



**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Lisa Ann L. Mangat, Director

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August 22, 2018

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room B-50
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Hollywood Argyle Apartments

Dear Board of Supervisors:

Pursuant to Federal Regulations 36 CFR Part 60.6(c) I am notifying you that the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) at its next meeting intends to consider and take action on the nomination of the above-named property to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). Details on that meeting are on the enclosed notice. The National Register is the federal government's official list of historic buildings and other cultural resources worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register provides recognition and assists in preserving California's cultural heritage. If the item is removed from the scheduled agenda, you will be notified by mail.

Local government comments regarding the National Register eligibility of this property are welcomed. Letters should be sent to California State Parks, Attn: Office of Historic Preservation, Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer, 1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, California 95816. So that the SHRC will have adequate time to consider them, it is requested, but not required, that written comments be received by the Office of Historic Preservation fifteen (15) days before the SHRC meeting. Interested parties are encouraged to attend the SHRC meeting and present oral testimony.

As of January 1, 1993, all National Register properties are automatically included in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) and afforded consideration in accordance with state and local environmental review procedures.

The federal requirements covering the National Register program are to be found in the National Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and in Federal Regulations 36 CFR Part 60. State law regarding the California Register is in the Public Resources Code, Section 5024. Should you have questions regarding this nomination, or would like a copy of the nomination, please contact the Registration Unit at (916) 445-7009. **Note that staff revises nominations throughout the nomination process.**

Sincerely,

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer



**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
STATE HISTORICAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

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COMMISSION MEMBERS

Marshall McKay, Chair
Alberto Bertoli, AIA
Bryan K. Brandes
Janet Hansen
Luis Hoyos
Rick Moss
David Phoenix
Adrian Praetzellis, PhD
Adam Sriro

MEETING NOTICE

FOR: State Historical Resources Commission Quarterly Meeting

DATE: Friday, October 26, 2018

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Los Angeles City Hall
Room 1010, 10th Floor
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

This room is accessible to people with disabilities. Questions regarding the meeting should be directed to the Registration Unit (916) 445-7008.

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

DRAFT

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Hollywood Argyle Apartments

Other names/site number: The Hollywood Argyle

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

2. Location

Street & number: 2017 N. Argyle Avenue

City or town: Los Angeles State: California County: Los Angeles

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide ___local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___C ___D

<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>
---	---------------------------------

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of commenting official:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Title :</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p> <p>_____</p> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Italian Renaissance

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Stucco

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Hollywood Argyle Apartments (Hollywood Argyle) is a four-story apartment building at 2017 North Cherokee Avenue in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles, California. Built in 1926, the Italian Renaissance Revival style building is constructed of steel and faced in brick, stuccoed on the first two floors and painted on the top two floors on the primary or east elevation. Measuring approximately seventy-two feet and six inches by one hundred eighty-six feet, the building occupies nearly the entire parcel on which it stands. The front block, which spans the full width of the site, extends back twenty-eight feet from the east elevation before the building narrows by eight feet on both the north and south sides, where there are narrow alleys. The building retains much of its original fabric, including its Italian Renaissance Revival form, original exterior materials, and many original interior features and treatments. Despite alterations in 1997, during which the windows on the north, south, and west elevations were replaced with vinyl units, and some interior modifications were made, the degree of change was relatively minor and the property retains integrity.

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Narrative Description

The east or primary elevation, facing Argyle Avenue, is five bays wide and symmetrical (**Photos 1, 2**). The first floor and the three center bays on the second floor are faced in painted stucco while the remainder of the elevation is painted brick. On the first floor, the center bay contains the main entrance, which consists of two paneled wood doors installed in the 1980s with a painted stone surround (**Photo 3**). Above the doors, there is an infilled (with stucco) transom panel with a small aluminum window. The entrance is reached by painted concrete steps with simple, painted wood hand rails that appear to have been installed circa 1988.

On either side of the entrance, there are two bays with pairs of multi-light wood casement windows with fanlights deeply recessed into the façade. Seven of the eight windows have canvas awnings that appear to have been installed circa 2000. On the second through third floors, there is a painted metal fire escape in the center bay, behind which is a one-over-one double-hung vinyl window on each floor. The vinyl windows were installed in 1997. The bays immediately to the north and south of the center bay contain a quadripartite arrangement of eight-light wood casement windows while the outermost bays contain tripartite arrangements of the same window type on all three floors. Between the windows on the third and fourth floors, there are painted, ornamental terracotta panels set into the façade. The fourth floor panels, larger than those on the third floor, contain cartouche motifs with the inscribed acronym “HA” (for Hollywood Argyle). The east elevation is topped by a painted metal cornice. The second through fourth floors are framed by tall, painted stone pilasters, a pair of which are found at both the north and south ends of the east elevation.

The north and south elevations of the front block, which are on the property line and extend back twenty-eight feet from the east elevation, are faced in painted brick and contain no openings. The rear wing, narrower than the front block by eight feet on each side, is faced in red brick and contains fifteen bays of both single and paired one-over-one double-hung vinyl windows installed in 1997 (**Photos 4, 6**). Due to the presence of adjacent buildings on both sides, neither the north nor south elevation of the building is readily visible from Argyle Avenue and can only be seen from the narrow concrete walkways that separate the building from the adjacent properties.

The west elevation is five bays wide and is faced in stucco on the first and second floors and red brick on the third and fourth floors (**Photo 5**). A metal fire escape in the center bay is less ornamental than that on the east elevation. On each floor, the bays alternate between single and paired one-over-one, double-hung vinyl windows that were installed in 1997. Because the west elevation abuts an adjacent alley, this side of the building is not visible from a public right-of-way.

The building has a flat roof with asphalt roll sheathing and contains a number of different features, including an original brick pilot house for the stair near the east end of the building and original mechanical shafts with vents that rise approximately two feet above the roof. Solar

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panels along the north and south sides were installed in 2015 (**Photo 22**). A parapet measuring approximately two feet tall surrounds the roof on all sides.

Interior

The building contains a mixture of 72 studio and one-bedroom apartments over the four floors. Each floor has a double-loaded corridor spanning the full length of the building. The corridors have wood floors, and plaster walls and ceilings with painted wood baseboard, door casing and crown molding. The apartment entrances contain hollow-metal or flat panel wood doors, all of which were installed in 1980 or later.

On the first floor, there is a small lobby off the main entrance at the east end of the building. This space contains wood floors, plaster walls with painted wood baseboard, and a lowered drywall ceiling installed in 1988. At the northwest corner, a wood communicating stair with ornamental metal railing leads to the main stair tower at the east end of the building. Another communicating stair is located at the center of the west wall and leads to the first floor corridor. A plaster archway framed by Corinthian pilasters used to unite the two communicating stairs. Since 1988, due to the lowering of the ceiling and the enclosure of the stair tower to create the code-mandated fire separation, the archway has been largely obscured. The pilasters are still visible (**Photos 7, 8**).

Both the primary stair tower at the east end of the building and a second, similar stair tower at the west end of the building are wood, U-return in configuration and have simple wood picket railings (**Photos 17, 21**). Both stairs provide access between the first and fourth floors; only the east stair tower provides access to the roof.

The apartments contain consistent finishes on all floors, including wood floors, exposed brick exterior walls, plaster or drywall partitions elsewhere, and painted wood baseboard, door and window casing, and crown molding. Most of the wood, single panel bathroom and closet doors appear to be original. Many of the apartments have walk-in closets with built-in furniture such as dressers and mirrors.

Integrity

There has been no change to the Hollywood Argyle Apartments *location* since the time of construction and that location was the primary catalyst for construction. The *setting* is intact with few significant changes to the immediate surroundings, either inside of or adjacent to the property boundary, aside from the construction of later apartment buildings of a similar scale to the north and east. The building retains a high level of integrity through its largely intact *materials* and *design*. Because the building continues in its historic function as a multi-family residential building, there have been no substantive changes to the configuration or finishes on either the exterior or interior. Both the overall form and defining Italian Renaissance Revival style characteristics remain, including the stucco and brick façades with stone door surround, pilasters, cornice, and original wood casement windows on the primary east elevation. These features also speak to the *workmanship* common among Hollywood apartment houses of this period, which frequently displayed the work of local masons, plasterers, and carpenters.

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Although the original windows on the north, south and west elevations were replaced with vinyl units in 1997, the 1/1 configuration is consistent and the original pattern of window openings remains largely intact throughout all of the outward facing and courtyard facing elevations. The original ornamental first floor windows on the primary (east) elevation remain intact.

On the interior, the primary public spaces, including the main lobby with terrazzo floors and prominent crown molding treatment, remain similarly unchanged from the 1920s period. The circulation plan and finishes, including materials such as wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings, also remain intact. The apartments retain many of their original finishes and features, including wood floors, baseboard, and windowsill and door trim, as well as original kitchen cabinetry and built-in dressing room furniture, all of which convey the building's original function as an apartment hotel. Although the plaster has been removed from some of the exterior walls within the apartments, the interior living spaces are otherwise intact. The building continues to operate in the residential function for which it was constructed, and therefore retains integrity of *feeling* and *association*.

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8. Statement of Significance

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.
- 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.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1927-1945

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Smith, Lewis Arthur (architect)

Samuel F. Bard & Company (builders)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Hollywood Argyle Apartments is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with Hollywood's transformation from an outlying suburban community into an urban, commercial center. The Hollywood Argyle is highly representative of the construction of midrise apartment houses, which replaced single-family dwellings in large numbers between about 1920 and 1930. The period of significance begins in 1927 when the building was completed, and ends in 1945 when the postwar development of single-family housing tracts in nearby suburban locations drew people away from the city and Hollywood became far less desirable as a residential area.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Early Hollywood

Settled in the late nineteenth century as a primarily agricultural community, Hollywood, originally called Nopalera for the Nopal cactus that thrived in the area, was home to numerous ranches, farms, and orchards north and west of Prospect Avenue, later renamed Hollywood Boulevard. Several early landowners, including Hobart J. Whitley and the enterprising husband and wife team of Harvey and Daeida Wilcox, began to subdivide and market large tracts of land—the Ocean View and Hollywood tracts, respectively—for residential development beginning in the late 1880s. The Whitley and Wilcox marketing efforts attracted relatively wealthy buyers who built large, single-family dwellings on many of the newly subdivided lots. This trend is evidenced by a 1919 Sanborn fire insurance map that shows an essentially suburban community north of Hollywood Boulevard, which served as Hollywood's Main Street with shops, hotels, churches, and a post office, among other commercial ventures. At the future location of the Hollywood Argyle, the map shows a 2-story house—likely built around 1915, according to notices advertising the property in the *Los Angeles Times*—with a detached one-story garage (**Figure 10**). Surrounding the property were parcels of similar size. Some had houses, although most were still undeveloped at the time the map was published in 1919.

In 1903, Hollywood became an incorporated municipality. Only seven years later, in 1910, the fledgling town voted for annexation with Los Angeles to secure vital city services such as a water and sewer systems. The town was already connected by public transit to downtown Los Angeles by way of a trolley line installed along Prospect Avenue, which created a quick and inexpensive link to the city, helping Hollywood itself to grow even larger.

Already established as a prosperous suburban community, beginning around 1910 the arrival of filmmakers and studios transformed Hollywood into an urban center in its own right. After the turn of the century, the American film industry was effectively controlled by Thomas Edison, who owned most moviemaking patents and imposed strict rules on the industry in the form of the

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Motion Pictures Patents Company (MPPC), formed in 1908 to consolidate major film companies in the eastern United States. In an effort to escape Edison's control, independent filmmakers began to move out west, many settling in and around Hollywood. In 1911, the Nestor Film Company was the first to set up a studio in Hollywood proper and was quickly followed by dozens of other independents attracted both by Hollywood's geographic isolation from the MPPC as well as its good weather. After 1915, when the MPCC collapsed, this trend accelerated. Hollywood Boulevard transformed from a Main Street serving nearby residents into the center of the national film industry.

Hollywood Argyle Apartments and Residential Development in Hollywood after 1920

As in much of Los Angeles, the population of which increased over 380% between 1910 and 1930—from 319,198 to 1,238,048—Hollywood's rapid commercial growth attracted tens of thousands of newcomers during this period. Coming "largely in response to the well-publicized lures of climate, motion pictures, and oil," their arrival spurred a huge demand for housing and transformed Hollywood from an essentially suburban community with a main street into a dense urban center.¹ Especially after 1920, large, multi-family buildings replaced many of the single-family dwellings built in the area north of Hollywood Boulevard during the previous two or three decades. In 1926 alone, the year in which construction on the Hollywood Argyle began a small boom resulted in dozens of new apartment buildings and hotels, creating what Richard Longstreth has called the "largest concentration of its kind in the metropolitan area."²

Most of Hollywood's new apartment houses and apartment hotels were three to five stories tall with center courtyards, although some high-rises, such as the Montecito Apartments at 6650 Franklin Avenue (extant; individually listed on the National Register in 1985), were also built during this period. Notable National Register-listed examples of the courtyard type include the Halifax Apartments (1923) at 6376 Yucca Street, and the El Cabrillo Apartments (1928) at 1834 North Grace Avenue. Frequently sited at major intersections, this group of buildings formed "a 'ring' of high quality multi-family residences which provided a bridge between commercial areas, studio plants, middle class, and wealthy single family residential areas." A large number of these buildings, inventoried in the Halifax Apartments National Register nomination, remain intact and continue to operate as apartments.³

The development of 2017 North Argyle Avenue is highly representative of the pattern established by earlier apartments like the Halifax. First announced in local newspapers in March 1926, the new four-story building was proposed to replace the two-story, single-family dwelling built on the lot about a decade before. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that Robert J. Dombroff, an investor and developer of an unspecified background, was planning a four-story apartment

¹ Donald J. Schippers, "Walker & Eisen: Twenty Years of Los Angeles Architecture, 1920-1940," in *Southern California Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (December 1964), 374.

² Richard W. Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 91.

³ Christy Johnson McAvoy, "Halifax Apartments," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, California Office of Historic Preservation, 1998.

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house with 150 rooms. The building would be constructed by Samuel F. Bard & Company, a local general contracting firm, for a total of about \$225,000.⁴

As indicated in the 1926 building permit, the Hollywood Argyle architect was local designer Lewis Arthur Smith (1869-1958), more commonly known as L.A. Smith. As documented by numerous articles in the *Los Angeles Times*, Smith frequently collaborated with Bard on Hollywood apartment projects for a number of clients during the 1920s and particularly in 1926, the same year that construction on the Hollywood Argyle began. In November of that year, the *Times* announced the start of apartment building projects to be designed by Smith and built by Bard, all in the vicinity of Hollywood.⁵

Although Smith's apartment designs varied in scale, they were consistently designed in relatively restrained interpretations of the Mediterranean Revival or Italian Renaissance Revival styles, which gained in popularity in Southern California and nationally after about 1910. Common among these projects were stucco wall treatments, often with rusticated bases, as well as low relief, decorative terra cotta panels and ornate door surrounds in carved stone or terracotta.⁶ These characteristics can be found in other Hollywood apartment projects shared by Smith and Bard, including St. George Apartments (1925, later Villa Elaine) at 1241 North Vine Street; Ruth Manor (1926, later The Canterbury Apartment Hotel) at 1746 North Cherokee Street; Roland Apartments (1926, later The Commodore) at 1830 North Cherokee Street; and Cherokee Manor (1926, later Cherokee Apartments) at 1842 North Cherokee Street. All four of these buildings remain largely intact and continue to operate as apartments.

The development of the Hollywood Argyle, like its aforementioned counterparts, was a response to a particular need for quick, temporary housing for new Hollywood residents. Announcing the building's grand opening in April of 1927, newspaper ads described in detail the building's offerings, which included apartments "beautifully furnished with luxurious Spanish furniture, velour drapes, electric refrigeration, steam heat, daily maid service, gorgeous lobby and last but not least, plenty of closet and drawer space." Such amenities and services, atypical of conventional apartment houses, placed the Hollywood Argyle squarely in the category of apartment hotel. As defined during this period, an apartment hotel was a multi-family residential building that provided tourists or new arrivals in a city with living quarters, a "temporary domicile," as one writer explains, accompanied by all or some of the services typically rendered by a hotel.⁷

⁴ "Four Business Houses to Rise," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 Mar 1926.

⁵ "New Buildings are Announced," *Los Angeles Times*, November 21, 1926.

⁶ Although Smith was often hired to design apartment houses—his 1958 obituary notes these projects as some of his major accomplishments—he was known at the time primarily for work on many of the Los Angeles area's most recognizable movie palaces. Working for Louis L. Bard, brother of Samuel F. Bard and owner of a large chain of theatres, Smith designed Bard's Hollywood Theatre (1923), later Vista Theatre, West Adams Theatre (1924) in Los Angeles, and Pasadena and 8th Street Theatres (1925), among at least a dozen others for non-Bard clients between 1920 and 1930. Typically, Smith's theatre designs were much more elaborate interpretations of the Mediterranean Revival or Italian Renaissance Revival styles often found in his apartment projects.

⁷ Robert Craik McLean, "The Apartment Hotel in Plan and Purpose," in *The Western Architect* 3, Volume 29 (March 1920), 25-27.

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The apartment hotel originated in Southern California after the turn of the century due to the exigencies of a rapidly growing population, becoming widely available to an economically diverse population in Hollywood itself by the early 1920s. In 1926, the *Los Angeles Times* observed that by the end of the following year, Hollywood would have upward of ten apartment buildings “giving hotel service.”⁸ Although the best known examples of Hollywood apartment hotels were built for wealthy film stars and studio executives—particularly Garden Court (1917) at 7021 Hollywood Boulevard (demolished in 1984) and Montecito Apartments (1930) at 6650 Franklin Avenue (extant; individually listed on the National Register in 1985)—others were marketed to a less affluent, middle-class clientele. The latter type, of which the Hollywood Argyle is a highly representative example, provided housing affordable to those arriving in Hollywood with more limited means, including fledgling actors and actresses, and those looking for work in supporting film industry roles.

Of the sixty-one residents counted in the 1930 U.S. Census, only seven were born in California, suggesting that many if not most of the residents were recent arrivals in the state. In addition, there were twenty-two singles, roughly equally divided between men and women. These unattached residents likely took advantage of the building’s bachelor or single apartments as advertised in classifieds appearing in the *Los Angeles Times* (**Figures 12, 13**). Although fifteen families were also living in the building, most consisted simply of married couples without children; only four of the families had children. The residents were also nearly exclusively white—the only non-whites were two Filipino-born servants—and most were born in the United States. Of the thirty-nine residents whose professions were listed, eighteen worked in the motion picture industry, primarily as actors and actresses though some supporting industry positions were included. The fact that only sixty-one residents were listed in a building that could have housed dozens more suggests either that others living there were less permanent tenants, such as tourists, or that the onset of the Great Depression had a detrimental impact on vacancies.⁹

In *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*, Paul Groth discusses the types of residents found in typical mid-level apartment hotels, a description that coincides with those who lived at the Hollywood Argyle. Groth states that the entire reason that such a building type emerged was that it “supplied housing needed for a mobile professional population that was expanding the American urban economy.” The range of professions listed clearly fall into this category of expanding white-collar positions. It was also an “alternative choice of residence for people whose lives did not mesh with a six- to ten-room single-family suburban house.” particularly bachelors, young married, retired or middle-income couples.¹⁰

As Hollywood’s population continued to grow through the late 1920s, the area’s inventory of multi-family buildings likewise continued to increase, leading owners of existing buildings to

⁸ “Hotels Rising in Hollywood,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 5, 1926.

⁹ “United States Census, 1930.” Database with Images. *FamilySearch*. <http://FamilySearch.org>, May, 2018. Citing NARA microfilm publication T626. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002.

¹⁰ Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States* (University of California Press, 1999), 56.

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worry over a perceived threat of overproduction. As a result of this uncertainty, apartment houses and hotels throughout Hollywood frequently changed hands during this period with owners concerned about the potential for falling rents. Still, the rental market was strong, and several large apartment management companies began to emerge, consolidating the ownership and operation of many of the buildings in an effort to control prices. One of the largest of these companies was Consolidated Hotels, Incorporated, which by 1929 owned over 100 hotels and apartment buildings valued at about \$25 million.¹¹

In line with the trend of consolidated ownership, the Hollywood Argyle was sold in May of 1929 to the Knickerbocker Holding Corporation, headed by the building's own builder, Samuel F. Bard. The Hollywood Argyle was one of ten similar apartment house and apartment hotel acquisitions—totaling nearly \$3,000,000 in value—made by Knickerbocker that month, many of which were built by Bard and designed by L.A. Smith. Unlike most of the buildings acquired by Knickerbocker, the Hollywood Argyle was not remodeled and its name was not changed. Typically, companies like Knickerbocker undertook full renovations of the apartments and gave their buildings new names in order to suit changing tastes and make the properties appear newer. It is possible that the Hollywood Argyle's location north of Franklin Avenue, slightly farther away from the bustle of downtown Hollywood where many of Knickerbocker's other buildings were located, was not subject to the vicissitudes of the rental market just a few blocks farther south.

With the worsening of the Great Depression between 1930 and 1933, the profits of many of Hollywood's motion picture studios plummeted, leading to a wider economic downturn that brought mass unemployment, the decline of commercial activity on Hollywood Boulevard, and a precipitous drop in the construction of new multi-family housing in the area. Although existing apartment hotels may have lost value during this period, the Hollywood Argyle and others marketed toward middle-income tenants continued to play a critical role throughout the 1930s by providing housing, especially short- to mid-term housing, at relatively modest cost to an economically distressed clientele. Advertisements in the *Los Angeles Times* show that while in 1928 singles and doubles were renting for \$65 and \$100 per month, respectively, after 1930 those rates dropped significantly to \$32.50 and \$42.50.

With the passing of the National Recovery Act of 1933 and the National Housing Act (NHA) of 1934, which provided government loans for the rehabilitation of multi-family buildings, conditions in Hollywood began to improve. By 1940, vacancy rates dropped significantly at the Hollywood Argyle and in other nearby buildings. Of the Hollywood Argyle's ninety-five residents counted in that year's census, a 56% increase over the sixty-one recorded in 1930, singles accounted for a slightly lower share of the population, about 29% compared to 36% ten years prior, and still constituted a large share of the building's tenants. An even smaller number of people were born in California and, as in 1930, most were recent arrivals in the city. The 1940 census was the first to ask each person where they lived five years prior, and the data showed

¹¹ Todd Douglas Gish, "Building Los Angeles: Urban Housing in the Suburban Metropolis, 1900-1936" (dissertation, University of Southern California, 2007), 292-293; "Apartments to be Operated by Hostelry Chain," *Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 1931.

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that over 50% of the Hollywood Argyle's residents were born in a different state or even a different country. In 1940, a greater share of the Hollywood Argyle's residents were born in a foreign country than in 1930. As in 1930, there was a mix of middle-class occupations, with a similar number of young people in the film industry.¹²

Postwar Decline in Hollywood

When the Hollywood Argyle was sold in 1941 to the Angelus Realty Corporation, its rents had barely recovered from their post-Depression low of \$32.50 per month for singles, commanding only \$35 for the same units.¹³ Stagnant rents like this were consistent among a wide range of Hollywood apartment houses during this period, pointing to a sustained decline of Hollywood as a desirable residential community through the 1930s. Angelus attempted to attract new tenants by renovating the building shortly after its acquisition; classified ads in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1941 advertise that the Hollywood Argyle had been newly decorated and furnished (**Figure 14**). The impact of these changes is unclear. While the mobilization of Hollywood and Greater Los Angeles during World War II brought an increased need for housing, possibly reducing vacancy rates for a period, postwar conditions led to greater decline.

The Hollywood Argyle passed through a number of different owners over the next decade as larger economic and urban forces, particularly the post-World War II development of the surrounding suburbs, threatened to transform Hollywood for decades to come. Following the war, the construction of large, single-family housing tracts in areas like the San Fernando Valley and the freeway system beginning in 1947 and extending through the mid-1950s decimated Hollywood's status as a desirable residential community. As residents drained from the area, drugs and prostitution took over and the crime rate skyrocketed to nearly double that in the rest of Los Angeles. Buildings like the Hollywood Argyle, increasingly occupied by a transient and homeless population, attained an air of poverty and neglect.¹⁴

Although the building received some cosmetic upgrades and code-mandated fire stair alterations in 1988, overall the building was in serious decline. In 1995, the owners of the Hollywood Argyle were fined and placed on probation for allowing "life threatening slum conditions" in the building, including numerous fire, health and building and safety code violations.¹⁵ After being abandoned for nearly two years—the building was shut down in 1995 due to the violations—a new owner acquired the property in 1997 and subsequently undertook a full renovation. As part of this project, most of the side and rear windows were replaced, and the apartments were brought up to modern living standards without any significant impact on the building's integrity. Since the late 1990s, the building has served a much needed market for lower-cost apartment housing in Los Angeles.

¹² "United States Census, 1940." Database with Images. *FamilySearch*. <http://FamilySearch.org>, accessed May 2018. Citing NARA microfilm publication T626. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2002.

¹³ "Argyle Apartments Sold for \$110,000," *Los Angeles Times*, 23 Feb 1941.

¹⁴ Paul G. Bahn, *The Archaeology of Hollywood, Traces of the Golden Age* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 26; Bruce T. Torrence, *Hollywood: The First Hundred Years* (New York: Zoetrope, 1982), 244.

¹⁵ "Owners Cited for Violations at Apartment Building," *Los Angeles Times*, March 15, 1995.

Hollywood Argyle Apartments
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Bahn, Paul G. *The Archaeology of Hollywood, Traces of the Golden Age*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

Gish, Todd Douglas. "Building Los Angeles: Urban Housing in the Suburban Metropolis, 1900-1936." Dissertation, University of Southern California, 2007.

Groth, Paul. *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

Longstreth, Richard W. *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997.

Los Angeles Times (Refer to footnotes for specific citations. All clippings were retrieved from www.newspapers.com)

McAvoy, Christy Johnson. "Halifax Apartments," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, California Office of Historic Preservation, 1998.

McLean, Robert Craik. "The Apartment Hotel in Plan and Purpose," in *The Western Architect* 3, Volume 29 (March 1920).

Schippers, Donald J. "Walker & Eisen: Twenty Years of Los Angeles Architecture, 1920-1940." *Southern California Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (December 1964).

Torrence, Bruce T. *Hollywood: The First Hundred Years*. New York: Zoetrope, 1982.

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 # _____

___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Hollywood Argyle Apartments
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Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.107533

Longitude: -118.325730:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the property—the building footprint—is shown as outlined on the accompanying Sketch Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel on which the building is and was historically situated.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kevin McMahon, Associate

organization: Powers & Company, Inc.

street & number: 1315 Walnut Street, Suite 1717

city or town: Philadelphia state: PA zip code: 19107

e-mail kevin@pwersco.net

telephone: (215) 636-0192

date: June 2018; Revised August 2018

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Hollywood Argyle Apartments
City or Vicinity: Los Angeles
County: Los Angeles
State: California
Photographer: Robert Powers
Date Photographed: April 26, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 22 East elevation, view west
- 2 of 22 East and north elevations, view southwest
- 3 of 22 East elevation, entrance detail, view west
- 4 of 22 Alley south of the building, view east
- 5 of 22 West elevation, view northeast

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- 6 of 22 Alley north of the building, view east
- 7 of 22 First floor, lobby, view northwest
- 8 of 22 First floor, lobby, view west toward corridor
- 9 of 22 Second floor, typical apartment, view south
- 10 of 22 Second floor, typical apartment, view north
- 11 of 22 Second floor, typical apartment, dressing room, view northwest
- 12 of 22 Second floor, corridor, view west
- 13 of 22 Third floor, typical apartment, view south
- 14 of 22 Third floor, typical apartment, view north
- 15 of 22 Third floor, corridor, view west
- 16 of 22 Fourth floor, corridor, view west
- 17 of 22 Fourth floor, stair, view northwest
- 18 of 22 Fourth floor, corridor, view east
- 19 of 22 Fourth floor, typical apartment, view southeast
- 20 of 22 Fourth floor, corridor, view west
- 21 of 22 Fourth floor, corridor and stair, view east
- 22 of 22 Roof, view west

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- Figure 2. Location Map
- Figure 3. Sketch Map with National Register Boundary
- Figure 4. Photograph Key 1 of 6: Site Plan

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Figure 5. Photograph Key 2 of 6: First Floor

Figure 6. Photograph Key 3 of 6: Second Floor

Figure 7. Photograph Key 4 of 6: Third Floor

Figure 8. Photograph Key 5 of 6: Fourth Floor

Figure 9. Photograph Key 5 of 6: Fourth Floor

Figure 10. Sanborn Map, 1919

Figure 11. Sanborn Map, 1950

Figure 12. Advertisement from the *Los Angeles Times*, February 1927

Figure 13. Advertisement from the *Los Angeles Times*, April 1927

Figure 14. Advertisement from the *Los Angeles Times*, April 1941

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Figure 1. USGS Map Excerpt (Hollywood Quadrangle, 2015)

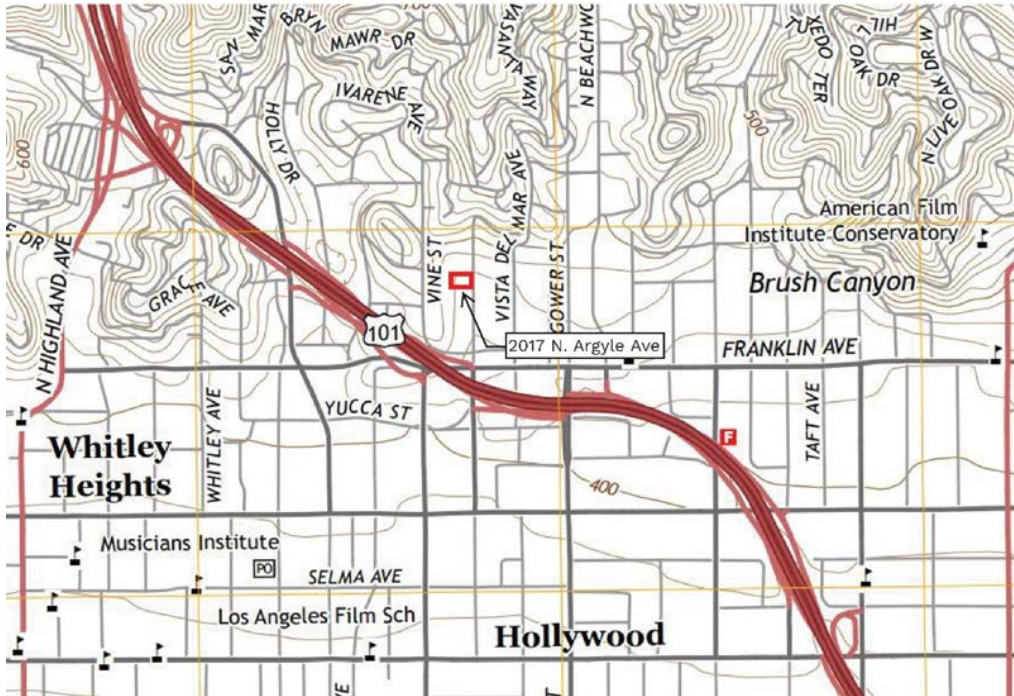
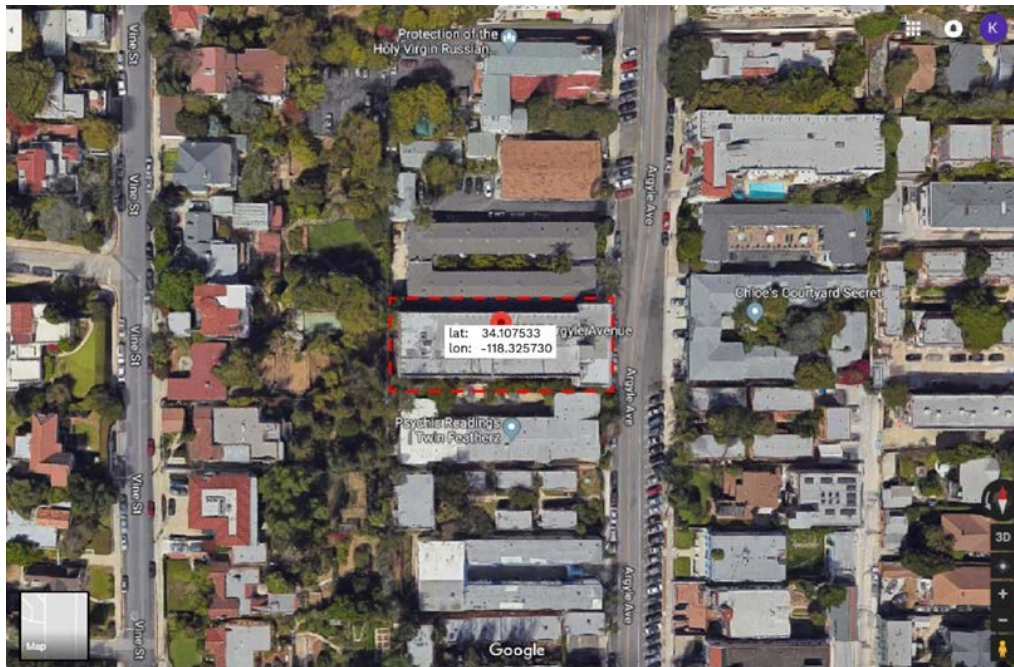


Figure 2. Location Map



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Figure 3. Sketch Map with National Register Boundary

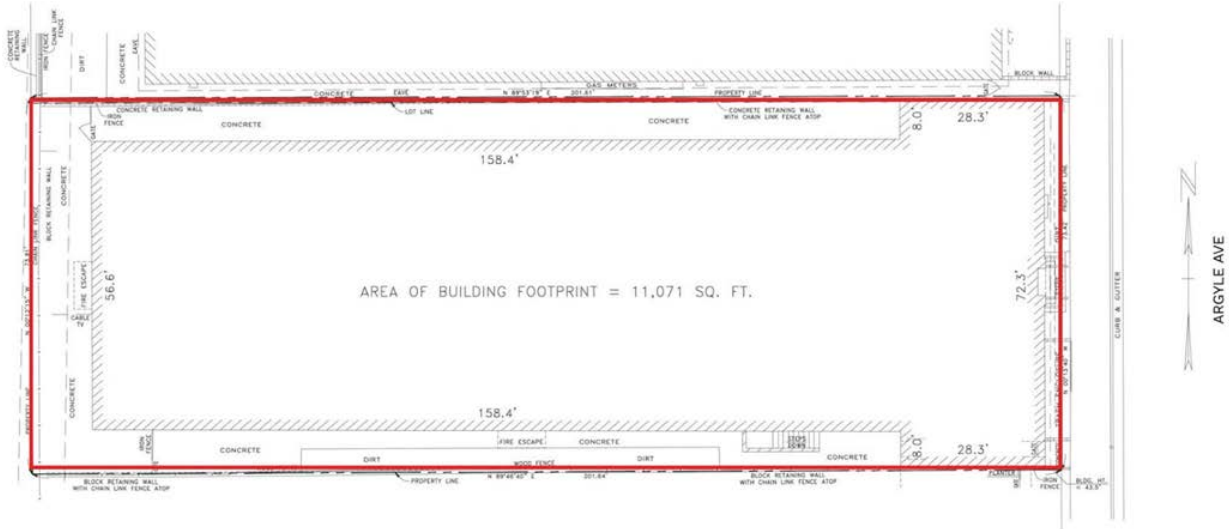
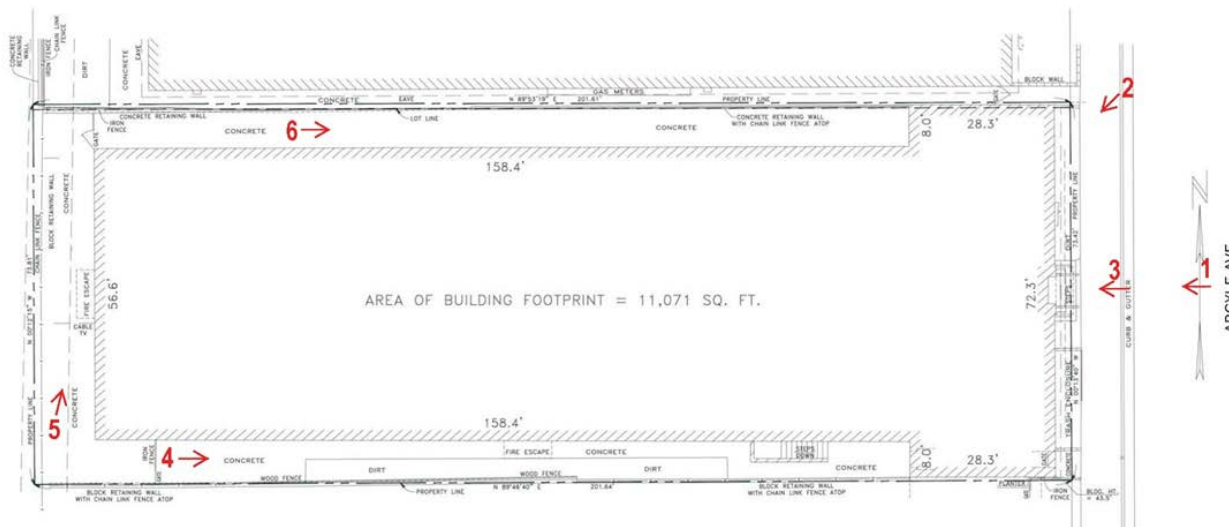


Figure 4. Photograph Key 1 of 6: Site Plan



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Figure 5. Photograph Key 2 of 6: First Floor

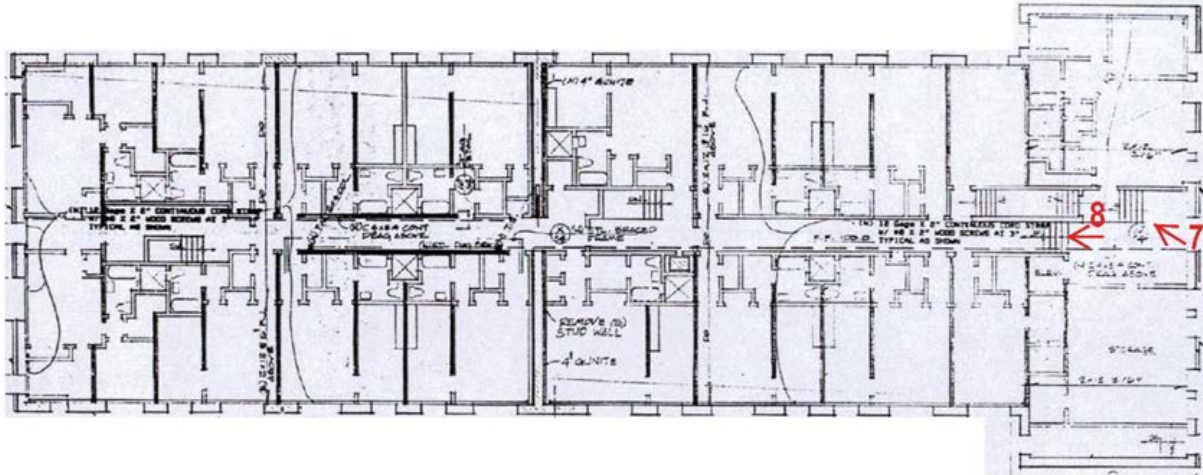
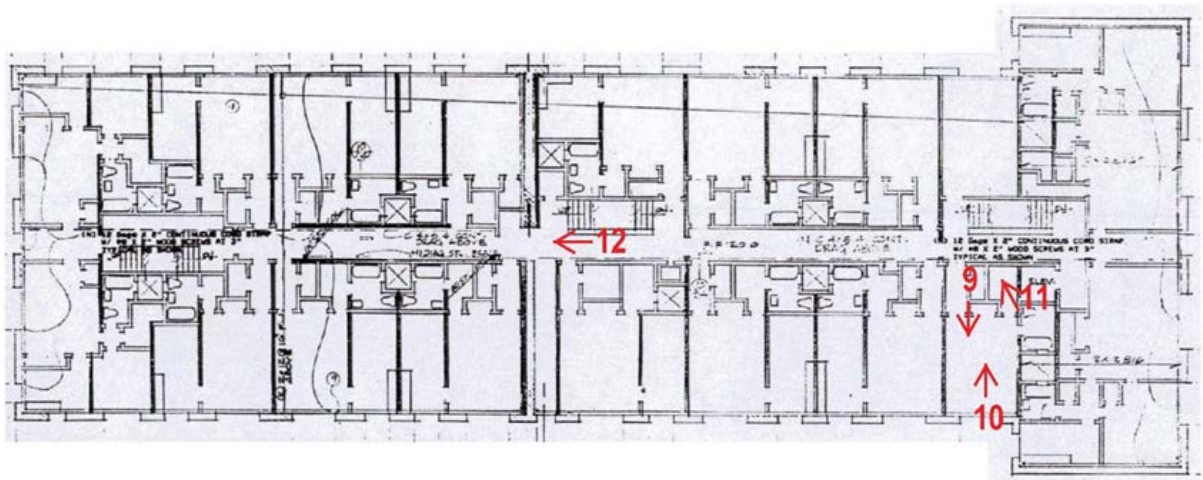


Figure 6. Photograph Key 3 of 6: Second Floor



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Figure 7. Photograph Key 4 of 6: Third Floor

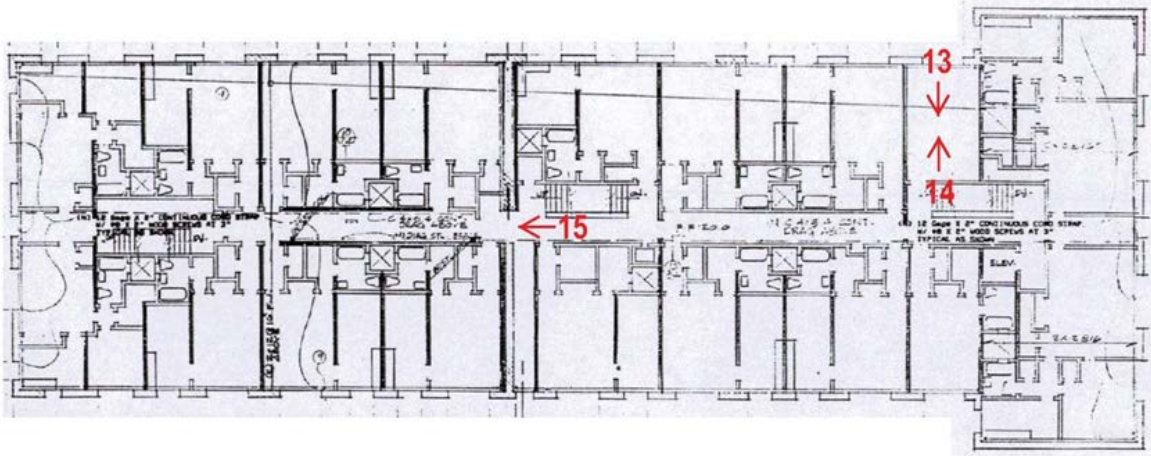
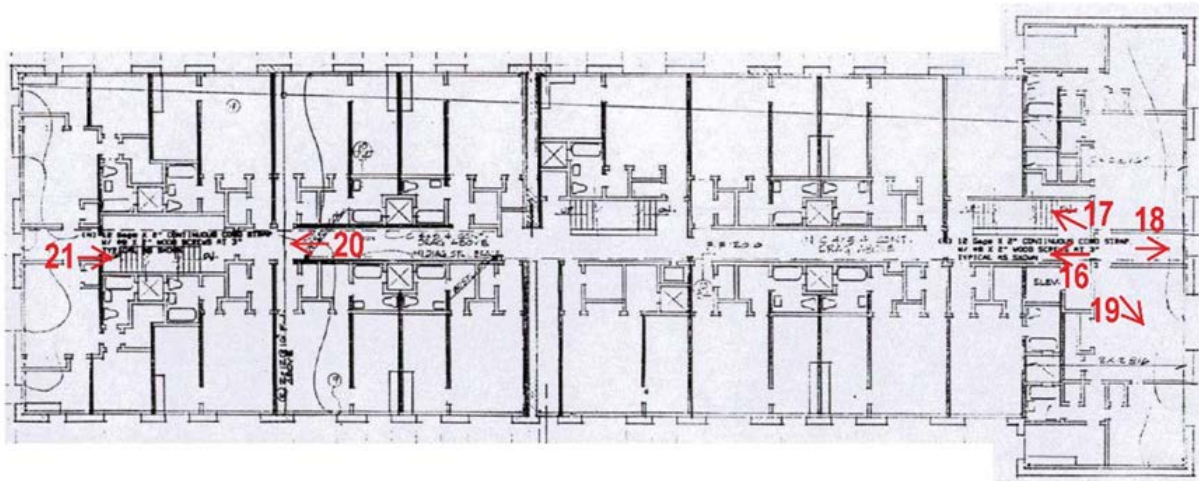


Figure 8. Photograph Key 5 of 6: Fourth Floor



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Figure 9. Photograph Key 6 of 6: Roof

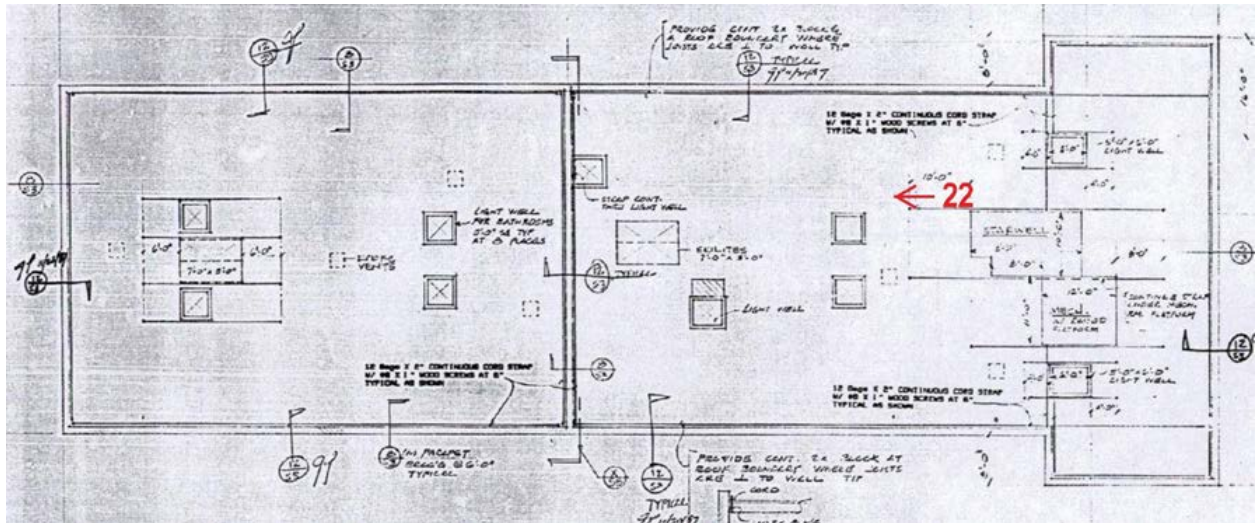
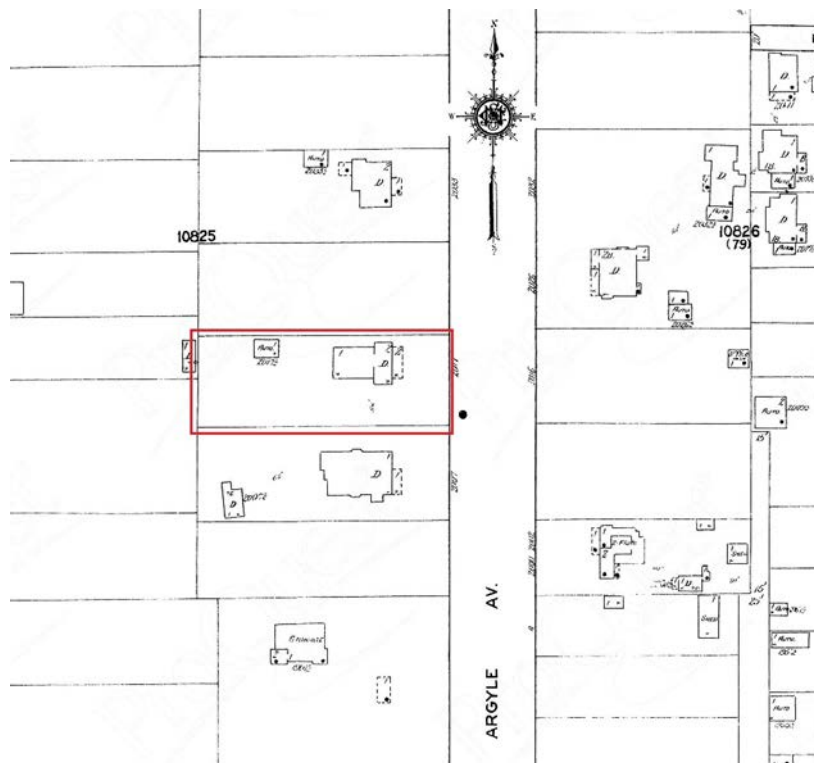


Figure 10. Sanborn Map, 1919 [future location of Hollywood Argyle outlined in red]



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Figure 11. Sanborn Map, 1950

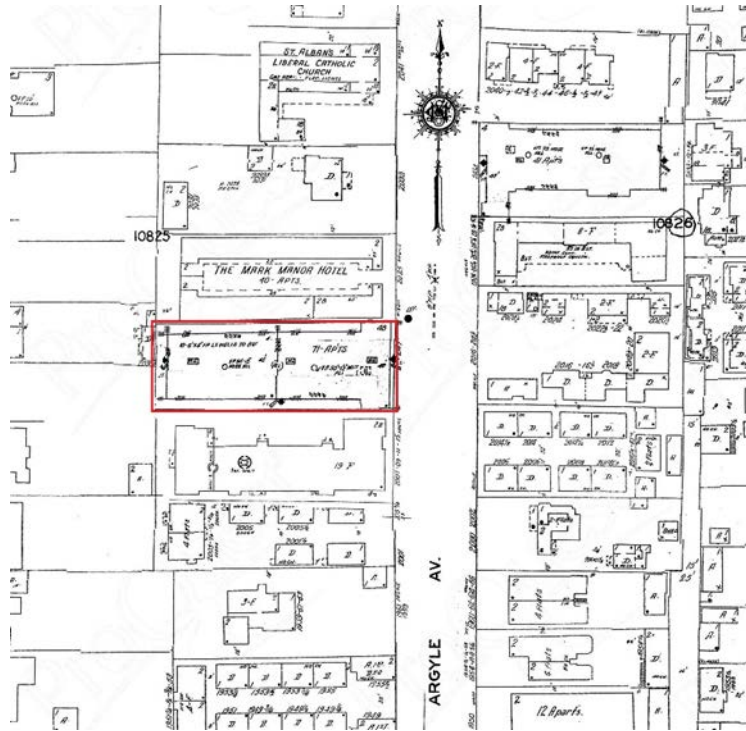


Figure 12. Advertisement, Los Angeles Times, February 1927



TO LET—APARTMENTS—
Furnished

Hollywood
GRAND OPENING
HOLLYWOOD ARGYLE
APARTMENTS

Hollywood's newest & most beautiful apartment. Just completed. Bachelors, singles, doubles and 4 room apartments. Beautifully furnished with luxurious Spanish furniture. Velour drapes, electric refrigeration, steam heat, daily maid service, gorgeous lobby and last but not least, plenty of closet and drawer space.
2017 NO. ARGYLE
Just off Franklin ave.

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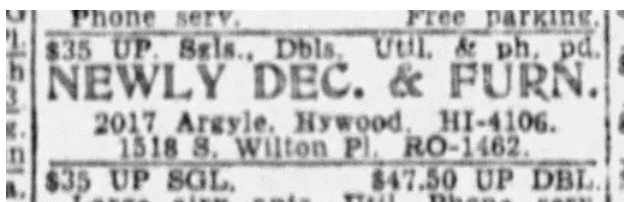
Figure 13. Advertisement, *Los Angeles Times*, April 1927



TO LET—APARTMENTS—
Furnished

Hollywood
HOLLYWOOD ARGYLE
APARTMENT
Ready for Occupancy
HOLLYWOOD'S
Newest and Finest
INDIVIDUALLY FURNISHED
APARTMENT HOME
Catering to those who discriminate.
Singles, doubles, 4-room apartments.
Luxurious Spanish furniture, velour drapes,
steam heat, Frigidaire, telephone, linen
service, daily maid service, de luxe doubles
with twin beds and two baths. Spacious
lobby and corridors.
2017 NORTH ARGYLE
JUST OFF FRANKLIN AVE.
FRANKLIN AVE P.E. CAR

Figure 14. Advertisement, *Los Angeles Times*, April 1941



Phone serv. Free parking
\$35 UP. Sgls, Dbls, Util. & ph. Pd.
[\$35 and up, Singles, Doubles,
Utilities & phone paid]
NEWLY DEC. & FURN.
[newly decorated and furnished]