, flower boxes, and birdbaths). By 1927, the addition of mineral pigments, and occasionally crushed glass, to the standard mix produced multi-hued Carthalite panels. Because the color permeates each masonry unit, Carthalite does not fade over time and minor damage is not readily visible. The manufacturers hoped that Carthalite would be a less-expensive and more-durable alternative to terracotta for architectural ornament.



The Pines Apartments, c. 1929

Eleven examples of colored Carthalite are known to exist in Wichita. In addition to the Pines Apartments, these buildings include a school, three retail stores, a synagogue, an office building, a park structure, a bridge and a single-family residence, most constructed between 1927 and 1940. Like the Pines Apartments, the known examples of colored Carthalite feature geometric or curvilinear motifs typical of the Art Déco and Moderne

[10] Wichita/Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department, Wichita Historic Preservation Office, Building Permit for 631 North Topeka, building permit # 9892, 1929.

periods of the late 1920s and the 1930s.[11] Walter Henrion became familiar with Carthalite at Allen's Market (2938 East Douglas Avenue, Wichita), a building his company also erected in 1930.[12]

Walter S. Henrion and the Henrion Improvement Company

Walter S. Henrion was president of the Henrion Improvement Company, a well-known construction company in Wichita. The earliest record of the company's projects appears in the *Wichita Beacon* in 1908, when W.S. Henrion built a "double apartment house" at Topeka and Murdock Avenues.[13] By the late 1920s, Henrion was involved with larger civic, commercial and industrial projects. In 1927 the *Wichita Beacon* reported the involvement of the Henrion Improvement Company with the construction of the first Phillips gas station in Wichita (805 East Central Avenue); a garage for the Southern Kansas State Lines (2nd Street and the Arkansas River); and an addition to the Travel Air, Inc. facility. The following year, Henrion built a fire station at 3rd Street and Wabash Avenue and in 1929 the company received the contract to build a $110,000 facility for Cessna.[14] On the Wichita State University campus, the Henrion Improvement Company built what is now known as Henrion Gymnasium. The main building was erected in 1921; the facility was expanded in 1929 and 1937.[15]

Walter Henrion sold the Pines Apartments property to his son Paul E. Henrion in May of 1930. At the time, Paul Henrion was secretary/treasurer of the Henrion Improvement Company, and lived with his wife Mabel at 3802 East Central Avenue. The Pines Apartments remained in the Henrion family until the late 1970s.

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[11] Barbara Hammond, "Carthalite: The Beautiful Concrete," unpublished draft article prepared for *American Bungalow Magazine,* (Wichita, Kansas: Wichita Historic Preservation Office, 2007), 1-6.
[12] Pamela Kingsbury, National Register Nomination for "Allen's Market, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas," 2006, 8:1. Wichita Historic Preservation Office, Wichita/Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department, Wichita, Kansas.
[13] "Henrion," Dr. Edward N. Tihen's Notes from Wichita Newspapers, Wichita State University Libraries, Department of Special Collections, available on-line, http://www.picosearch.com/cgi-bin/ts.plmm, accessed 18 June 2007.
[14] Ibid.
[15] "Henrion Hall," Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas, available on-line, http://webs.wichita.edu/?u=mark1&p=henrionhall, accessed 2 August 2007.

632 NORTH TOPEKA AVENUE

The Stacked Flat Apartments at 632 North Topeka Avenue is the oldest building in the District, first appearing in the city directory in 1926. It was owned by Probate Judge Jefferson D. Dickerson and his wife Edna. John and Amelia Campbell lived in the second unit. John Campbell was manager of the Innes Music Company.

By 1930, Judge and Mrs. Dickerson had moved from the building. Carlos and Mabel Edds resided in the main unit. Carlos was a salesman with the Minneapolis-Moline Power Implement Company. The only other residents in the building were their children Roma and Rita, both students. It is unclear from the city directory listing if Roma and Rita lived in the second flat. The following year Guy and Mary Hale were tenants in the building. Guy Hall was a buyer for the Rorhbaugh Dry Goods Company.

A decade later there were two new tenants in the building. John and Beulah Herbst lived at 632 North Topeka Avenue, while Henry and Marjory Rech lived at 632 ½ North Topeka Avenue. John Herbst was a teacher at the Wichita Buisness College and Henry Rech was an assistant cashier with the National Biscuit Company.

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Wichita/Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department, Wichita Historic Preservation Office. Building Permit for 631 North Topeka Avenue. Building permit # 9892. 1929.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

625 North Topeka Avenue
The North 10 feet of Lot 26, all of Lot 28 and the South 10 feet of Lot 30, Topeka Avenue, J.P. Hilton's Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Owners: Michael & Bonita Fieser, 1847 North Wellington Place, Wichita, KS 67203

630 North Topeka Avenue
The North 10 feet of Lot 29, All of Lot 31, Topeka Avenue, J.P. Hilton's Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Owners: Michael & Bonita Fieser, 1847 North Wellington Place, Wichita, KS 67203

631 North Topeka Avenue
The North 20 feet of Lot 30, all of Lot 32, Topeka Avenue, J.P. Hilton's Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Owner: Gregory E. Nuessen, 622 North Topeka Avenue, Wichita, KS 67214

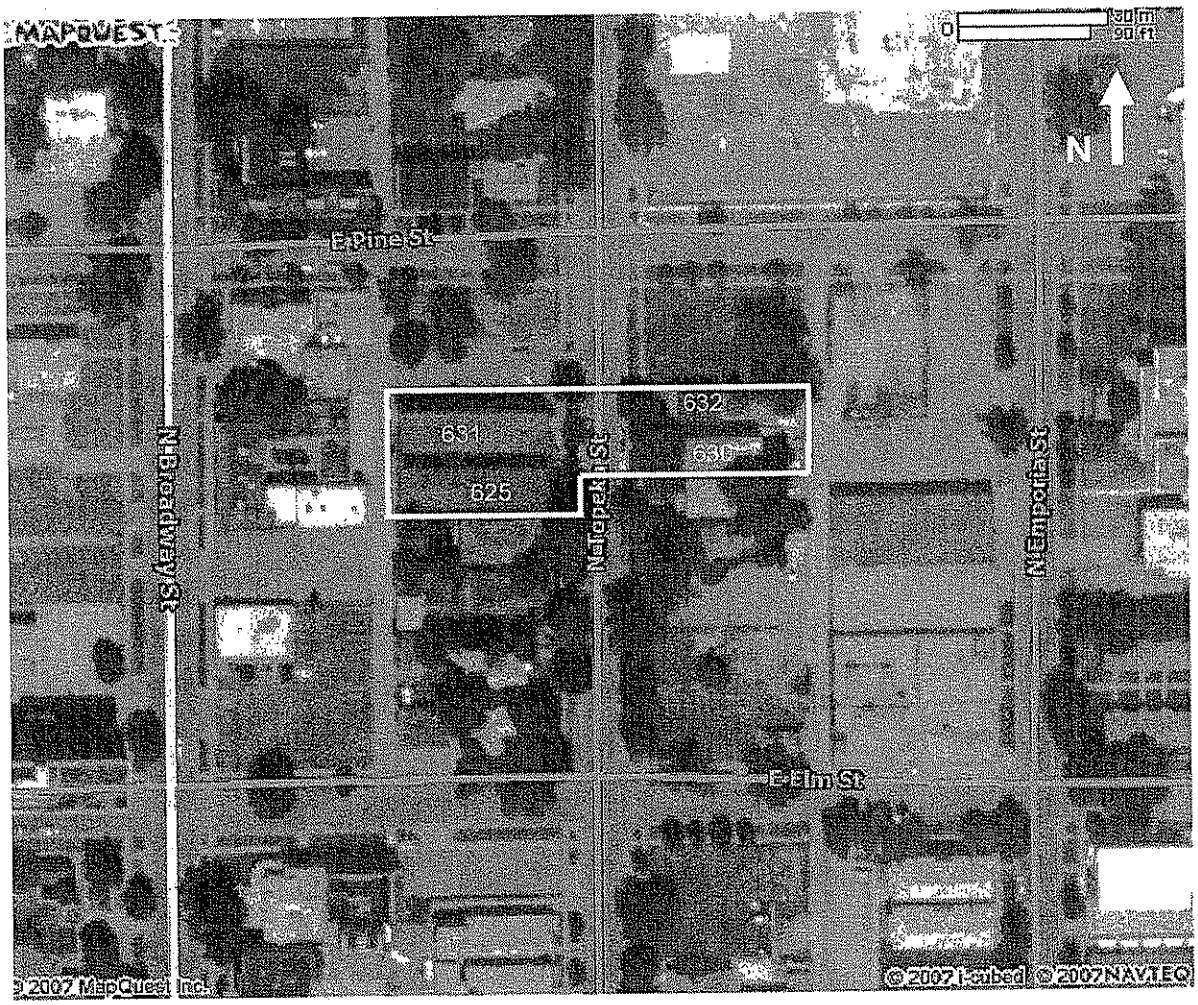
632 North Topeka Avenue
Lot 33 and the South 10 feet of Lot 35, Topeka Avenue, J.P. Hilton's Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas.

Owner: Felipa Serrano Patterson, 632 North Topeka Avenue, Wichita, KS 67214

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District includes four purpose-built apartment buildings erected during the late 1920s and the lots on which they sit. Although they represent two different apartment types, they are united by their multi-family form, their proximity to each other, commonalities of design, and associations with Wichita's middle class workers. Their flat brick facades, typical of multi-family construction during the inter-war period, distinguish these four buildings from other single-family and multi-family buildings on the block.

HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP



PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

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Kansas City, Missouri

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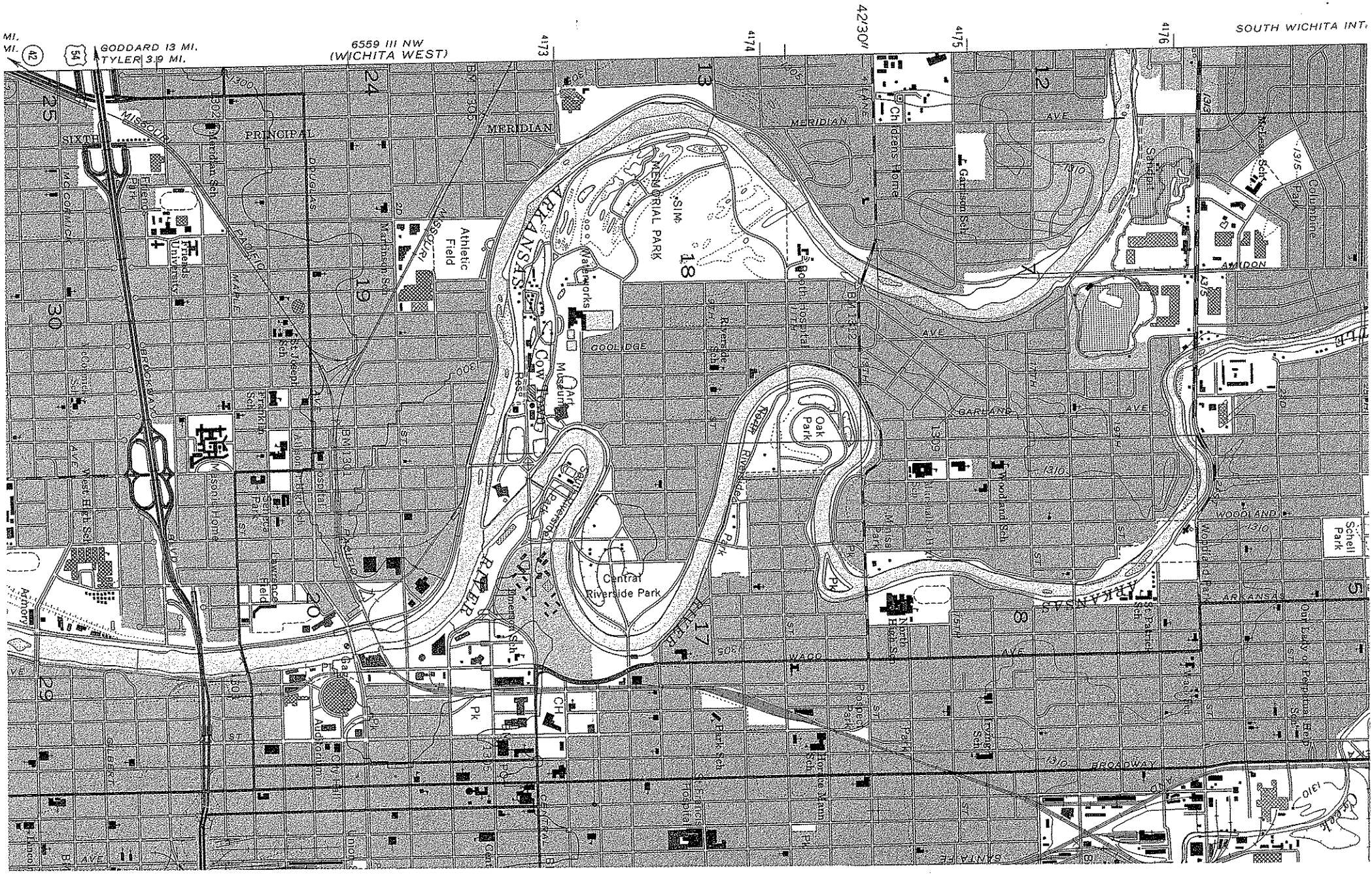
Wichita, Kansas

Date of Photographs:

June 2007
Digital images submitted with nomination

January 2008

View Number	Description	Camera View
1.	632 and 630 N. Topeka Ave., from corner of Pine Street	Southeast
2.	631 and 625 N. Topeka Ave., north and east elevations	South
3.	625 and 631 N. Topeka Ave., east (front) elevations	Northwest
4.	625 N. Topeka Ave., east (front) elevation	West
5.	625 N. Topeka Ave. (south and west elevations) and 631 N. Topeka Ave. (west elevation)	North
6.	631 N. Topeka Ave., west and north elevations	South
7.	631 N. Topeka Ave., east and south elevations	Northwest
8.	631 N. Topeka Ave., east elevation, detail of Carthalite ornament	West
9.	631 N. Topeka Ave., east elevation, detail of Carthalite panel	West
10.	630 N. Topeka Ave. (south and west elevations) and 632 N. Topeka Ave. (west elevation)	Northeast
11.	630 N. Topeka Ave., west and north elevations	East
12.	632 N. Topeka Ave., west and south elevations	East
13.	632 N. Topeka Ave., east (rear) elevation	Southwest
14.	630 N. Topeka Ave., east (rear)elevation, detail of Carthalite panel	Southwest

NORTH TOPEKA AVENUE APTS. HIST. DIST.
WICHITA, SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
UTM: 14/646890/4173180