NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Plaza House Apartments

Other names/site number N/A

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri

2. Location

Street & number 4712 Roanoke Parkway | N/A | not for publication

City or town Kansas City | N/A | vicinity

State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64112

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B X C ___ D

Mark A. Miles August 28, 2013

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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.)

X	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	**Total**

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: BRICK
CERAMIC TILE
roof: ASPHALT
other:

X **NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES**

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.

[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.

[ ] 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.

Areas of Significance
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1955

Significant Dates
1955

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Voskamp and Slezak

[X] STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUTATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_x_State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
_x_Other
Name of repository: Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.607

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:___N/A_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
1	39.041843	-94.597668	3		
2			4		

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)
_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lauren Rieke, Hist. Preservation Specialist and Elizabeth Rosin, Principal
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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 18 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.

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: Plaza House Apartments

City or Vicinity: Kansas City

County: Jackson State: Missouri

Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography

Date Photographed: March 2013

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

1 of 12: Front (east) elevation, view looking west.
2 of 12: North and east elevations, view looking southwest.
3 of 12: South and east elevations, view looking northwest.
4 of 12: South and west elevations, view looking northeast.
5 of 12: North and west elevations, view looking southeast.
6 of 12: Neighborhood context, view looking southwest.
7 of 12: Neighborhood context, view looking northwest.
8 of 12: Detail of brick patterning, view looking north.
9 of 12: Detail of front (east) entrance, view looking west.
10 of 12: Lobby, with elevators in the background, view looking northwest.
11 of 12: Typical upper floor corridor, view looking south.
12 of 12: Typical apartment living room, view looking west.

Figure Log:

1 of 9: Map/ Site Plan
2 of 9: Contextual Map
3 of 9: Photo Map – Exterior
4 of 9: Photo Map – 1st Floor
5 of 9: Photo Map – Typical Upper Floor
6 of 9: Historic plans- Site plan
7 of 9: Historic plans- First floor plan
8 of 9: Historic plans- Typical floor plan
9 of 9: Historic plans- Basement plan

SUMMARY

The Plaza House Apartments is located at 4712 Roanoke Parkway in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. Constructed in 1955 to function as a multi-family apartment building, it is as an excellent example of the High Rise Apartment Building property sub-type established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri." Not only does Plaza House represent the expansion and changing attitudes of the city that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, but it exemplifies the Modern Movement architectural idiom through its form, massing, and materials. The T-shaped plan features seventy-two apartments disbursed over eleven stories and organized around a double-loaded corridor. The building has a concrete structure clad in scored blond brick and capped with a flat roof. Panels of red and turquoise ceramic clay tile accentuate the horizontal and vertical planes of the facades. Entrance distinguished by concrete frames and original aluminum windows are arranged symmetrically on the main (east) façade. Interior layouts remain spacious and open, as when first constructed. Plaza House Apartments retains excellent integrity and the character-defining features that distinguish its architectural significance remain largely unchanged and in excellent condition.

SETTING

The Plaza House Apartments encompasses four city lots near the center of the block. Located within the West Plaza neighborhood, the property is bounded on the east by Roanoke Parkway, on the south by 48th Street, on the west by Belleview Avenue, and on the north by 47th Street. The property slopes slightly to the east, creating a rear elevation that is one-half story higher than the front elevation. A grass lawn with minimal landscaping covers the south and east sides of the property. An asphalt parking lot and driveway dominate the rear (west) and north side of the property, respectively. A public sidewalk spans the east side of the property and a concrete sidewalk and flight of concrete stairs with a metal railing lead to the building.

High-rise apartment buildings and large commercial buildings of varying styles fill the remainder of the block and characterize the immediate vicinity. The Modern Movement building immediately south of Plaza House was also constructed in the mid-1950s, while the others date from the 1910s to the early 2000s. The historic open space that lines the east side of Roanoke Parkway was originally known as Roanoke Plaza. It was redeveloped as the Bloch Cancer Survivor's Park in 1990. The current configuration, landscaped with sculptures, concrete planters, winding paths, and lush foliage, dates to 2009 (Photo 6, 7).

The surrounding neighborhood has a combination of residential and commercial buildings. To the west the buildings quickly change from low to mid-rise apartment buildings to single-family residential houses, while to the east and directly south are similar high-rise apartment buildings that lead into the Country Club Plaza commercial district. Further south, Ward Parkway separates an area of predominantly single-family dwellings on larger lots. The area to the north features a mix of single-family houses, low, mid and high-rise apartments as well as commercial buildings.

EXTERIOR

The building footprint measures roughly 127-feet by 77-feet. It stands at eleven stories tall plus an additional rooftop penthouse. The T-shaped plan has slight rectangular projections on the north and south facades and exhibits bilateral symmetry on the main (east) elevation *(Photo 1)*. On the rear elevation, the first floor at the base of the "T" is open, supported by four round concrete columns *(Photo 4, 5)*. In keeping with the style and period of construction the building has a concrete block structure and the flat roof has tight eaves and no parapet.

Large blocks of red and turquoise ceramic tile accent the scored blond brick veneer. On the primary façade, blond brick spandrels at each floor give the façade a strong horizontality. Between the brick bands, panels of red tiles alternate with the window bays, adding verticality to the design *(Photo 1)*. The north and south facades with accompanying projections are clad entirely in blonde brick with bands of five windows that wrap around each corner. On the projections, bands of windows alternate with bands of turquoise tile that align with the brick spandrels on the primary façade *(Photo 4)*. These alternating bands, visible on the corners of each façade, enhance the overall verticality of the exterior. The rear, west, façade is clad entirely in blond brick *(Photo 5)*.

A large, open veranda at the front of the building has a concrete floor and metal railing. A rectangular concrete projection outlines the main entrance. The structure tapers inward as it moves down the building wall. Inset within this frame are aluminum and glass double doors, flanked on the south by a large picture window and on the north by a turquoise ceramic clay tile wall. A dark green arched awning spans the width of the entrance and projects out over the doorway *(Photo 9)*.

Entrances on the north and south facades are similarly bordered by flat concrete block frames and feature double metal doors adjacent to a wall of red ceramic clay tiles. Two additional entrances at the center of the rear façade beneath the open base of the "T" access the first floor. The southern entrance has glass and aluminum paired doors at ground level, while the northern entrance has paired metal slab doors accessed via a small concrete staircase with metal railings. A concrete staircase at the northwest corner of the building provides exterior access to the basement.

Fenestration on the main façade is symmetrical around a central double window. To each side, the flanking bays contain three single windows, a paired window, and five windows that wrap the corner, with three on the primary facade and two the north and south facades. Fenestration on the north and south projections is sparse with only five windows that wrap each of the corners. Similar to the east elevation, two of the five windows are on the north or south facades and three wrap to the east or west facades *(Photo 8)*. The rear façade has a combination of single, double, triple and corner windows arranged asymmetrically on each floor. Found at every corner of the building, the corner windows are a key feature of the Plaza House's Modern Movement design. They eliminate severe vertical lines at the corners of the building and enhance the overall sense of horizontality in the design. All of the Plaza House windows are original one-over-one double hung aluminum windows with steel lintels. Windows on the east, north, and south façades have clay tile sills (red or turquoise to match the adjacent panel). Windows on the rear façade have simple brick sills.

INTERIOR

The interior configuration of the building has not changed since the initial construction period *(Figure 7, 8)*. A double-loaded T-shaped corridor organizes the interior of the building *(Photo 11)*. There are enclosed staircases at either end of the main corridor and seventy-two apartments distributed over eleven floors plus the rooftop penthouse. The first floor features the main lobby, elevator foyer, front and rear vestibules, main office, laundry and maintenance rooms, in addition to three apartments. The second through tenth floors each have seven apartments - four 2-bedroom apartments, two 1-bedroom apartments and one studio apartment. Two apartments on the eleventh floor have been combined to create the penthouse suite.

First Floor

The main entrance leads to a glass and aluminum entry vestibule and the rectangular main lobby. The simple, unadorned lobby has square columns spread throughout the space as well as a bank of original brass mailboxes in the northeast corner *(Photo 10)*. At the rear of the lobby is the elevator foyer which accesses two elevators with original metal cabs. A set of half stairs on either side of the lobby leads up to the central corridor. Another half staircase with a metal railing is opposite the elevator foyer. It leads to utility spaces and the rear entry vestibule. The rear vestibule is similar to the main one, with a glass and aluminum frame, though it features a built-in bench.

Flooring on the first floor varies, with carpet in the lobby and corridor, stone tile in the main vestibule and elevator foyer, and tile in the rear vestibule, all with vinyl base trim. The laundry room, maintenance area and staircases have concrete floors. The walls and ceilings retain their original sand-finish plaster, though this has been covered with wallpaper in the lobby. Walls in the laundry room, maintenance area and staircases are painted concrete masonry units. Doors vary throughout, though most are wood with simple decorative trim and wood frames.

Upper Floors

Apartment layouts are open, spacious and functional, in keeping with the trends of the Modern Movement (Photo 12). There is little ornament or detail, though they are fitted with a variety of built-in cabinets, shelves and closets. Many of the kitchens and baths have their original fixtures, though some have been replaced with non-historic elements. Additionally, the main corridor has original doors for trash or milk delivery.

Doors in the corridor are stained wood set in painted metal frames with integrated casings. The frames also feature hinges from previously installed louvered doors. Main doors in the apartments are wood with simple curved plaster returns and metal jambs, while closet doors are sliding metal. Windows have deep aluminum sills, along with metal headers and jambs.

The corridor is carpeted with a carpet base trim. The apartments feature carpet in the living and bedrooms without a base trim and tile or vinyl sheet floor and vinyl base trim in the kitchens and bathrooms. The walls and ceiling retain their original sand-finish plaster, and bathrooms have tile wainscoting.

INTEGRITY

The Plaza House Apartments has experienced few changes since the period of significance and retains all aspects of historic integrity. The setting of the building today resembles that of the past, alluding to the continued significance of this property type. Still in its original location near the Country Club Plaza, it sits opposite an open plaza surrounded by a high-density residential neighborhood intermixed with some commercial buildings. The design, materials and workmanship of Plaza House, as envisioned by the architects, are intact throughout the building and it remains an excellent example of Modern Movement residential design. Distinguished by the symmetry and simplicity of the façade, the geometric application of masonry cladding, wrap-around corner windows, and the absence of applied ornament, the building reflects the primary tenets of the style. Alterations to the exterior have been minimal, the most significant being the addition of the fabric awning at the main entrance. Because the building was constructed before the advent of central air conditioning, many residents have installed window units that visually intrude on the otherwise smooth and clean exterior elevations. The building retains its historic interior configuration of apartment units organized around a double-loaded corridor. The original windows, doors, elevator cabs, and bank of mailboxes in the lobby are all extant. The sand plaster finish remains on most walls throughout the building, although the lobby has been wallpapered. Original flooring has been replaced throughout the buildings as part of regular maintenance. The open floor plans of the units remain unchanged since the period of significance, as do the spacious multi-purpose community rooms. Original historic features, such as kitchen and bathroom fixtures, built-in cabinetry and milk delivery doors are in good condition. The Plaza House Apartments meets all of the registration requirements of the High-Rise Apartments property subtype in the MPDF “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” which further contributes to its feeling and association with the Modern Movement and the development of Kansas City during the 1950s.

SUMMARY

The Plaza House Apartments in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is eligible for inclusion on the National Register under Criterion C for local significance in the area of ARCHITECTURE. It meets the registration requirements defined by the MPDF "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri" for the High Rise Apartment Building sub-type. Designed by the prominent local architectural firm of Voskamp and Slezak, it is an early and definitive example of a high-rise apartment building in the Modern Movement style. Constructed in 1955, the period of significance, the eleven-story building contains seventy-two apartments arranged around a T-shaped, double loaded corridor. Defined by its distinct rejection of historic elements, geometric massing, and juxtaposed horizontal and vertical emphasis, the building precisely represents the Modern Movement and retains excellent integrity of character defining features, both on the interior and the exterior. Furthermore, the Plaza House Apartments stands as a testament to the progress and expansion of Kansas City and the impact of high-rise apartment buildings on local settlement patterns.

ELABORATION

The Plaza House Apartments represents the High Rise Apartment Building property sub-type as defined by the MPDF "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri." Following the criteria described in the MPDF, it was built specifically as an apartment building with a single, main public entrance and secondary entrances along public right-of-ways; it has more than twenty-seven self-sufficient units, is between eight and twelve stories tall, and has at least one elevator with an adjoining lobby. In addition, it has the optional criteria of a medium-sized lobby and T-shaped plan with a double-loaded corridor *(Figure 7, 8)*. As explained in the MPDF, such buildings mark an important shift in the progress of this property type as they allowed for the use of new technology and aesthetic flexibility on the part of the architect. In addition, the economy and efficiency of this property type changed the settlement patterns of the city, consolidating higher numbers of residences into smaller footprints and contradicting the dramatic movement of people and businesses away from the city center and into the suburbs.[1]

The Plaza House Apartments was constructed during a period of progress and expansion in Kansas City following the slower decades of the 1930s and 1940s. Accelerated by the annexation of land north of the river and urban renewal, the city experienced a surge of new businesses, industries, and construction and underwent a marked shift in its residential patterns. Built at a time when many middle-class families were moving away from the center of the city and into the suburbs, the erection of high-rise apartment buildings altered the character of many established residential neighborhoods north of 47th Street and west of Troost Avenue.[2] Not only did the larger massing and higher occupancy of such buildings differ from the existing single-family houses, but the application of Modern Movement design elements further distinguished them from their surroundings. Additionally, the increased height of these buildings allowed

[1] Sally Schwenk, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri," 7 November 2007, Kansas City, Missouri, F-19-20.
[2] George Erlich, *Kansas City, MO: An Architectural History, 1826-1990, revised and enlarged edition,* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press: 1984), 138.

innovation in the interior organization of the entire building as well as individual units. This is evident at Plaza House Apartments in the arrangement of apartments around a double loaded corridor which maximized the number of units on each floor.

The area around Country Club Plaza and the West Plaza neighborhood, however, was generally exempt from this exodus of people and continued to thrive and develop, thus necessitating the construction places such as Plaza House Apartments.[3] The building's central location and proximity to transportation routes, important businesses and employers as well as entertainment and medical facilities provided another incentive for people to move into the West Plaza neighborhood. Apartment dwellings remained a viable and affordable option for the market of working-class and middle-income families and individuals who could not afford a single-family residence. Thus, the erection of Plaza House Apartments, a high-rise apartment building in a dense urban environment, fulfilled the need of providing housing for large numbers of people at a reasonable expense, while the use of the Modern Movement style simultaneously alluded to the progressive attitudes of the city.

The design of the building follows the Modern Movement style, popular from the 1950s to the 1980s. This period marked a transition from designs of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century based on classical elements to those characterized by a marked break from the past through geometric forms and simplistic decoration.[4] It was influenced by the International Style, which is characterized by flat, smooth surfaces, ribbon windows, exposed structure and flat roofs.[5] Drawing from the military presence following World War Two, the Modern Movement is based on functionality and focused on utilization of innovative materials such as reinforced concrete and modern building technology such as concrete and steel structural systems which enhanced wind resistance. In Kansas City in particular, however, architects approached this new and unfamiliar design with caution so as not to so dramatically reject more traditional forms.[6]

As expressed by the design of the Plaza House Apartments, the Modern Movement is characterized by refined ornament and detail simple geometric form and massing, an emphasis on horizontal and vertical planes, clean edges created by wrap-around corner windows, and defined window and door openings. The overall form of the building is rectangular, with additional rectangular forms created at the north and south projections. The primary exterior embellishments are the contrasting bands of red and turquoise ceramic clay tile that add horizontal and vertical definition to the blond brick façade. This reflects a larger trend of patterned brickwork that historically adorned apartment buildings throughout the city. The concrete frames that boldly outline the entrances and the concrete building structure are also notable expressions of the Modern Movement style. Traditional cornices, columns and other ornamental details were traded for austere steel lintels, sills of corresponding material and modern aluminum and glass doors. The interior is similarly simplistic, alluding to the utilitarianism and efficiency of the Modern Movement which promoted larger, multi-purpose living spaces.[7] Apartments are open and spacious, with public rooms such as the living/ dining room grouped together, separate from the more private bedrooms.

[3] Ehrlich, 124.
[4] Ibid, 128.
[5] Schwenk, E-34-35.
[6] Ehrlich, 121.
[7] Schwenk, E-40.

ARCHITECTS

Raymond Leonard Voskamp

Raymond Leonard Voskamp was born on February 5, 1904 in Joplin, MO. Voskamp earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Interior Design and began his career in 1935 as an assistant architect with the State of Missouri Building Commission.[8] During this time Governor Lloyd Stark hired him to be the project architect for renovations to the Missouri governor's mansion.[9] Later, he was an associate at Gentry and Voskamp, a firm started by his brother, Edgar, and a resident architect with Smith, Hinchman and Grylls before partnering with Frank Robert Slezak in 1945.

In addition to his professional career, Voskamp was active in the local community, lecturing on Architectural Practice and Training, acting as secretary, Vice President and President of the Kansas City chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and serving on the Board of Standards and Appeals from 1951-1955.[10] He and his first wife, Josephine, had one son, Raymond Voskamp Jr. After Josephine's death in 1949 he remarried. He died on April 16, 1988 in Kansas City, MO. [11]

Frank Robert Slezak

Frank Robert Slezak was born in Kansas City, Missouri on July 23, 1913. He attended the Faxon School in his early years and in 1935 received a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture from the University of Kansas. Slezak was employed as a draftsman with Gentry and Voskamp from 1935-1941 and an Architectural Engineer with Beech Aircraft from 1941-1945 before partnering with Raymond Voskamp in 1945. A member of the Kansas City Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Slezak served as the treasurer from 1949-1951, Vice President from 1953-1955 and was elected President in 1955.[12] He was involved in the local community as president of the Roanoke Homes Association, a member of the Kansas City board of zoning, and as chairman of the medal awards commission.[13] He and his wife, Lora, had two daughters and one son.

Voskamp and Slezak, Architects

Raymond Voskamp and Frank Robert Slezak first encountered each other while Slezak was employed as a draftsman with Voskamp's firm, Voskamp and Gentry. They worked together for six years from 1935-1941 and started their own firm, Voskamp and Slezak, Architects in 1945. Based out of Kansas City, Missouri, most of the firm's projects were in the metropolitan area. Some notable projects include the

[8] American Institute of Architects, "Voscamp, Raymond Leonard," *The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects,* 579, http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/American%20Architects%20Directories/1956%20American%20Architects%20Directory/Bowker_1956_V.pdf (accessed 4 April 2013).
[9] "Raymond Voskamp Sr.," *Kansas City Star*, 18 April 1988, Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library, Microfilm.
[10] American Institute of Architects, "Voscamp, Raymond Leonard," 579.
[11] "Raymond Voskamp Sr.," *Kansas City Star*.
[12] American Institute of Architects, "Slezak, Frank Robert," *The AIA Historical Directory of American Architects,* 511, http://communities.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/American%20Architects%20Directories/1956%20American%20Architects%20Directory/Bowker_1956_S.pdf (accessed 4 April 2013).
[13] "Frank Slezak New AIA Fellow," Kansas City Star, 16 April, 1965.

Exchange National Bank (1950) in Atchison, KS and the Elks Club Building (1955) in Newton, KS, in addition to two other apartment buildings, Twin Oaks Apartments (1951) and 333 Meyer West apartments in Kansas City, MO. Twin Oaks Apartments exhibits many of the same Modern Movement concepts, such as the contrasting horizontal and vertical emphasis, two-tone brick patterning and overall simplicity of form, but more importantly marks the beginning of the city's renewal of architectural style.

In 1965, Voskamp and Slezak joined with three other architectural firms to design the Richard Bolling Federal Building in Kansas City, MO, which remains as one of the tallest buildings in the city. In 1967 the firm acquired two new partners, Raymond Voskamp Jr. and John Jameson, and was renamed Voskamp, Slezak and Jameson. It reorganized again in 1970 under the name Voskamp and Voskamp and remained as such until Raymond Voskamp Sr. retired in 1976.

PROPERTY HISTORY

Construction of the Plaza House Apartments began in early 1953 when the city of Kansas City issued a permit for preliminary excavation and site preparation.[14] Another permit in 1954 approved the construction of a 40'-2" by 47'-8" six-room penthouse on the roof of the building.[15] When completed in 1955 the concrete block building had brick veneer, a tar and gravel roof and measured 127'-2" by 77'-4," with seventy-two apartment units dispersed over eleven stories.[16]

The building held full or nearly full occupancy from the time of its construction, with many occupants living in the same apartment for five or more years or occupying two apartments simultaneously. In keeping with the requirements as identified in the MPDF, during the period of significance and for many years thereafter, residents exhibited a wide range of employment from working-class to middle-income economies. Additionally, following the trend of this property type in the Kansas City area, the building was occupied by many single adults, childless couples and retired people, who could take advantage nearby amenities that the central business district offered.

City Directories show that the first manager of Plaza House Apartments was Mrs. Edna Peck, who resided in the building with her husband, Roy. She was the manager for at least ten years and remained as a tenant until at least 1975. Some tenants were widows or retired couples able to utilize the low maintenance and compact spaces of apartment life; others held white-collar positions, such as a salesman for Drexel Furniture or a clerk for New York Life insurance company, and could take advantage of nearby transportation routes; still others were employed in more prominent roles, including Vice President for Stern Brothers & Co., a corporate stock and bonds company, and President of Whistle-Vess Bottling and could benefit from the nearby businesses. Interestingly, many single women resided in the apartments and held similar working-class positions, such as a teacher at Barstow School and a cashier at TWA, among many others.

One of the more notable tenants was H. Roe Bartle, who moved into the building around 1960. During this tenancy, he was elected mayor of Kansas City, MO for two terms - 1955 and 1959. A well-known

[14] City of Kansas City, Missouri Landmarks Commission, building permit #66727 (2/6/53).
[15] City of Kansas City, Missouri Landmarks Commission, building permit #18051 (1/20/54).
[16] City of Kansas City, Missouri Landmarks Commission, building permit #17827 (3/5/53).

lawyer, Boy Scout executive and public speaker, he earned a reputation for his leadership skills and volunteerism. As mayor of Kansas City he was able to promote economic development and reorganize the tax code, though one of his more major accomplishments was bringing the Dallas Texans professional football team to the city, later renamed the "Chiefs" in honor of Bartle's nickname, the Chief. He resided in the building until his death on May 8, 1974. Thus, from the period of significance, Plaza House Apartments has displayed the diverse array of people who comprise the Kansas City community and the employment opportunities available to working-class and middle-income individuals.

CONCLUSION

The Plaza House Apartments is significant as a High Rise Apartment Building property sub-type as established in the MPDF "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri." The eleven story building boasts seventy-two apartments that have, for the most part, been continually occupied since its construction in 1955. The architectural firm of Voskamp and Slezak designed the building based on the tenets of the Modern Movement, marking a distinct shift from historic forms. Distinguished by its pure form and massing, bilateral symmetry, contrasting horizontal and vertical organization and use of patterned brickwork, the building exemplifies the style while at the same time representing functionalism and utility associated with this period. Home to a variety of residents, its location allowed for easy access to the amenities of the city while remaining viable for working-class and middle-income individuals. Furthermore, the presence of this building in the West Plaza neighborhood symbolizes the renaissance that occurred in Kansas City during the 1950s and 1960s and created the need for economical and efficient housing such as Plaza House Apartments.

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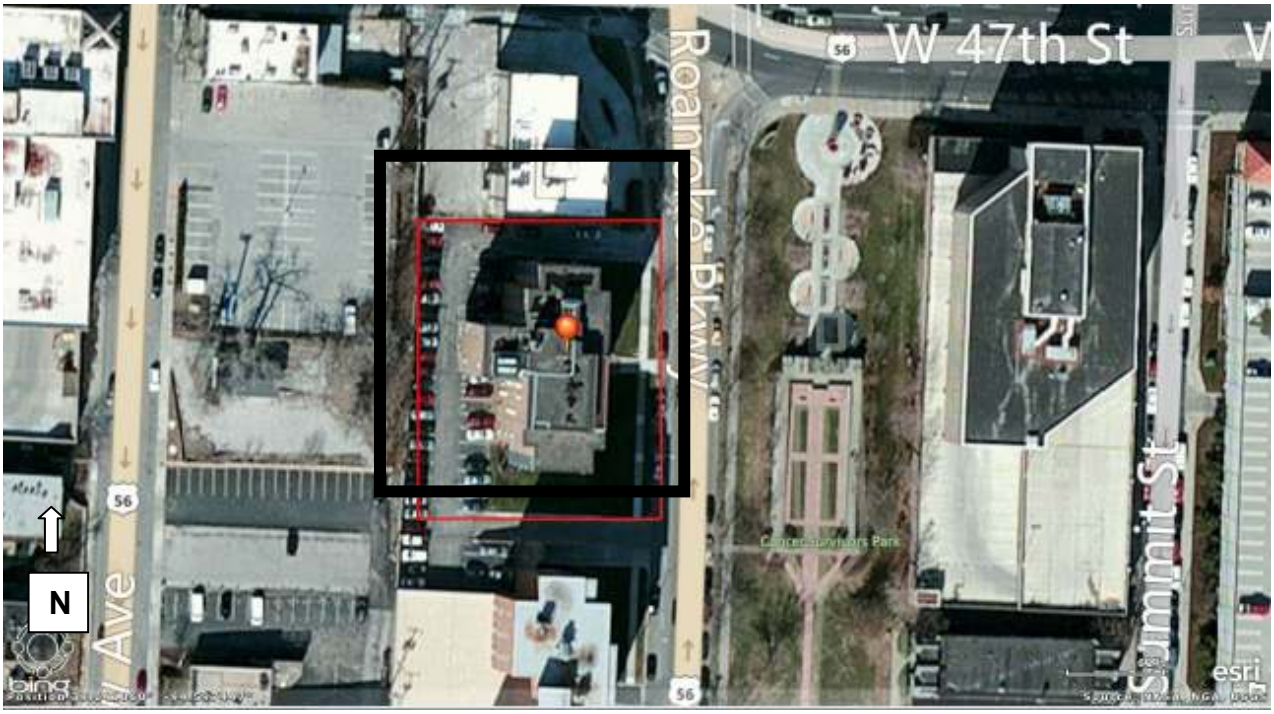
Verbal Boundary Description

Plaza House Apartments stands on 0.607 acres on lots 80-84 including Penn Park in the West Plaza neighborhood of Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property include the parcels of land historically associated with the resource.

Figure 1: Map/ Site Plan

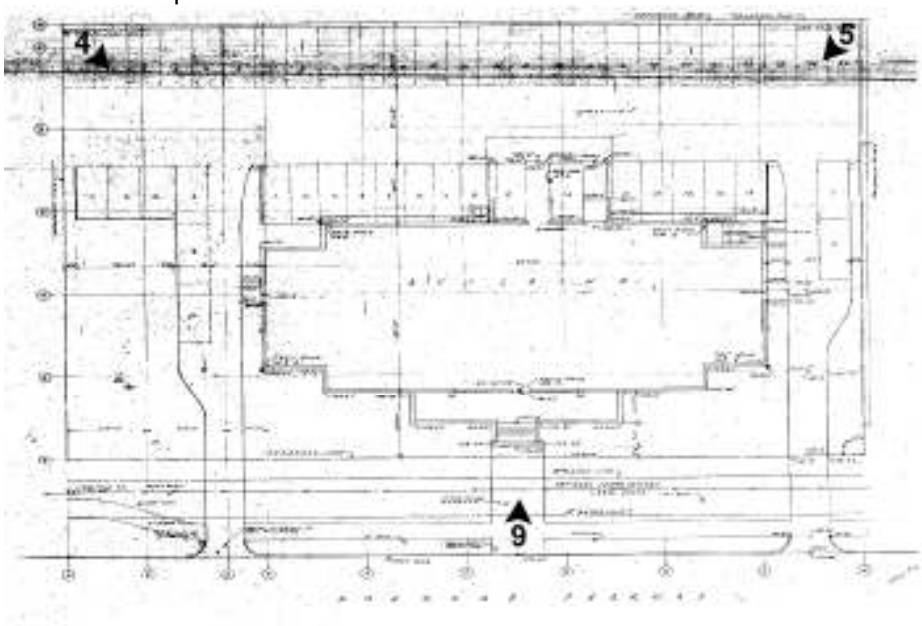


Plaza House Apartments
4712 Roanoke Parkway
Jackson County, Missouri
(Datum: WGS84) Latitude/ Longitude: 39.041849 -94.597668

Figure 2: Contextual Map

Plaza House Apartments
4712 Roanoke Parkway
Jackson County, Missouri
(Datum: WGS84) Latitude/ Longitude: 39.041849 -94.597668

Figure 3: Photo Map – Exterior



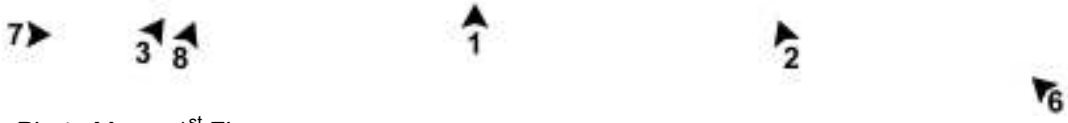


Figure 4: Photo Map – 1st Floor

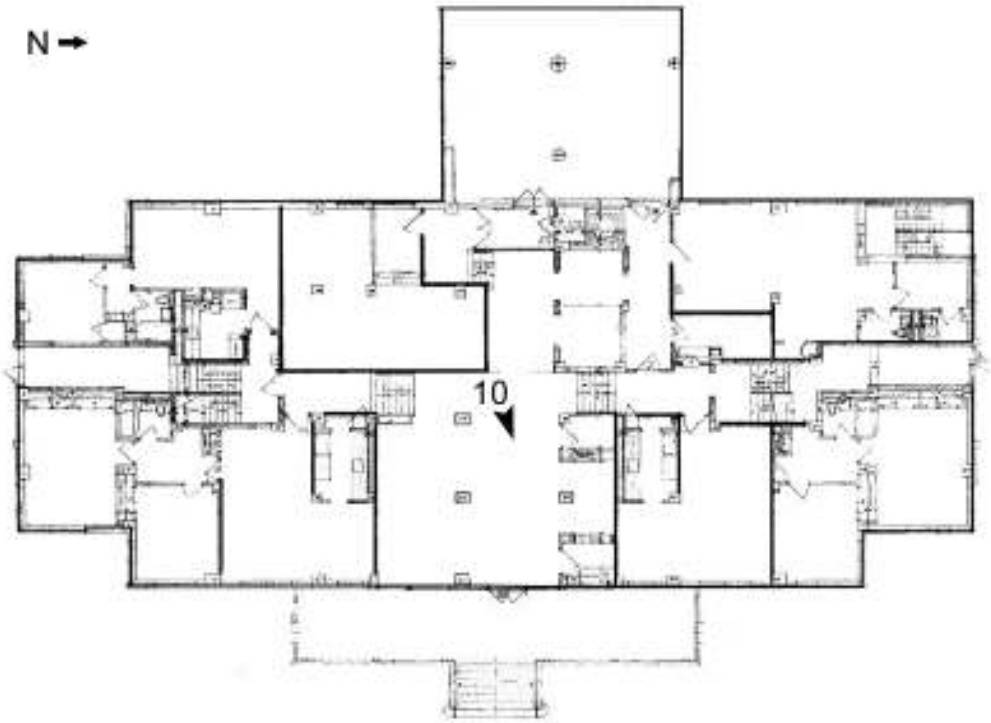

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Figure 5: Photo Map – Typical Upper Floor

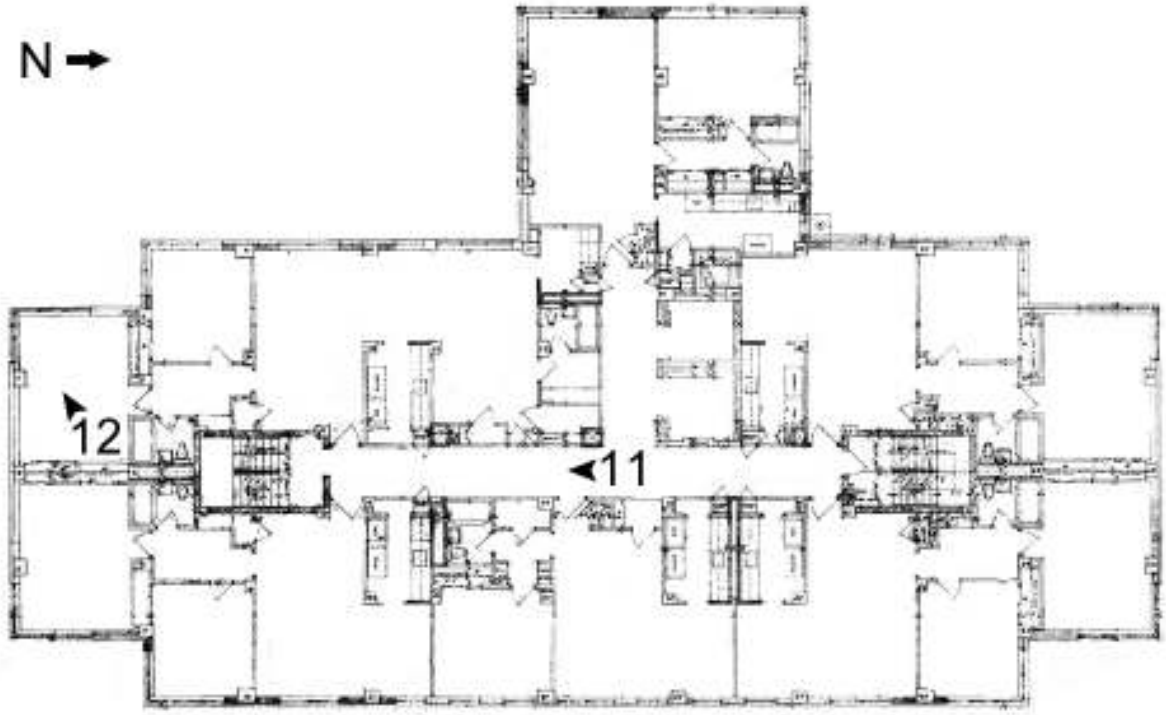


Figure 6: Historic plans- Site plan

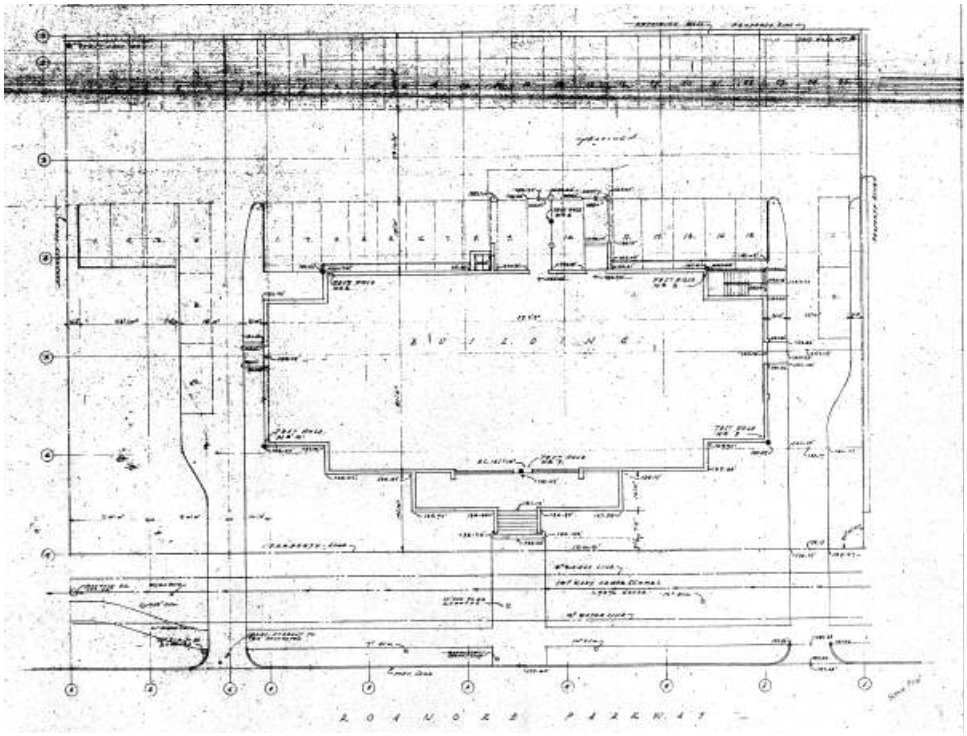


Figure 7: Historic plans- First floor plan

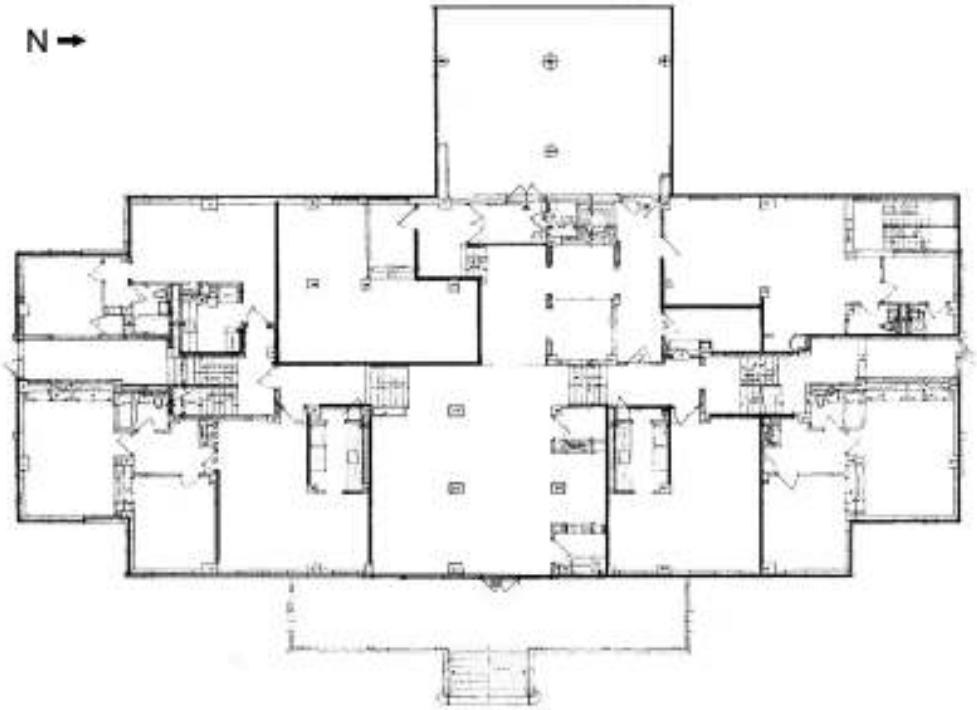


Figure 8: Historic plans- Typical floor plan

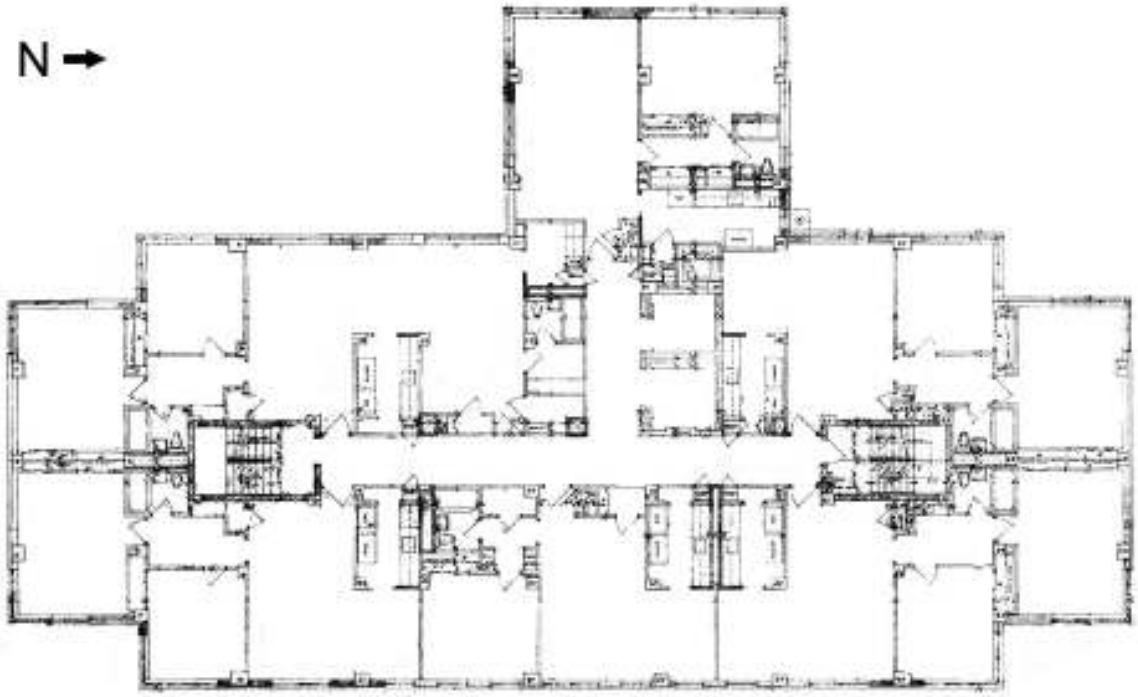
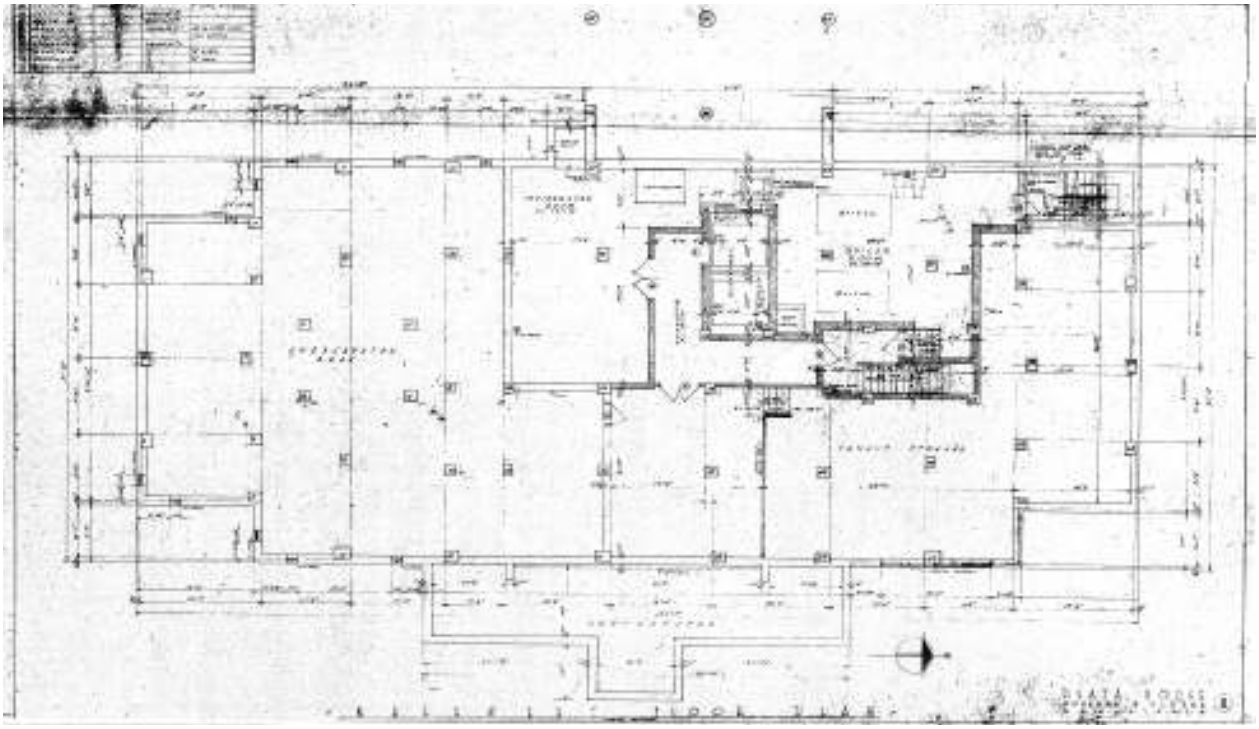


Figure 9: Historic plans- Basement plan



Plaza House
4712

Plaza House
4712
PLAZA HOUSE
4712 ROANOKE PARKWAY