

Rieger Hotel
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, MO

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Hotel

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:
Commercial style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	concrete
walls	brick
roof	asphalt
other	terra cotta

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

Rieger Hotel
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO
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.
- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository:

Kansas City Public Library

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1915-1953

Significant Dates

1915

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Smith, Rea and Lovitt, architects

Gray Construction Company

Rieger Hotel
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

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

1 1/5 3/6/3/0/0/0 4/3/2/7/9/0/0
Zone Easting Northing

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

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

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

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cydney E. Millstein
organization Architectural and Historical Research, LLC date August 25, 2003
street & number P.O. Box 22551 telephone 816.363.0567
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64113

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 Rieger, LLC
street & number 1922 Main Street telephone 816.474.5205
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

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.

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Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri

SUMMARY

The Rieger Building, located at 1922 Main Street, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, was designed by the noted Kansas City architectural firm of Smith, Rea and Lovitt and built by the Gray Construction Company in 1915. As defined in the MPS Cover Document "Working Class Hotels and 19th and Main Streets in Kansas City, MO," the Rieger Building is an intact example of the Two-Part Commercial Block Hotel, featuring "prominent storefronts at the main facade, double-hung, sash fenestration set in groups of three and divided by spandrels between floors." Furthermore, the Rieger displays terra cotta at its facade, which "was used to embellish the main facade from the storefront level and often, through the upper stories, thereby setting off the primary facade from the secondary elevations."

Located within five blocks of the Kansas City's Union Station, sited in the middle of a block on a major thoroughfare. To the north, east and west are other commercial buildings. To the south is a paved parking lot. The west or rear facade is adjacent to an alleyway. A 1950s-era, flat roof commercial building is adjacent to the north facade.

Its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association has been retained in the exterior, meeting the registration requirements as set forth in the MPS cover document. The Rieger Hotel has a metal clad addition with a canopy that extends over the rear section of the main roof, added in 2003. This modification has a minimal affect on the historic integrity of the building.

ELABORATION

The three story commercial building is constructed of reinforced concrete and brick with a terra cotta veneer on the east or main facade. The original storefront was recently renovated, based on the original design. The storefront features a central, tripartite window unit, flanked by single-leaf wood doors. The storefront unit is crowned by a leaded glass transom. A wide band of white terra cotta divides the storefront level from the upper floors. Original tripartite fenestration features a double-hung, sash 6/1 central unit flanked by 4/1 units. Floors are separated by monochromatic spandrels of highly ornamented terra cotta. A wide cornice with a symmetrically placed nameplate featuring the word "RIEGER" crowns the building. The terra cotta facade is very detailed and contains blocks of several different patterns.

The south facade, generally characterized by masonry walls, is punctuated at the center bays by 3/3, double-hung, sash windows. A non-original metal balcony with large knee-bracing has been placed between the second and third stories. Fenestration of the north facade is paced at

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National Park Service

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**Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri**

the center bays. The rear façade is marked by a single-leaf door at the first story, center bay; 3/3 metal units at the second story and a non-original recessed window bay at the third story. Fire doors with metal balconies mark the north bay of the second and third story. The north and south façades, characterized by a concrete structural grid, feature 3/3 windows. The fenestration of the south and north façades are duplicated at the rear, where a metal fire escape is placed at the north end. The far north bay features single-leaf metal doors. The interior of the Rieger building has been modified over the years and a minimum of historic features remains extant. The Rieger Hotel has a metal clad addition with a canopy that extends over the rear section of the main roof, added in 2003. This modification has a minimal affect on the historic integrity of the building.

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Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri

SUMMARY

The Rieger Hotel, 1922 Main Street, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and is locally significant in the following areas: COMMERCE: The development of the Rieger Hotel coincides with the historic context identified in the MPS Cover Document "Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets in Kansas City, MO": "The Evolution of Travel Modes and Hotel Space in Kansas City: 1880-1915." As a representative example of a working class hotel, the Rieger Hotel was established as a convenient, comfortable and efficient place of lodging. It represents the values and standards in hotel accommodations offered to the working class traveler within walking distance of Kansas City's freight district and Union Station. Alexander Rieger, civic leader, entrepreneur and Czechoslovakian consul, was responsible for the construction of this working class hotel. Along with the Midwest and Monroe, it is one of the few hotels to remain in the 1900 block of Main Street. The period of significance is 1915 through 1953, the end date established by the discretionary cut-off period of the National Register.

History and Significance

In 1915 Alexander Rieger hired the Kansas City architectural firm of Smith, Rea and Lovitt to design a hotel for the corner of Main and 20th Street. As originally designed, the hotel was a small intimate brick and terra cotta, three-story fireproof building. The firm's design also called for ornamental ironwork, marble, tile and terrazzo floors, skylights, and metal framed windows. Bids closed on July 30, 1915. In August it was announced that Gray Construction Company was awarded the job as general contractor.¹

During its first decade of operation, the building was known as the Rieger Hotel. Sometime during the mid-1920s the building changed hands and became the Traveler's Hotel. E. E. Porter Soft Drinks also had an office located in the building in 1927. In 1941 the building was vacant; however after World War II the building was reopened as the Milton Hotel. Office space was also leased to the Acme Decal Company. After 1961, only the Acme Decal Company remained.²

In 1962 Orville Anderson, owner and operator of Anderson Photography, purchased the building from Mrs. Mary G. Jacobs. With no immediate plans for the Rieger Building, Anderson leased twenty-two rooms on the second and third floors for hotel space to the Elms Hotel. It is

¹ *Western Contractor*, July 28, 1915, 30 and August 11, 1915, 29.

² Polk City Directories for Kansas City, Missouri, 1916-1965.

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**Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri**

unclear whether or not this business was related to the Elms of Excelsior Springs, Missouri. In 1964 Anderson Photography moved their headquarters to the first floor and basement area at 1922 Main. The Elms Hotel continued to occupy the upper two floors.³

Both working class individuals and travelers stayed at the Rieger Hotel. Like the Midwest and Monroe Hotels, the Rieger Hotel typically catered to single workers without families who found it necessary to live in proximity to their place of employment. One of the most common long-term residents was the traveling salesman who utilized the hotel space as a base of operation.

Alexander Rieger

Alexander Rieger was born in Czechoslovakia and immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of nine in 1879. In 1885, at the age of fifteen, Alexander moved to Kansas City where he was employed for a short time as a stock boy for the firm of G. Bernheimer Brothers Dry Goods. Six months later he bought a small grocery store at Third and Gillis. After the grocery business, he established Rieger and Co., dealers in fine liquors, located across the street from the Livestock Exchange Building.⁴

Rieger's business acumen led him to become a major figure in the financial industry during the first thirty-six years of the 20th century in Kansas City. His various positions include director of the StockYards National Bank, founder of Home Trust Company in 1920 and a long affiliation with Merchants Bank beginning in 1916. He was chairman of the board at Mercantile Bank, president of the Community State Bank and a major stockholder in the National Bank of North Kansas City.

³"Anderson Photo In Move To 1922 Main," *Kansas City Star* 12 July 1964. Not paginated. Clippings, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Missouri.

⁴"Alexander Rieger," *Kansas City Times*, 1 July 1936. Clippings, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Missouri.

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**Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri**

He is also recognized for his civic leadership within the Jewish community as a member of the board of the United Jewish Charities of Kansas City, the Jewish Orphans Home and Menorah Hospital. Perhaps his most important contribution to Kansas City occurred in 1929 when he was appointed the Czechoslovakian consul for Kansas and Missouri and aided the trade relations between the mid-west and Czechoslovakia.⁵ Rieger died of a heart attack in 1936 at the age of 66.⁶

⁵ "Czechoslovakia Consul to Kansas and Missouri," *Kansas City Star*, 25 January 1929. Clippings, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Missouri.

⁶ "Alexander Rieger," *Kansas City Times*, 1 July 1936.

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**Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri**

Bibliography

"Alexander Rieger," *The Kansas City Times*, 1 July 1936.

"Anderson Photo In Move To 1922," *The Kansas City Star*, 12 July 1964.

"Czechoslovakia Consul to Kansas and Missouri," *The Kansas City Star*, 25 January 1929.

Polk City Directory, Kansas City, Missouri, 1916-1965.

Western Contractor, July 28, 1915, 30 and August 11, 1915, 29.

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**Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri**

Verbal Boundary Description

McGee's Addition, All of E Alley and W of Main St. of S 24¾' of Lot 487, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Rieger Hotel, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

Key to Photographs

Len Fohn, photographer, September 2003.

Location of Negatives: Architectural and historical Research, LLC
P.O. Box. 22551
Kansas City, Missouri 64113

1. Main or east façade; view facing west.
2. Main and south façades; view facing northeast.
3. South façade; view facing north.
4. North façade; view facing southwest.
5. Rear or west façade; view facing east.

Hopkins Chase
 Hotel of 1941 +
 New Stanley
 Kansas City, Mo.
 A. Midwood Hotel
 15/200 019/1327 890
 B. River Hotel
 15/200 019/1327 900
 C. Menard Hotel
 15/200 019/1327 150



United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying them, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

The Evolution of Travel Modes and Hotel Space In Kansas City: 1880-1915

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Cydney Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield

organization Architectural and Historical Research, LLC date August 25, 2003

street & number P.O. Box 22551 telephone 816.363.0567

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64113

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Mark A. Miles
Signature of certifying official Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

03/18/04 See continuation sheet
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	Page Numbers
E. Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	
The Evolution of Travel Modes and Hotel Space in Kansas City: 1880-1915	1
F. Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	12
Two-Part Commercial Block	
G. Geographical Data	15
H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the public property listing.)	16
I. Major Bibliographical References (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	17

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
Kansas City, Jackson, MO

E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING NAME: Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri

PREFACE

With the completion of the new Union Station Terminal at Pershing Road and Main Street in 1914, the need for affordable hotel space was realized. The hotels in the Midtown area, specifically those of 19th and Main Street, Kansas City, reflect an important aspect of the city's cultural history and development. Investors took advantage of the opportunity to construct convenient, comfortable, and efficient hotels in the area surrounding the new railroad terminal. During the ensuing years, Midtown catered to train passengers and employees. The hotels in the area provided a mixture of transient and more permanent residential lodging.

Main Street was a primary streetcar route connecting Union Station to the city's Central Business District. The area also offered affordable restaurants and taverns. Unlike the upscale, high-rise hotels and fine restaurants of the Central Business District located further north, Midtown was designed for the working class traveler, as well as laborers that found employment in the freight district and railroad terminal. There are several surviving hotel buildings in Midtown, along 19th and Main Street, constructed between 1914 and 1920. They were built, specifically, to serve the passengers and employees of Union Station and the surrounding area.

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXTS

The Evolution of Travel Modes and Hotel Space in Kansas City: 1880-1914

INTRODUCTION

H. Weisskamp, author of the book entitled *Hotels* (1968), observed that:

[T]he modern American hotel dates from the early days of railroad travel, when the

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
Kansas City, Jackson, MO

modest hostelry, prepared to entertain small groups of occasional guests, was forced to become a more commodious and efficient institution to accommodate the great number of traveling salespeople. Technical progress in the late 19th century permitted the construction of large hotels with safeguards against fire.¹

Early Precedents for Temporary Lodging

Food and shelter have always been the primary needs of humankind. Early man was nomadic by nature. The need to travel to find food and shelter meant survival. Man eventually learned to tame his surroundings by using protective clothing and building adequate, permanent shelter. The nomadic, hunter-gatherer economy evolved into an agricultural economy, where traveling for trade became a way of moving goods and exchanging produce. One of the earliest examples of business travel was the camel caravan of the Orient. When merchants traveled over great distances for trade, the tent became their temporary lodging. Written references to the use of lodging or inns can be found as early as 1785 B.C.E. Law 111 of *Hammurabi's Code of Laws*. The law provided a guideline for the exchange of goods for services.² During the Crusades, in the year 1000 C.E., shelter for travelers was found in the monasteries and other religious institutions throughout Europe and the Middle East and by 1282, the first licensing control for the fair distribution of business for innkeepers was established by a hostelry guild.³

Early models of the modern hotel first appeared in Europe during the late eighteenth century. As transportation methods advanced, travelers crossing the country no longer relied on horse and carriage. By the mid to late 1800s, trains made it possible to move massive numbers of people at a faster rate of speed. The steam engine also replaced the sails on ships making an Atlantic or Pacific crossing faster and safer. Curiosity of the idle rich was one of the driving forces behind travel. As more Europeans

¹ "Hotels," *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), Online, www.bartleby.com/65/. Accessed, 18 August 2003.

² Lloyd Duhaime, ed. "No. 111: Hammurabi's Code of Laws," 1785 B.C.E., [Online], *Law Museum Archive* (British Columbia: Duhaime and Company, 2002), http://www.duhaime.org/Law_museum/hamm1.htm#1. Accessed August 18, 2003.

³ Patricia J. Gagnon and Bruno Ociepka, *Travel Career Development*, Sixth Edition (Wellesley: Institute of Certified Travel Agents, 1998), 122.

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
Kansas City, Jackson, MO

began to travel during the late 1700s, the need for lodging increased as well. Hotels began to appear offering plush accommodations to entice the adventure-seeking world traveler.

As Nigel Thrift points out:

By the end of the eighteenth century, hotels had begun to appear, for example the 60-bed, Hotel de Henri IV, built in Nantes in 1788 at a total cost of £17,500, a tremendous sum of money at the time.⁴

When the Industrial Revolution began in Europe, the working class began to travel, not for leisure, but to find work in new factories. Housing became an issue; they had to rely on boardinghouses or rooms rented out by home owners seeking to earn extra income. Factories would often build their own rooming houses or "company hotels" as a benefit to ensure employees for their factories. With an influx of immigration to American by the early 1800s, lodging became paramount to American culture.

American Prototypes

In 1794 the first purpose-built hotel in North America was opened in New York, [that of] the City Hotel with 70 rooms. Several other, similar hotels were built in other cities in the next few years, but it was not until 1829 that the first first-class hotel, Boston's Tremont House, with 170 rooms, was built. The Tremont innovated such features as private rooms, with locks, soap and water for each room, bellboys and French cuisine. The tourist expansion of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw a further massive expansion of hotels and motels...⁵

Paul Groth's study of downtown residential hotels in San Francisco, from 1880-1930, offers a unique perspective on the American hotel for the working class. In his book, he states that "[f]or two hundred years, hotels have served a series of domestic roles in the urban vernacular environments and

⁴Nigel Thrift, "Remembering The Technological Unconscious By Foregrounding Knowledges of Position", *School of Geographical Sciences University of Bristol* [Online]
http://www.gsv.bris.ac.uk/courses/general/staff/information/thrift_papers/remembering_the_technological_unconscious.doc
Accessed 19 August 2003.

⁵ *ibid.*

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
Kansas City, Jackson, MO

subcultures.”⁶ He goes on to say “[p]eople live in hotels, full-time, throughout the United States. Americans have done so for over two hundred years, often choosing hotel life over other housing options.”⁷

Between 1880 and 1930 American hotels fell into four distinct categories or ranks: palace hotel, mid-priced hotel, rooming house and cheap lodging house. The rank of a building type can also be characterized by “architectural evidence, [which] closely matches social stratification suggested in written records ... original construction details... especially plumbing and air wells--were surprisingly reliable counterparts to the social stratification and class differences.”⁸ The palace hotel and the mid-priced hotel between 1880 and 1940 were socially reserved for the use by the upper and middle classes of America.

The rooming house was reserved for use by the lower working class. These accommodations served both the transient lodger and those needing residential lodging. Rooming houses were for people in skilled trades earning a steady income, but not enough to live in a single dwelling. They often were single women and men, including teachers, stenographers, machinists and freight workers who chose to live in close proximity to their places of employment. Rooms were single, furnished and clean.⁹

Although very different in architecture, décor and patron levels of income, the commonality between all ranks of hotels was a mixture of both the transient and residential patron. After the depression a marked shift occurred in hotel patronage; investors, among others, redefined urban economy and downtown America. One of the shifts was a change in the way all four ranks of hotels were utilized. Between 1930 and 1980, residential hotels were no longer being built. As the population shifted to suburban areas well outside of the downtown business and retail districts, so did the need for lodging. Unless a city had a

⁶ Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), Preface.

⁷ *Ibid*, 1.

⁸ *Ibid*, 20-22.

⁹ *Ibid*, 23.

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
Kansas City, Jackson, MO

healthy convention business, most downtown areas found themselves with too many hotel rooms.¹⁰ Often, older hotels remained vacant.

The construction of the Interstate Highway System during the 1950s was yet another factor that caused the overall failure of the downtown hotel. As interstate travel increased, so did the construction of motor court or motel that first appeared in the late 1920s. Holiday Inn was the first chain of motels, opening their first facility in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1952.¹¹

THE EVOLUTION OF TRAVEL MODES AND HOTEL SPACE IN KANSAS CITY: 1880-1914

Transportation in the first decades of the 1800s was vital to the growth of the city. In Kansas City's early history, ferries had been established along the north side of the river in Clay County to accommodate trade routes between Independence and Liberty, Missouri. The first ferry service to operate on the south side of the Missouri River began in 1826.¹² This marked the shift in the Santa Fe Trail trade, as steamboats began using the Grand Avenue "Westport" landing" to offload their passengers and cargo. The new landing reduced the time spent moving cargo overland from Independence to the Town of Westport, approximately nine miles south of the riverfront.¹³ The Gillis House Hotel and Harris House Hotel, the first of the recorded rooming house/hotel, were located on the riverfront on the road to the Town of Westport.¹⁴

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 264-73. One exception was during and shortly after World War II when temporary overcrowding occurred. Soldiers needed bivouacking and soldiers released from the service needed immediate housing. As construction of new housing in the suburban areas gained momentum, overcrowding of downtown hotels was quickly remedied.

¹¹ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 253-254.

¹² Charles P. Deatherage, *History of Kansas City Missouri and Kansas* (Kansas City: Interstate Publishing Co., 1927), 348.

¹³ Deatherage, 359.

¹⁴ George Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History* (Kansas City: Historic Kansas City Foundation, 1979), 3-11.

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
Kansas City, Jackson, MO

As the city further developed, Kansas City became an ideal trade center due to its central location, new rail routes and excellent river access. By 1865 the Missouri Pacific Railroad, the first rail line to reach Kansas City, constructed a depot just west of Grand Avenue along First Street to accommodate both steamboat and rail passengers. As a result, an increasing number of hotels, boarding houses and mercantile shops began to appear around the depot and city market.¹⁵

After the Civil War, the West Bottoms became the home of several industrial establishments. The low-lying flat surface bordered by the Kansas and Missouri Rivers was thought to be ideal as a freight district. At the turn-of-the-century a severe flood, which caused a change in the course of the Missouri River, convinced business owners otherwise. Subsequently, industry and commercial enterprises began to build on high ground just south of the downtown area.

Along with the development of Kansas City's central core, the Midtown area, south of the CBD, increased in size during the early 1900s. Businesses such as the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Beer depot at Walnut and 20th Street, Rex Welder and Engineering Company at 19th and Walnut and The Phoenix Stone and Lime Company at 1927 Main were located on rail lines that snaked through the area. In 1914, Union Station opened at Main Street and Pershing Road. Affordable hotels for working-class travelers were in short supply. In 1915 the first rooming house hotels began to appear on Main Street. One of the earliest of this type of hotel may have been the Best Hotel at 1923 Main, built in 1915 and designed by Smith, Rea, and Lovitt. Razed in the late 1970s, it stood as a modestly designed, one-bay wide, two-story, building.

These Main Street hotels, such as the Best Hotel, were within walking distance of Kansas City's freight district and industrial areas, as well as the Central Business District. Whereas the hotels of the CBD reflect the opulent lifestyle of the upper class in Kansas City during the era of the "grand hotel," the hotels of the Midtown area along 19th and Main Street represent the values and standards in hotel

¹⁵ Deatherage, 340-60.

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Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets,
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accommodations offered to the working class. Little notice was given to the construction of these hotels, none of which stood more than five stories. Instead, the press turned public attention to the luxury high-rise hotels and buildings designed by well-known architects such as Sanneman and Van Trump and Smith Rea and Lovitt. However, it is important to note that these firms designed buildings for Midtown hotels, as well.¹⁶

Hotels on Main Street: 1900 - 2000 Main Street, Kansas City, Missouri

In the 1900 block of Main, the architectural firms of Sanneman and Trump, and Smith, Rea, and Lovitt were responsible for at least five buildings, four of which were built as hotels.¹⁷ Unlike the broken down lodging houses of the late 19th century, hotels for the working class during the first three decades of the twentieth century could easily be mistaken for warehouses, lofts or office buildings of the same period. "Choosing to give cheap hotels facades that were commercial and not residential was an attempt at making them culturally acceptable both to their residents and to outsiders."¹⁸ The design of these hotels include a simple ornamentation of the entry façade, where as, the remaining exterior facades consist of flat brick walls and plain window treatments without embellishment.

The interior spaces of these hotels, with narrow hallways, a lack of furniture, and shared bathing space, reflected the social and economic conditions of their clientele.¹⁹ Often the hotels with highly embellished, more articulated façades, offered a better interior in the way of accommodations. The hotels in this study are primary examples of the social and economic trend in American hotels during the first decades of the twentieth century.

¹⁶ Ellen J. Uguccioni and Sherry Piland, "Hotels in the Downtown Area of Kansas City," National Register of Historic Places Inventory, Nomination Form, Section 8, cover page.

¹⁷ Ellen J. Uguccioni and Sherry Piland, "Historic Inventory: Midwest Hotel (1983), Monroe Hotel (1981) and Rieger Building (1983)," Copies, Landmarks Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

¹⁸ Paul Groth, *Living Downtown: The History of Residential Hotels in the United States*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 166.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 163-166.

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The Rieger Hotel, located at 1922 Main Street, was a speculative venture by the investor and banker, Alexander Rieger. He had anticipated a need for hotel space for business travelers coming arriving at Union Station. Built in 1915, the hotel was designed by Smith, Rea and Lovitt, architects and built by Gray Construction Company. The Rieger building's east façade features ornamentation of poly-chromed terra cotta veneer on all three stories. The remaining three sides featured no exterior ornamentation.²⁰

Smith, Rea and Lovitt were also the architects for the Midwest Hotel, 1925 Main Street. Aiken and Thayer constructed this five-story hotel in 1915. Although the exterior of the first floor west façade with two bays was altered in 1952, the upper floors have retained the original terra cotta veneer on the remaining four stories.²¹ Like the Rieger, the remaining three sides of the building do not contain notable architectural features.

R. H. Sanneman of the architectural firm of Sanneman and Van Trump designed the Monroe Hotel for the Dubinsky Brothers at 1904-06 Main Street in 1920. This hotel is the largest of the three hotels standing five stories with three bays. The original plan called for a sufficient foundation that would hold three additional stories for future expansion although the additional floors were never built.²²

Rieger Hotel: 1922 Main Street

In 1915, Alexander Rieger hired the architectural firm of Smith, Rea and Lovitt to design a hotel for the corner of Main and 20th Street. Construction bids called for a fireproof reinforced concrete shell. Exterior work was to consist of brick and terra cotta. The job also called for ornamental ironwork, marble, tile and terrazzo floors, skylights, and metal framed windows. Bids closed on July 30, 1915. Gray Construction Company was awarded the job as general contractor.²³

²⁰ Uguccione and Piland, "Historic Inventory: Rieger Building."

²¹ _____, "Historic Inventory: Midwest Hotel."

²² _____, "Historic Inventory: Monroe Hotel."

²³ *Western Contractor*, Vol. 30, July 28, 1915, 30 and August 11, 1915, 29. Microfilm, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Missouri.

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During its first decade of operation, the building was known as the Rieger Hotel. The first floor contained a diner and tavern which was linked to Rieger's early years in the business of selling liquor beverages prior to prohibition. Sometime during the mid-1920s the building changed hands and became the Traveler's Hotel. In 1927 the E. E. Porter Soft Drinks company operated an office on the main floor, in the area of the old tavern and remained in business at this location until prohibition ended.

In 1941 the building was vacant. After World War II the building was reopened as the Milton Hotel while also providing office space to the Acme Decal Co. By this time, the hotel was serving as a residential hotel for transients in need of short-term leases. The hotel space was once again vacant in 1961, only the Acme Decal Company remained.²⁴

In 1962 Orville Anderson of Anderson Photography purchased the building from Mrs. Mary G. Jacobs. With no immediate plans for the Rieger Building, Anderson leased twenty-two rooms on the second and third floors to the Elms Hotel. It is unclear whether or not this business was related to the Elms of Excelsior Springs, Missouri. In 1964 Anderson Photography moved their headquarters to the first floor and basement area at 1922 Main. The Elms Hotel continued to occupy the upper two floors. The building was used consistently as a hotel for nearly fifty years. In 1962 Anderson Photography purchased the building.²⁵

The Midwest Hotel: 1925 Main Street

Several months after Smith Rea and Lovitt accepted bids on the Rieger Hotel, they began taking bids for the Midwest Hotel owned by J. H. Harris. Aiken and Thayer were hired as the general contractor. The seventy-five room, three-story, reinforced concrete, fireproof hotel was estimated to cost \$50,000 when completed. The entry on the west façade was designed with stone and terra cotta trim.

²⁴ Polk City Directories, 1916-1965. Microfilm, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Missouri.

²⁵ "Anderson Photo In Move To 1922 Main," *Kansas City Star* 12 July 1964. Clippings, Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Missouri.

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Joseph Harris owned the hotel until January 31, 1943. It was purchased by Mrs. Stella Parke who had operated the hotel for seven years under a lease from Mr. Harris. In April 1943 the United States war department condemned the hotel. Mrs. Parke protested the move and vowed to remain in the hotel until the government threw her out. It appears the move came after Mrs. Parke and co-owner and daughter Gladys Parke Kline rejected negotiations for a lease to the government. Under the lease plan, the war department was to take possession for one year with extension privileges through the duration of the war.

The Midwest offered a prime location military police (bivouacked in Penn Valley Park) headquarters because of its proximity to the Union Station terminal. It was also more convenient as much of their work was located in the downtown area. Charles J. Winger of the war department made it clear that the move was necessary due to the war effort. Possession of the hotel was surrendered back to Parke and Kline in April 1946.

The Monroe Hotel: 1904-06 Main Street

Raymond H. Sanneman, architect for the Dixon Hotel (1912), designed the Monroe Hotel in 1920 for the Dubinsky Brothers. Edelman- Fleming Construction Company was hired as the general contractor. The building is of reinforced concrete with brick and terra cotta. The five-story hotel was designed to carry an additional three stories. Concrete Engineering was awarded the structural steel contract. The cost of the hotel was estimated at \$150,000.²⁶

This adjacent area is noted for its relationship to Thomas J. Pendergast, boss of the Democratic Machine in Kansas City beginning in the early 1920s. He was a strong supporter of the laboring class. As a key figure behind many of the large building projects in Kansas City during the 1920s and 1930s, Pendergast

²⁶ Western Contractor, Vol. 37 17 March 1920, 30. Little is known about the Dubinsky Brothers. Thomas Pendergast was affiliated with a David Dubinsky but it is unclear at this time if there is any relationship with the Dubinsky Brothers.

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helped to find people jobs. He built his office in 1926 at 1908 Main. From this location, he proceeded to control the political atmosphere of Kansas City until he was indicted for tax evasion in 1939.

In 1924 Thomas J. Pendergast bought the Monroe Hotel. In 1926, Pendergast hired Sanneman to design a two-story building adjacent to the south side of the hotel at 1908 Main. This building served as the headquarters for the Jackson County Democratic Club. It also served as Pendergast's office where much of his business was conducted until the late 1930s. Sometime after he purchased the hotel, a doorway was installed between his second floor office and the hotel giving Pendergast a convenient, if not clandestine, entry. Out of town visitors to Pendergast's office frequently stayed at the Monroe Hotel. After Pendergast's release from prison for income tax evasion, a Federal Court ordered the doorway to be sealed and barred Pendergast from any further political activity.²⁷ With its link to Pendergast and the Democratic Party, this hotel is highly representative of working class hotel accommodations.

²⁷ Sally F. Schwenk, "Hotel owned by Pendergast slated for demolition by city," *Explore Kansas City* 9 April 1999, 8.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

I. Name of Property Type:
Two-part Commercial Block Hotel

II. Description:

All the extant hotels located in the 1900 block of Main Street are characterized by the same architectural vocabulary and construction methods. The Midwest, Monroe and the Rieger hotels, ranging in height from three to five stories, featured prominent storefronts at the main façade (subsequently altered), double-hung, sash fenestration set in three and divided by spandrels between floors. Terra cotta was used to embellish the main façade from the storefront level and often, through the upper stories, thereby setting off the primary façade from the secondary elevations. The cornice line typically features bracketing and more than often, a denticulated bandcourse below the parapet wall. The secondary facades are either punctuated with double-hung, sash fenestration or simply read as a masonry wall.

The overall design of these hotels reflect the Two-Part Commercial Block style, "the most common type of composition used for small and moderate-sized commercial buildings throughout the country."²⁸ As described by Longstreth:

This type of building is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones. These zones may be similar, while clearly separated from one another; they may be harmonious, but quite different in character; or they may have little visual relationship. The two-part division reflects differences in use inside. The single-story lower zone, at street level, indicates public spaces such as retail stores...or hotel lobby. The upper zone suggests more private spaces, including offices, hotel rooms...The type has been used to accommodate a wide range of functions and is readily found in almost all forms of commercial development, dominating the core of small cities and towns as well as many neighborhood commercial areas.²⁹

Popular from the 1850s through the 1950s, the Two Part Commercial Block has its roots in the shop-house form of Roman antiquity.³⁰ The unobtrusive examples from the early decades of the 20th century do not display many references to past styles; however they do have similarities in design and materials. Generally speaking:

Diverse expressions in design were achieved by a steadily growing array of building materials. Brick came in numerous colors and textures...A number of substitute materials appeared on the

²⁸ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*. (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1987), 24.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

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market... Terra cotta, which could be cast into any form and fired in almost any color, was considered an elegant substitute veneer and became widely used.³¹

III. Significance:

The Two-Part Commercial Block Hotels are significant to the historic contexts identified and documented in Section E of this multiple property form specifically for 1) their role in providing affordable, convenient and comfortable lodging for working class clients and 2) their impact on the streetscape and economics of 19th and Main streets. Whereas the hotels of Kansas City's Central Business District reflect the opulent lifestyle of the upper class during the era of the "grand hotel," the hotels of the Midtown area represent the values and standards in hotel accommodations offered to the working class. Little notice was given to the construction of these hotels, none of which stood more than five stories in height. Instead the press turned public attention to the luxury high-rise hotels and buildings designed by well-known architects such as Sanneman and Van Trump and Smith Rea and Lovitt. However, these firms were also responsible for the design of the working-class hotels found along 19th and Main Street.

This property type has significance primarily in the area of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. Other areas that may be relevant include TRANSPORTATION and COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT. The Two-Part Commercial Block hotels are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C.

IV. Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the characteristics and qualities described above must be sufficiently illustrated and the degree of integrity required must be sufficient to support the significance of the building's specific contribution to the historic context identified in Section E. Aspects of integrity to be considered include location, setting, design, workmanship,

³¹ *ibid*, 41.

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materials, associations with the established historic context and ability to convey feelings relating to its associative, artistic, and/or information value.

This requires that the Working Class Hotel located on 19th and Main Street retain the composition, architectural vocabulary, and materials of the primary façade. Because the primary façade is characterized by its two-part design, brick walls, terra cotta embellishments and parapet wall, the retention of these defining elements and their component parts is required. Due to the age of these buildings and their continued use, a certain degree of deterioration and loss is to be expected. Reversible alterations, such as the loss or removal of the original storefront elements, ornamental detailing, replacement of doors, window sashes and framing elements and scarring of architectural elements are common and do not necessarily diminish a building's contribution to the historic contexts.

Interior changes, including loss of ornamental detailing and trim, specific architectural elements, and even the rearrangement of floor plans may not be significant to the building's perceived contribution to certain historic contexts, if the defining exterior design elements, location, setting, siting, or contribution to the streetscape remains intact.

To be eligible under Criteria A and C, the building must retain the majority of the original exterior brick walls, in particular the primary façade; significant character-defining elements must remain intact and alterations to the building are reversible and the historic character of the property can be easily restored. Generally speaking, the overall feeling or character of the building for the time period in which it was erected is intact.³²

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³² These registration requirements were based on requirements as discussed in Sally F. Schwenk, "Historic Colonnade Apartments of Kansas City," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, n.d.

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The Multiple Property Documentation Form includes three buildings constructed between 1915 and 1920 located in the 1900 block of Main Street, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

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H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

This multiple property listing, "Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets," Kansas City, Jackson County, is based upon the Midtown Survey, the Survey Plan for Kansas City, Missouri, and individual survey forms completed by Landmarks Commission, Kansas City, Missouri. The multiple Property Listing, "Historic Colonnade Apartments of Kansas City, Missouri, prepared by Sally Schwenk, Historic Preservation Services, LLC, provided valuable insight into the preparation of this document. The Kansas City Public Library also provided valuable secondary documentation.

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STATE OF MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Bob Holden, Governor • Stephen M. Mahfood, Director

www.dnr.mo.gov

March 17, 2004

Ms. Carol Shull
United States Dept. of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" Street NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find enclosed the following Multiple Property Documentation Form and three related individual registration forms from Missouri for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri

Midwest Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri

Monroe Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri

Rieger Hotel
Jackson County, Missouri

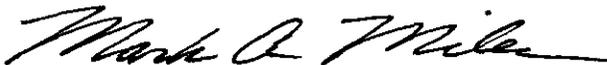
Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on November 14, 2004. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register. No objections, notarized or otherwise, were received for the above referenced nomination.

The City of Kansas City, as part of its responsibilities as a Certified Local Government, was provided an opportunity to review the proposed nomination prior to its presentation to the state review board. Letters from the Mayor and the Kansas City Landmarks Commission supporting the nomination are enclosed.

If you have any questions concerning this submission, please contact Tiffany Patterson of my staff at 573/751-7800, tiffany.patterson@dnr.mo.gov, or at the State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

Sincerely,

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



Mark A. Miles, Director and
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures: as stated

Integrity and excellence in all we do



CITY OF FOUNTAINS
HEART OF THE NATION



KANSAS CITY
MISSOURI

Office of the Mayor

Mayor Kay Barnes

29th Floor, City Hall
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2778



(816) 513-3500
Fax: (816) 513-3518

November 5, 2003

Stephen M. Mahfood
Missouri State Historic Preservation Officer and
Director, Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176

NOV 13 2003
HPP

Dear Mr. Mahfood:

As Mayor of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, a Certified Local Government, I have reviewed the nomination to the **National Register of Historic Places** for the Multiple Property Listing for the *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri*. In my opinion these landmarks are of historical significance, and I recommend their nomination to the National Register.

Notification of intent was mailed to the property owners on October 15, 2003, and a public notice was printed in the *Pulse* on October 9, 2003. The Landmarks Commission office received no letters or calls in opposition to the nomination.

The Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri, reviewed the nomination for the Multiple Property Listing of the *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri* to the **National Register of Historic Places**. They also recommended approval of the nomination with the recommendation that the preparer explore the association of the working class who lodged in the area with the political machine of Tom Pendergast, a key figure of the Democratic Political Party in Kansas City during the 1920s and 1930s whose office was located on the 1900 block of Main, and if appropriate include the findings in the nomination.

Sincerely,

Kay Barnes

cc: Wayne Cauthen, City Manager
Vicki L. Noteis, AIA, Director of the City Planning & Development Department
Bradley Wolf, Administrator, Landmarks Commission
Cydney E. Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield of Architectural and Historical Research, LLC; Nomination Preparers

CITY OF KANSAS
CHARTERED 1850KANSAS CITY
MISSOURI**City Planning and Development Department****Planning, Preservation and Urban Design
Landmarks Commission**26th Floor, City Hall
414 E. 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2795(816) 513-2902
Fax: (816) 513-2899

October 30, 2003

Stephen M. Mahfood
Missouri State Historic Preservation Officer and
Director, Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176

Re: **National Register Nomination for the *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri***

Dear Mr. Mahfood:

As Chair of the Landmarks Commission of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, a Certified Local Government, I am pleased to inform you that the Commission has reviewed the Multiple Property Documentation Form for the **National Register of Historic Places** for the *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri*. In the opinion of the Landmarks Commission, these landmarks are of historical significance, and we recommend acceptance of the multiple property documentation form for the National Register.

The nomination was reviewed by the Landmarks Commission at a regularly scheduled hearing on October 24, 2003. Notification of intent was mailed to the property owners on October 15, 2003, and a public notice was printed in the *Pulse* on October 9, 2003. The Landmarks Commission office received no letters or calls in opposition to the nomination.

At the October 24, 2003 hearing of the nomination, the Landmarks Commission made a motion to **recommend** to the State Advisory Council on Preservation the following:

Stephen M. Mahfood

October 30, 2003

Re: *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri*

Page Two

Finding that the Multiple Property Documentation Nomination for *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri* defines a prominent property type that reflects important aspects of the City's cultural history and development. The Working Class Hotels Property Type reflects the planning, social and architectural concepts of commerce and construction in Kansas City, Missouri between 1914 and 1920. Therefore the Commission recommends **ACCEPTANCE** of the Multiple Property Documentation Nomination Form for *Working Class Hotels at 19th and Main Streets, Kansas City, Missouri*. They also recommended approval of the nomination with the recommendation that the preparer explore the association of the working class who lodged in the area with the political machine of Tom Pendergast, a key figure of the Democratic Political Party in Kansas City during the 1920s and 1930s whose office was located on the 1900 block of Main, and if appropriate include the findings in the nomination.

Sincerely,



William L. Bruning

Chair, Landmarks Commission

cc: The Honorable Kay Barnes, Mayor
Wayne Cauthen, City Manager
Vicki L. Noteis, AIA, Director of the City Planning & Development Department
Bradley Wolf, Administrator, Landmarks Commission
Cydney E. Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield of Architectural and Historical Research, LLC; Nomination Preparers





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WISLA

MEGER





