

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Chouteau Apartments/Parkway Dwellings

and/or common Chouteau Condominiums

2. Location

street & number 4937-43 Laclede Avenue not for publication

city, town St. Louis vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state Missouri code 29 county City of St. Louis code 510

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: conversion

to residential condominiums

4. Owner of Property

name Ellen and Bruce White, E. W. Ellermann, and F. Lee Zingale

street & number 8029 Clayton Road

city, town St. Louis vicinity of state MO 63117

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis City Hall

street & number Market Street at Tucker Boulevard

city, town St. Louis, state MO 63103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title 1. Architectural Survey of the Washington University Medical Center Area has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date December 1981  federal  state  county  local

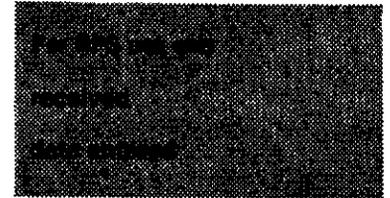
depository for survey records Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.  
706 Chestnut Street, Room 1217

city, town St. Louis state MO 63101

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2. Missouri State Historical Survey  
June 1982  
Historic Preservation Program  
Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
P. O. Box 176  
Jefferson City,

State

MO 65102

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Item #10 Continued. Verbal Boundary Description.

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of Laclede to the property line which divides 4943 and 4947 Laclede; thence turning north; continue along said property line 100 feet to the north property line of 4943-27 Laclede; thence turning east, continue along said property line 200 feet to its intersection with the west side of South Court; thence turning south, continue 100 feet along said side of South Court to point of origin.

# 7. Description

## Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

## Check one

unaltered  
 altered

## Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Chouteau Apartments (Parkway Dwellings) consist of four identical red brick buildings four stories high which were constructed in 1909 at a cost of one hundred thousand dollars. Designed by St. Louis architects Mauran, Russell & Garden, the two story "double-decked" plan of each of the sixteen units was the first to be built in the city.

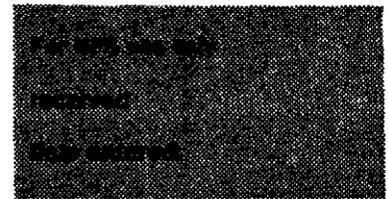
Sheltered by tall trees arching over the sidewalk, the vine-clad Chouteau Apartments seem quietly removed from nearby busy, urban streets. The four, modestly scaled red brick buildings are uniformly set back on gently rising, terraced lawns enclosed by simple wrought-iron fencing. (Photo #1.) Recalling stately Georgian town houses, the apartments are distinguished by fine classical proportions which gain effect through restrained detailing. (Photo #2.) The buildings are constructed of reinforced concrete faced with fine-grade pressed brick employed as rustication on first story facades; a light gray stone water-table and stringcourse further demark lower story divisions. Facade entrances, featuring stone enframements fashioned into classical entablatures, are surmounted by second and third story, center-bay windows with splayed brick keystone arches. (Photo #3.) Multi-paned French doors open to balconies which punctuate second and third stories. (Roofs covering third story balconies appeared to be later additions as do the filigree wrought-iron vertical supports.) Facade windows are divided into six or eight lights over one and employ stone sills and brick lintels. The architects' interest in the aesthetic potential of brick is revealed in simple brick geometric friezes employed above fourth story windows; a metal cornice embossed with egg and dart motifs surmounts the friezes. (Photo #3.)

East and west (side) elevations have smaller windows with stone sills and row-lock arches. North (rear) double-hung sash windows are paired under row-lock arches. Reinforced concrete fire escape/porches (badly deteriorated) extend from the rear elevation of each apartment. Sixteen concrete block garages (built in 1925) stand behind the buildings.

Both the exterior and the interior of the Chouteau Apartments fulfilled early twentieth century edicts of design which claimed that the "success of an apartment house depends on its plan . . . . The more like a private house the apartment is in the arrangement and size of rooms, the better it is . . . . [Apartments] must be simple in the extreme, inconspicuous, but dignified, in good taste, and, above all else, well built." The Chouteau Apartments introduced St. Louis' earliest use of a duplex plan, appealing for its resemblance to a private house and for its functional efficiency. Advantageously sited, principal rooms receive generous light and ventilation from the southern exposure. Each apartment consists of approximately twelve hundred square feet. First floors are divided into a living room (17 feet by 14 feet), dining room (12 feet by 14 feet, four inches) and kitchen/pantry (7 feet, 6 inches by 14 feet). Original millwork is simple and restrained, and each living room includes a gas fireplace flanked by built-in bookcases in some units. Third story living rooms open to facade balconies. Access to second floor rooms in all apartments is by stairs opening from the living room. Upper floors are divided into three

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bedrooms and one full bath. Master bedrooms have southern exposures and vary in size from 12 feet by 15 feet to 12 feet by 18 feet, 3 inches. The smallest bedroom measures 8 by 8 feet, 6 inches and was originally used as servant's quarters.

The new owners of the Chouteau Apartments have announced plans to refurbish them as condominiums; alterations include conversion of first floor pantries to half baths and replacement of deteriorated rear fire escape/porches.

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> R. W. Sexton, ed., American Apartment Houses of Today (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1926), p. 11 and p. 14.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1909 **Builder/Architect** Mauran, Russell & Garden, architects

## Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

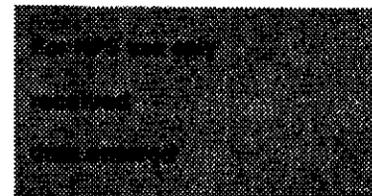
Designed in 1909 by architects Mauran, Russell & Garden, the Chouteau Apartments (Parkway Dwellings) introduced St. Louis to a new plan and concept in apartment design. Each of the sixteen apartments featured a duplex plan--the first constructed in St. Louis. Promoted as an exclusive "private place" (traditionally reserved for single-family houses), the four apartment buildings attracted middle- and upper-income families who desired the convenience of apartment living in St. Louis' most fashionable turn-of-the-century district, the Central West End.

According to The Architectural Record in 1910, the design of apartment buildings in America had not received "competent architectural attention" and was in need of reform. Critics lamented that too frequently design was left in the hands of professional real estate investors who resorted to "needless embellishment," attracting tenants with sham, ornamental facades rather than promoting "convenience of plan, substantial construction, the safety of the inmates in the event of fire."<sup>1</sup> A year earlier, however, the St. Louis Republic featured an article on local apartment design which proclaimed that St. Louis was gaining national recognition for its advances in apartment design:

Already apartment-house buildings in this city have reached such a high state of perfection that prospective builders from other cities are coming here on tours of inspection. They pick out the many attractive features of locally planned structures and take them away to include them in plans and specifications of their own buildings.<sup>2</sup>

St. Louis architects and builders, the article explained, had made an "exhaustive study" of apartment design in the East and subsequently improved upon the Eastern models to the extent that Eastern designers were now "compelled to take pattern from their Western competitors."<sup>3</sup> Spurred by a shortage of servants in the city, apartment building in St. Louis was a recent phenomena in 1909. Its growing popularity, however, reflected a national trend in which apartment living was becoming an attractive alternative to homeownership for increasing numbers of middle- and upper-income families. The "modern" St. Louis apartment appealed to the "small-salaried man and the better-off head of a family alike"; it offered efficient design which minimized "drudgery" of housekeeping and reduced operating expenses, yet preserved important "home-life" qualities of the single-family house.<sup>4</sup>

Among the innovative design features singled out for discussion by the St. Louis Republic was the duplex plan of the Parkway Dwellings located at 4937-4943 Laclede Avenue. Acclaimed as a "new departure in apartment-house

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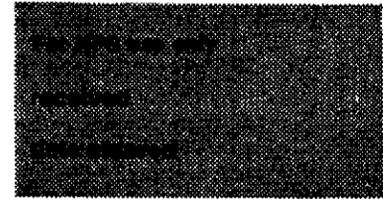
Continuation sheet Chouteau Apartments—St. Louis Item number 8

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building; the distinctive "double-decked" plan of each of the sixteen units was advertised as the first to be built in St. Louis. The plan enhanced the apartments with a decidedly home-like appearance and eliminated the conventional dark, long-hall plan. In other ways as well, the Parkway Dwellings exhibited the most advanced thinking in apartment design. The exterior design departed from an elaborate facade treatment popular at the time but condemned by The Architectural Record as a "layer of tawdry veneer which lasts long enough to make its impression on the prospective victim."<sup>5</sup> The modest scale, sparing use of ornament and unpretentious materials of the Parkway Dwellings fulfilled design ideals strongly advocated by apartment critics but seldom found in contemporary design. Their reinforced concrete and tile wall construction, "absolutely fireproof", was a significant safety feature not always required by urban building codes.

Located one block east of Forest Park (site of the 1904 World's Fair), the Parkway Dwellings were among the earliest apartments constructed in the Central West End. When the apartments were built, residential development was extremely sparse in City Blocks fronting Forest Park; City Block 3884 where the Parkway Dwellings stand was vacant with the exception of the Monticello Hotel (demolished) built shortly before the Fair and one apartment building (the "ABC's") constructed in 1906 on Kingshighway. One block northeast of the Parkway Dwellings large, single-family houses filled the blocks on West Pine. However, the appearance of apartment buildings in no sense diminished the residential quality of the neighborhood. For St. Louisans a special appeal of the Parkway Dwellings was cultivated through a domestic image peculiar to St. Louis: the "private place." Devised as a private zoning instrument through deed restrictions controlling street use, house cost, type of occupancy, etc., the private place had become St. Louis' formula for development of small, exclusive neighborhoods of single-family gentility. Press releases announcing construction plans for the Parkway Dwellings described the project as a new "place" on "highly restricted property" which would be created by a private street cut through the apartment site "east and west, beginning at Euclid Avenue."<sup>6</sup> The Parkway Dwellings would be the latest addition to the Central West End's virtual monopoly of prestigious private places and the first multi-family complex established as a "place". (See Site Plan.)

The success of the design and concept of the Parkway Dwellings can be attributed to an alliance of St. Louis blue-stocking investors and professional architects. The apartments were financed by the Parkway Apartments Co., incorporated in Missouri, March 19, 1909, shortly before construction began. The company's three stockholders, Edward C. Dameron, Jesse D. Dana and Erastus Wells, were members of the city's business elite who previously had collaborated on other apartments in the Central West End.<sup>7</sup> Dana and Wells were West End residents and thus had personal stakes in maintaining its high residential character. Erastus Wells, the organizer of the syndicate, was particularly well-schooled in principles of civic beauty and neighborhood pride. During the administration

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of his father (Mayor Rolla Wells) a "beautification crusade" was undertaken by St. Louis in preparation for the 1904 World's Fair which focused on improvements in the Central West End, a residential enclave of Mayor Wells' constituency.<sup>8</sup> The third stockholder, Edward C. Dameron (in 1909, a resident of Clarksville, Missouri) had been a schoolmate of Rolla Wells and was well-connected to St. Louis' leading families. The parcel on which the apartments stand (Block 55 of Peter Lindell's Second Addition) was part of a large family inheritance acquired by Dameron's step-mother from her uncle, Peter Lindell.<sup>9</sup>

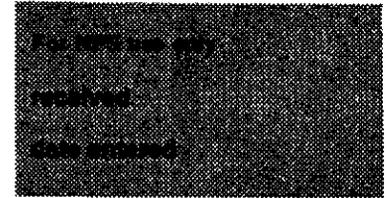
Mauran, Russell & Garden, architects of the Parkway Dwellings, were among the city's most distinguished designers of private place houses. The partnership was organized in 1900 by John L. Mauran (1866-1933), an 1889 graduate of M.I.T. who later worked in the Boston and Chicago offices of nationally prominent architects Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. In 1892, Mauran was transferred to St. Louis where the Boston firm already had received important commercial and residential commissions. Both Ernest J. Russell (1870-1956) and Edward G. Garden (1871-1924) were associated with Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge in Chicago before joining their St. Louis staff in the 1890s. By 1909, Mauran, Russell & Garden's designs were leaning toward strong, simple forms with understated historic detailing. The firm's preferred material was St. Louis brick frequently employed as a major ornamental motif and revealed for its natural beauty. Two buildings of 1906, the Racquet Club and Second Baptist Church, along with the Parkway Dwellings exploit these qualities.

From their opening in September 1909, the Parkway Dwellings enjoyed a high rate of occupancy. Early residents included corporate presidents, directors, managers and superintendents, bank and government officers, lawyers, salesmen, a landscape architect and a stockbroker. In 1916, the apartment site was platted as part of the Dameron Subdivision of City Block 3884. At that time, the east/west "private Street" (projected in 1909, but never laid out) was opened as a public street, Buckingham Court (See Site Plan.); by the mid-1920s, the subdivision was filled with other low-rise apartment buildings. When the Parkway Dwellings were sold in 1919 to Auguste Chouteau, Sr. (namesake and direct descendent of one of St. Louis' eighteenth century French founders), it was reported that the apartments yielded an annual rental income of thirteen thousand dollars or approximately sixty-seven dollars per month from each unit.<sup>10</sup> A few years later the name Parkway Dwellings was dropped in City Directories and the buildings were listed as the Duplex Apartments. Since then they have also commonly been known as the Chouteau Apartments. (Auguste Chouteau, Jr. has been a resident of the apartments for forty-five years.)

Over the years the Chouteau Apartments have been fortunate in escaping the fate of many older apartments whose exteriors have been defaced and interior plans carved into smaller units. Careful renovation of the apartments will preserve an important milestone in the development of St. Louis' historic housing stock.

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Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>H. W. Frohne, "The Apartment House," The Architectural Record 27 (March 1910): 207-213.

<sup>2</sup>St. Louis Republic, 19 September 1909, Part V, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. (Occasionally, the St. Louis Republic indulged in boosterism.)

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Frohne, p. 209.

<sup>6</sup>St. Louis Republic, 24 March 1909, p. 10. It was also reported that the four buildings would be the "nucleus of a group of ten structures which will eventually cost a million dollars." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 4 April 1909, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>All three men were stockholders in the Kingshighway Apartment Co. which was incorporated in 1908. Dana was a stockholder and President of Revere Realty Co., incorporated in 1906 when the company built the "ABC" Apartments at 4 through 20 North Kingshighway. Revere Realty, the Kingshighway Apartment Co. and the Parkway Apartment Co. were located in the same office.

<sup>8</sup>Julian S. Rammelkamp, "St. Louis: Boosters and Boodlers," Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society 34 (July 1978): 204-207.

<sup>9</sup>Dameron's step-mother, Elizabeth McCoombs Dameron, was one of bachelor Peter Lindell's ten nieces and nephews who inherited his vast estate valued at nearly three million dollars and considered the largest in all of St. Louis at the time. Lindell (1776-1861) was a pioneer merchant who came to St. Louis from Maryland in 1811. Lindell's Second Addition comprised 412 acres, acquired by him in the early nineteenth century. The Addition was bounded on the east by Grand Avenue, on the west by Kingshighway, on the north by Olive Street and on the south by Duncan Avenue.

<sup>10</sup>St. Louis Republic, 4 May 1919, Part 7, p. 1.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Clayton, MO

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

1	5	7	3	6	1	8	0	4	2	8	1	0	2	1	5	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing									

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing									

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Chouteau Apartments are located in City Block 3884A. Beginning on the northwest corner of South Court and Laclede Avenue, continue west 200 feet along the north side

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By © 1982, Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

name/title) Mary M. Stiritz, Research Associate

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc. date 18 June 1982

street & number 706 Chestnut Street, Room 1217 telephone (314) 421-6474

city or town St. Louis state MO 63101

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

### State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Director, Department of Natural Resources and  
title State Historic Preservation Officer date

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

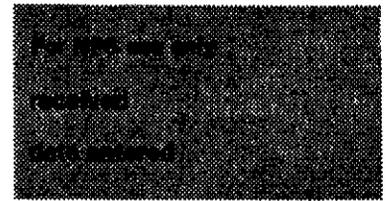
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation sheet Chouteau Apartments-St. Louis Item number 9

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Bibliography

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- "The Apartment House Up to Date." The Architectural Record 22 (July 1907).
- "The Duplex Apartment House: A Comparison of the Newest Buildings of This Type." The Architectural Record 29 (April 1911): 327-334.
- Frohne, H. W. "The Apartment House." The Architectural Record 27 (March 1910): 205-217.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Contemporary Apartment Buildings in New York City." The Architectural Record 28 (July 1910): 61-70.
- Jones, Maureen. "4927-42 Laclede Avenue." Project for Landmarks Association with St. Louis University, 7 December 1981.
- The Realty Record and Builder 16 (March 1909).
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 4 April 1909, p. 10.
- St. Louis Republic, 24 March 1909, p. 10; 19 September 1909, Part V; and 4 May 1919, Part 7, p. 1.
- Sexton, R. W., ed. American Apartment Houses of Today. New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., 1926.

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Continuation sheet CHOUTEAU APARTMENTS/PARKWAY DWELLINGS  
Item number 11

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- 2) James M. Denny, Chief, Nominations-Survey  
and State Contact Person  
Department of Natural Resources  
Historic Preservation Program  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

August 1982  
314/751-4096

CHOUTEAU APARTMENTS  
St. Louis, Missouri

UTM Reference Points:

15/736180/4280250

Quadrangle, Clayton, MO  
Scale, 1:24,000





**Photo Log:**

Name of Property: **Chouteau Apartments**

City or Vicinity: **St. Louis [Independent City]**

County: **St. Louis [Independent City]** State: **MO**

Photographer: **Mary M. Stirtz (unless otherwise noted)**

Date

Photographed: **May 1982 (unless otherwise noted)**

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

1 of 3. 4941 and 4943 Laclede, S (principal) elevation, facing N.

2 of 3. 4937-43 Laclede, S elevation. Photostat from drawing by Stan McKay, 1982.

3 of 3. 4937 and 4939 Laclede, S (principal) elevations, facing NE.





