

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

New Designation x for: Historic Landmark x Historic District
Amendment of a previous designation
Please summarize any amendment(s)

Property name Texas Gardens Apartments
If any part of the interior is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.

Address 1741 28th Street, S.E.

Square and lot number(s) Square 5635, Lot 803

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7B

Date of construction 1943-1944 Date of major alteration(s) N/A

Architect(s) Charles E. Marzadro Architectural style(s) Art Deco

Original use Apartment Building Present use Same

Property owner Texas Gardens Partners, LLC

Legal address of property owner 4515 36th Street South, Arlington, VA 22206

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) Texas Gardens Partners, LLC/MED Developers

If the applicant is an organization, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 4515 36th Street South, Arlington, VA 22206/(703) 403-1752

Name and title of authorized representative Bruce Finland, Managing Partner

Signature of representative  Date 9-20-17

Name and telephone of author of application EHT Traceries, Inc./ (202) 393-1199

Date received
H.P.O. staff

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Texas Gardens Apartments

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C., 1880-1945

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1741 Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E.

City or town: Washington State: DC County: _____

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide ___local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___C ___D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

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

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete and brick

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Located at 1741 Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E. in Square 5635, Lot 803 (historically Lots 1-8), the Texas Garden Apartments is a three-story, brick and concrete, compound-plan apartment building that was designed in the Art Deco style in 1943. The building is constructed on a concrete foundation, and is faced in six-course, common bond brick masonry. It features a raised basement and is capped by a flat roof. Its compound plan consists of a T-shaped main block, oriented parallel to Texas Avenue, S.E., with three large projections extending from the eastern end of the principal mass. Two of these projections, canted in relation to the building's long axis, form the east elevation along Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E. This elevation is broken by a recessed bay containing the building's main entrance. A large, third projection faces the alley located to the north of the building. The entire southeastern corner of the building presents a rounded wall surface, characteristic of the Art Deco style. The apartment building is situated on a 0.5-acre gently-sloping site. It is bound to the north by a public alley, to the south by Texas Avenue, S.E., to the east by Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., and to the west by Lot 804 (historically, Lots 9-10). A small parking lot is located directly to the north of the building, south of the alley.

Exterior

Overall, the building is approximately 190 feet long by 100 feet wide and stands forty feet tall. Its Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., or east, elevation is divided into eight bays, and its Texas Avenue, S.E., or south, elevation is divided into eighteen bays. The building's rear, or west,

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elevation is six bays wide, while the north, parking lot-facing, elevation is divided into fifteen bays with a brick-faced chimney stack. The north-facing projection is two bays wide.

Two entrances to the building are located within its Texas Avenue, S.E., and Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., elevations. These entrances are both accessed by concrete walkways that connect with the public sidewalk. Both entrances feature low concrete stoops with metal railing and each consists of a contemporary, single-leaf, single-pane, glass and aluminum door with a two-pane rectangular sidelight. Both of these entrances are sheltered by a contemporary, domed canvas awning. The main, or Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., entrance is flanked by two banks of forty glass blocks arranged in ten four-block rows. The Texas Avenue, S.E., entrance features a four-pane wood fanlight and an arched brick surround. In addition, the building contains two basement-level entrances: one is located in the canted, one-bay elevation that connects the alley-facing and northernmost Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., projections, while the other is located on the north elevation. Both are accessed by a set of descending concrete steps.

The building presents varying fenestration. All of the building's windows feature concrete sills and soldier course brick lintels. The first- through third-story windows are primarily wood sash, double-hung six-over-six, ranging from single to paired in form. In a few instances, such as the windows located above the building's main entrance, these have been replaced with double-hung, vinyl, one-over-one windows. The basement level windows vary from the standard, wood six-over-six, to vinyl, one-over-one, and vinyl sliding replacement windows.

A collection of character-defining masonry elements provides architectural details to the building's exterior treatment. Two vertical strips of flush brickwork, resembling piers and communicating the influence of the Art Deco style, extend the full height of the Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., entrance bay, terminating just above the roofline. These vertical masonry "piers" begin to either side of the entrance, rising upward, and are composed of a single stretcher course with a single header-course outer border, with an inner area of headers located between them. Decorative courses of brickwork, laid in a parquet pattern, run between the basement, first, second, and third stories on all of the building's elevations. In addition, the brick lintels of the third story windows join to form a continuous soldier course that wraps around the building. Above this course, the Texas Avenue, S.E., and Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E., elevations feature decorative rectangular masonry inset panels set at intervals. These panels are composed of a slightly darker brick delineated by a header course border.

Interior

Few alterations have occurred to the building's public spaces, including the corridors and stairwells, which have retained their original materials and finishes. The building has two main corridors off the main stairwell: a long corridor that lies on the east-west axis and a shorter north-south corridor. There are two stairwells, one off the main lobby and the other approximately halfway down the east-west corridor. Both of the stairwells retain their original materials, including terrazzo flooring, baseboards, plaster walls, and iron railings. Save for the first floor, the public corridors are fairly simple and lack decorative elements.

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The corridors in the basement have simple, poured concrete floors and painted wood baseboards. The first-floor corridors and lobby have coved, crown molding, and sections are divided by plaster, ogee arches. The main lobby, off the Twenty-Eight Street, S.E., entrance, has a black and red terrazzo boarder, surrounding a white terrazzo interior with a black and red terrazzo, seven-point star. The second and third floor corridors have terrazzo flooring and baseboards and plaster ogee arches, but no crown molding.

There are currently forty-nine apartments that are a mix of studio, one, and two-bedroom units. Each unit features a single bathroom, kitchen, and varying sizes of living areas. All of these spaces feature a mix of original and contemporary fabric; historic material extant in the spaces include a few wood and glass china cabinets, doors and hardware, plaster walls and arches, wood trim, and parquet flooring.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1943-1944

Significant Dates

1943-1944

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Charles E. Marzadro (Architect)

Abe Feinstein (Builder)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Texas Gardens is significant under National Register Criteria A and C. The apartment building, completed in 1944, illustrates the patterns of development that shaped the Anacostia community, specifically the construction of multi-family apartment buildings to accommodate the growing working-class population of the District during the World War II years. Architecturally, Texas Gardens represents an excellent example of the Art Deco style. Texas Gardens also serves as an example of the **Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building**, as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form *Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C., 1880-1945*. The building meets the descriptive criteria for the Conventional Low-Rise type in that it was designed and built specifically to function as a multi-family residence, contains at least five self-sufficient apartment units, is between two and four stories in height, and has a single main public entrance.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Texas Gardens is historically significant under **National Register Criterion A** in the areas of **Community Planning and Development** and **Social History**. The building contributes to the historic context of apartment building development in the District of Columbia as presented in the MPD form. The construction of purpose-built apartment buildings, such as Texas Gardens, provided a new type of housing to residents of the District. As an example of the Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building, it represents the most prevalent example of the building type constructed locally during the first half of the twentieth century. Buildings such as Texas Gardens introduced a new model for residential organization based on multi-family habitation that stood in contrast to the single-family dwellings and rowhouses of the nineteenth century. In addition, their construction represented a solution to the housing shortage experienced in the District during the 1930s and 40s, providing many residential units with an increased effectiveness of available architectural and financial resources. These buildings also permitted an efficient use of land in locations already served by public transportation and utilities, such as Anacostia, directly affecting population growth in this and other outlying areas of the District. Further, the emergence of the Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building changed the course of social and domestic trends, affecting patterns of development, social interaction, and public services in areas such as Anacostia, where building activity and community growth was traditionally structured around the single-family dwelling.

Texas Gardens is also architecturally significant under **National Register Criterion C** in the area of **Architecture**. Constructed between 1943 and 1944, the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco style of the 1930s and 40s. These are reflected in the rounded exterior wall surface of the building's southeast corner, the use of glass block, and masonry elements such as geometrically patterned brick work and the vertical brick "piers" found in the main entrance bay. In addition, the building is architecturally significant as an example of the larger purpose-built conventional apartment buildings constructed after World War I, the design of which was influenced by local zoning laws and the Garden City Movement.

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The Period of Significance for Texas Gardens is 1943-1944, which corresponds to the years during which the building was constructed.

Integrity

To ensure that the characteristics and qualities described in the MPD form are sufficiently represented, appropriate aspects of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, association, and feeling must be retained to convey its associative, artistic, and informational value. The building is still in its original location, and its main entrance and principal elevation is still oriented toward Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E. Similarly, the building has maintained its original compound plan design. Texas Gardens is set within a largely intact residential neighborhood that has retained much of its historic streetscape, characterized by detached single-family houses, small cottages, and low-rise apartment buildings constructed between the 1920s and 40s. Importantly, the building retains its key character-defining elements, such as its rounded wall surfaces, patterned masonry, and glass block, and therefore continues to convey the feeling of an early 1940s Art Deco apartment building.

Development Context

The property is located within the southeastern portion of the District of Columbia in an assemblage of neighborhoods that have been collectively referred to as the Anacostia community. The development of the Anacostia area during the mid-nineteenth century was initially stimulated by the rebuilding of the Eleventh Street Bridge in 1846 and the creation of St. Elizabeth's Hospital which began in 1853. The historic core of Anacostia, originally known as Uniontown, was first laid out in 1854 by the Union Land Association. It was intended as a suburban residential district of white working-class families, particularly those employed at the Washington Navy Yard, and restrictive covenants prevented African Americans from owning homes in the settlement. City services and infrastructure development were slow to arrive in Anacostia until the late nineteenth century. In 1890, the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge was reconstructed, linking the area to greater Washington, and furthering interest among real estate developers who recognized its potential as a suburb of rapidly-growing Washington.¹

The land on which the Texas Gardens apartment building is located was first subdivided in 1891. A group of investors consisting of sugar magnate John W. Havemeyer, Congressmen Thomas J. Clunie and Archibald M. Bliss, and New York businessman Erwin C. Carpenter purchased the land in 1889. Three years later they subdivided the tract, historically part of the Naylor Farm, to

¹ Howard Gillette, "Old Anacostia, Washington's First Suburb," in *Washington at Home: An Illustrated History of Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*, ed. Kathryn Schneider Smith (Northridge, CA: Windsor Publications, 1988), 98-100.

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form the East Washington Heights subdivision.² In 1903, Arthur Randle purchased a large portion of the stalled East Washington Heights subdivision, and renamed it Randle Highlands.³ To provide streetcar access to the subdivision Randle, in 1898, received a Congressional charter to establish the East Washington Heights Traction Railroad. The line was operational by 1905, and ran across the Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge, terminating at Minnesota Avenue, S.E.⁴

Substantive residential and commercial development; however, did not occur in the neighborhood until the mid-twentieth century. By 1919, the path of Texas Avenue had been laid out, but the squares situated to the east of Twenty-Fifth Street and to the south of Pennsylvania Avenue remained undeveloped. While building permits reveal that some construction was taking place during the 1920s in the area east of Twenty-Fifth Street, map review suggests that extensive building did not occur in this area until the World War II years and afterward. This activity was in part stimulated by the construction of a new Pennsylvania Avenue bridge in 1939, and during the 1940s the intersection of Pennsylvania and Minnesota Avenues, S.E., known as L'Enfant Square, emerged as a flourishing commercial district. This shopping district was anchored by the distinctive Art Deco-style Dobkin's clothing store at 2324 Pennsylvania Avenue.⁵

Period advertisements for Dobkin's provide insight into the character of the L'Enfant Square shopping corridor, and point to the degree to which modern design – from architecture to consumer products – was transforming the Anacostia streetscape and the American way of life during the 1930s and 40s. The store was constructed by owner Harry Dobkin in 1938, and was designed by local architect Evan J. Conner.⁶ A newspaper advertisement for Dobkin's, which appeared in October 1946, proclaimed the store "S.E. Washington's Most Complete Department Store" and Dobkin's offered a variety of merchandise which ranged from clothing to appliances.⁷ Like Texas Gardens, the striking brick two-story commercial building incorporates Art Deco elements into its design such as geometric panels and streamlining. Programs initiated by the Federal Housing Administration during the 1930s, intended to promote consumer activity through retail façade modernization, employed a spirited public relations campaign which vocally advocated for modernism in residential and commercial architecture during the Depression, in particular endorsing the streamlined aesthetic that was transforming the design of everything from automobiles and ocean liners to the packaging and design of consumer

² Jim Byers, "East Washington Heights," in *Washington at Home: An Illustrated History of Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*, 2nd ed., ed. Kathryn Schneider Smith (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 397-401; Matthew B. Gilmore and Michael R. Harrison, "A Catalog of Suburban Subdivisions of the District of Columbia, 1854-1902," *Washington History* 14, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2002/2003): 41.

³ Jim Byers, "East Washington Heights," in *Washington at Home: An Illustrated History of Neighborhoods in the Nation's Capital*, 2nd ed., ed. Kathryn Schneider Smith (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 397-401; Matthew B. Gilmore and Michael R. Harrison, "A Catalog of Suburban Subdivisions of the District of Columbia, 1854-1902," *Washington History* 14, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2002/2003): 41.

⁴ LeRoy O. King, *100 Years of Capital Traction: The Story of Streetcars in the Nation's Capital* (Washington: Taylor Publishing, 1972), 106.

⁵ Byers, 405.

⁶ District of Columbia, Inspector of Buildings, Building Permit 217342, October 11, 1938.

⁷ "Display Ad," *Evening Star*, October 29, 1946, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed January 29, 2016).

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products.⁸ Reflecting this modernization trend, an advertisement from 1947 lists Dobkin's as an authorized dealer for Philco television sets, proclaimed as the "leader" in what the advertisement describes as the "great new world" of home entertainment technology.⁹

Public transportation continued to link the residents and consumers of Anacostia to the broader District of Columbia. Transit service into the area transitioned after 1933, when the Capital Transit Company took over the operation of all street railways in the District. In addition, bus service was replacing streetcars in many parts of the District by this time.¹⁰ During the 1940s, streetcar service terminated at Fifteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., west of the river, and riders transferred to the C6 Hillcrest bus, which continued across the river to Pennsylvania and Branch Avenues. This combination of bus and streetcar service provided a vital source of transportation across the Anacostia River, connecting the commuters of Randle Highlands to the Washington Navy Yard and downtown Washington.

A Working-Class Community

Anacostia's Randle Highlands subdivision was a working-class enclave during the mid-twentieth century. The extent of available Washington, D.C., city directories from this period are fragmentary, however, the 1956 edition of *Polk's Washington City Directory* yields valuable information regarding the residents who were living in Texas Gardens at this time. In Texas Gardens, occupations of the building's residents during the 1950s ranged from clerks, military personnel, and secretaries, to salesmen, cab drivers, and telephone switchboard operators. For example, Dorothy M. Furness, single, was an office secretary in the Department of the Navy, and Walter E. Elkins, married, was a member of the U.S. Air Force. Robert E. Lee, married, was a cab driver, while Joseph E. Sanchez, married, was a counterman at General Electric Supply. Eleanor Walter, single, was a clerk at Woodward and Lothrop, Inez Walter, married, worked for the C&P Telephone Company, and Charles Gratto, married, was a teller at Riggs National Bank.¹¹ These middle-class residents of Texas Gardens were typical of the demographic segment who were living in the many Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Buildings that were being constructed in the District of Columbia during the twentieth century, and their presence speaks to the working-class character of the Anacostia community during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

Housing Patterns and Architectural Character

The "purpose-built" apartment building, based on European precedents, first arose in Washington during the mid-to-late nineteenth century, and by the mid-twentieth century, it had become the primary form of housing for the region's working-class population. The first true "purpose-built" apartment buildings were constructed in Washington beginning in the 1880s as luxury buildings for the city's elite, but beginning in the 1890s, and continuing into the early

⁸ Gabrielle Esperdy, *Modernizing Main Street: Architecture and Consumer Culture in the New Deal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 58-65, 146-48.

⁹ "Display Ad," *Evening Star*, September 26, 1947, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed January 29, 2016).

¹⁰ King, 133.

¹¹ R. L. Polk, *Polk's Washington City Directory* (Washington: R. L. Polk, 1956), 78 (streets).

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twentieth century, more modest buildings were developed for the city's middle class, who had gradually begun to embrace the concept of apartment living.¹² These purpose-built, "conventional-type" apartment buildings were usually three to four stories in height, precluding the need for an elevator. Their individual apartments were usually arranged along interior hallways, and typically included a parlor, bedrooms, a dining room, and a kitchen.¹³

During the first half of the twentieth century, particularly after World War I, the development of purpose-built apartment buildings in Washington was influenced by local zoning laws and the Garden City Movement. The District of Columbia adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1920. The law designated specific areas for apartment building construction, regulated the size of the building's footprint on the building lot, its setback from the street, as well as the amount of open space surrounding the building. A height limit was implemented in some neighborhoods as well.¹⁴ Likewise, the Garden City Movement influenced the character of multi-family residential design in the United States during the twentieth century. Ebenezer Howard, a late nineteenth-century English housing reformer, articulated the theoretical basis of the movement in advocating for the creation of low-density residential settlements within the rural landscape as an alternative to the crowding and other problems associated with urban living.¹⁵ The Garden Apartment form first appeared in America during the 1920s as an application of the principles of the Garden City Movement to multi-family housing. Garden apartment buildings, often constructed as part of multi-building complexes, are notable for their low-rise form, their placement within in a landscaped setting, and the absence of the ornate lobbies and elevators seen in the mid- and high-rise apartment buildings of the era.¹⁶ In addition to these design influences, the extension of street railway lines during the twentieth century led to the emergence of apartment building corridors in the District. Similarly, the arrival of the automobile expanded the geographic extent of apartment house construction to areas such as Anacostia.¹⁷

In Anacostia, the 1930s and 1940s brought a shift from single-family to multi-unit housing, as the region experienced a dramatic influx of new government and defense workers during this period. Between 1930 and 1940, the District's population grew from 486,869 to 663,091. By 1950 the population of the greater metropolitan area had reached 1,464,089. This need for increased housing units resulted in a reduction in the size of individual apartments. To meet the demand, developers built numerous small apartment complexes in the District of Columbia, either privately financed or backed by mortgage insurance provided by the Federal Housing

¹² Emily Hotaling Eig and Laura Harris Hughes, *Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C., 1880-1945*, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Washington, DC: Traceries, 1993), E17-21.

¹³ *Ibid.*, E-21-22.

¹⁴ Mark Andrich, "The Impact of Zoning on Apartment House Development, Washington, DC, 1920-1985, unpublished research paper, George Washington University, February, 1985.

¹⁵ Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (1898; repr., Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1965), 45-50.

¹⁶ James M. Goode, *Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment Houses* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), 183-86; Emily Eig and Laura Hughes, *Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C. 1880-1945*, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Document Form, 1993, E52.

¹⁷ James M. Goode, *Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment Houses* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1988), 183-86; *Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C. 1880-1945*, E52.

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Administration.¹⁸ The results of this apartment development are reflected in Baist's 1959 real estate atlas, which depicts concentrations of apartment buildings along Minnesota Avenue, S.E., and east of Twenty-Seventh Street, S.E.

Residential development in the area is characterized by a mix of small frame and masonry houses and cottages in the Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Cape Cod and Craftsman styles, many dating to the 1920s, with later garden and larger apartment buildings in the Colonial Revival and Art Deco styles constructed on the principal streets and avenues. The architectural variety seen in the neighborhood's apartment buildings reflects the stylistic development that characterized Washington's apartment buildings during this period. By the 1920s and 1930s, the Beaux-Arts and classically-influenced styles of the early twentieth century were beginning to give way to the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles of the early modern movement.¹⁹ With its distinctive curved wall surfaces, geometric ornamentation, vertical masonry piers, and use of glass block, Texas Gardens serves as an artistically-conceived and well-designed example of the Art Deco style within the greater Washington area.

Along with the Colonial Revival, the Art Deco style, seen in the area's commercial and residential architecture, served as a unifying aesthetic for the neighborhood during the 1940s. The Art Nouveau, the Vienna Secession, Cubism, the Bauhaus school, and other turn of the century movements in the fine arts and architecture informed the development of the Art Deco, synthesized at the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes held in Paris.²⁰ The Art Deco style, reflected in the design of Texas Gardens, represented the "spirit" of the 1930s and early 1940s, and its streamlined aesthetic emphasized cleanness, smoothness, and speed. New mass-produced building materials, such as extruded aluminum, glass block, and plastics were prominently incorporated into Art Deco architecture. The defining elements of the style include geometric ornament, curved surfaces, the use of horizontal bands or grooves in the exterior wall surfaces, and the use of glass block and other modern materials.²¹ In addition to Texas Gardens (1943), other characteristic examples of the Art Deco style within the neighborhood are the previously discussed Dobkin's department store (1938), the former theater at 2533 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. designed by New York City architect John Eberson (1940), and the nearby apartment buildings located at 1521-1529 Twenty-Eighth Street (George Santmyers, 1939), 1731 Twenty-Eighth Street (Sam Novak, 1939), and 2810-2812 Texas Avenue (George Santmyers, 1941).²²

¹⁸ Frederick Gutheim, *Worthy of the Nation: The History of Planning for the Federal Capital* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1977), 229-30; Gillette, 101; Eig and Hughes, E63-64.

¹⁹ *Apartment Buildings in Washington, D.C. 1880-1945*, E56.

²⁰ Hans Wirz and Richard Striner, *Washington Deco: Art Deco Design in the Nation's Capital* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1984), 18-20.

²¹ Wirz and Striner, 19-20, 32-33, 36-37; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 464-65.

²² District of Columbia, Inspector of Buildings, Building Permit 234272, July 6, 1940; Building Permit 224575, July 11, 1939; Building Permit 219534, January 13, 1939; Building Permit 243416, May 9, 1941.

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Land Acquisition and Construction

The property, Lot 803 (historically Lots 1-8) in Square 5635, is located within the Randle Highlands subdivision. Claud Bailey purchased the undeveloped lots from Arthur Randle in 1924.²³ Thomas and Ethel Taylor subsequently acquired the property in 1931.²⁴ Abe Feinstein purchased Lots 1-8 on September 29, 1942 from the Taylors.²⁵ On July 13, 1943, Feinstein applied for a permit to construct the building, which was designed by Charles E. Marzadro. Feinstein is listed as both the owner and builder on the permit, the only one issued in the District on which his name appears. It is unclear whether Feinstein was associated with the development entity of Feinstein, Burroughs, & Korth, who worked with architect George Santmyers in northwest Washington during the 1930s. According to the permit for Texas Gardens, the steam-heated building was constructed of brick and concrete block at an estimated cost of \$100,000. The permit states that the building was originally designed with 152 rooms, accommodating forty-four families. Feinstein also completed a special application for eight "area" projections beyond the building line, two on the south elevation and six on the east, listed as measuring five feet in width, and projecting outward two feet. However, these projections were not incorporated into the final design. The building permit also includes an application for the construction of an on-grade surface parking lot, accommodating twenty-two cars, and located to the north of the building. The Inspector of Buildings conducted a final inspection of the completed building on June 21, 1944.²⁶

Post-Construction

After its construction, the building was initially managed by Nan and Porter Realty Company, who offered efficiency, one, two, and three-bedroom unfurnished apartments for rent.²⁷ By February 1944, advertisements list Brennan and Porter as the management company.²⁸ Abe Feinstein only held the property for three years, selling it in 1945 to David and Bessie Feldman and Mildred Hofberg.²⁹

The first advertisement to refer to the building as Texas Gardens ran in September 1950. At the time the building was being managed by Jess Fisher and Company, Inc.³⁰ Beginning in 1953, apartments in the building, still managed by Jess Fisher, were advertised as furnished.³¹ By 1961, the building was being managed by Harry Poretsky and Sons. An advertisement for an

²³ District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds, liber 5229, folio 355, recorded April 29, 1924.

²⁴ District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds, liber 6581, folio 356, recorded August 1, 1931.

²⁵ District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds, liber 7797, folio 581, recorded October 2, 1942.

²⁶ District of Columbia, Inspector of Buildings, Building Permit 262197, July 13, 1943.

²⁷ "Apartments Unfurnished," *Evening Star*, January 16, 1944, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

²⁸ "Apartments Unfurnished," *Evening Star*, February 20, 1944, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

²⁹ District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds, liber 8109, folio 410, recorded May 22, 1945.

³⁰ "Apartments Unfurnished," *Evening Star*, September 10, 1950, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

³¹ "Apartments Furnished," *Evening Star*, June 9, 1953, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

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unfurnished one-bedroom unit describes it as “completely redecorated.”³² Between 1961 and 1965, advertisements refer to the building only by its address. Beginning in 1966, it is again referred to as Texas Gardens.³³ No management company is named, however. Beginning in 1968, the building was managed by Shannon and Luchs.³⁴

The building was being managed by the Dismer Auxier Real Estate Company from late 1972 into the spring of 1973.³⁵ In May 1973, the Feldmans and Hofberg sold the property to the Hartford E. Bealer Development Company, who owned it until 2005.³⁶ By the fall of 1973, advertisements refer to the building as “newly decorated,” and under the management of William J. Davis, Inc.³⁷ It remained under Davis management into the 1980s.

Designer

Charles E. Marzadro was born in Italy in 1881.³⁸ In 1912, he was living in Cincinnati, Ohio and was working as an interpreter.³⁹ Social Security records indicate that he and his wife Lattie gave birth to a daughter, Emilia, in Norfolk, Virginia in 1920.⁴⁰ Their son, Charles D. Marzadro, was born in Norfolk in 1922.⁴¹ While they were obviously living in Virginia during the early 1920s, Charles and Lattie Marzadro do not appear on the 1920 federal census. In 1924, Charles E. Marzadro is listed in an Atlantic City, New Jersey directory as a builder.⁴² The 1926 edition lists him as a general building contractor, specializing in reinforced concrete construction and structural engineering.⁴³ According to the 1940 Federal Census, the only one in which he appears, Marzadro was working in the Washington, D.C., area by this time as a contractor, and was boarding at 1373 Columbia Road, N.W. His wife and children are not listed as residents in the boarding house. The census reveals that Marzadro was a college graduate, although it is unclear whether he received formal training as an architect. Despite the lack of evidence

³² “Apartments Unfurnished,” *Evening Star*, February 25, 1961, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

³³ “Apartments Unfurnished,” *Evening Star*, June 11, 1966, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

³⁴ “Apartments Unfurnished,” *Evening Star*, May 2, 1968, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

³⁵ “Apartments Unfurnished,” *Evening Star*, December 28, 1972, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

³⁶ District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds, liber 13494, folio 335, recorded June 5, 1973.

³⁷ “Apartments Unfurnished,” *Evening Star*, October 3, 1973, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

³⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940, Washington, District of Columbia, Enumeration District 410, sheet 14A, Record Group 29, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

³⁹ Williams Directory Company, *Williams’ Cincinnati Business Directory* (Cincinnati, OH: Williams Directory Company, 1912), 1296.

⁴⁰ U.S. Social Security Administration, “Social Security Application for Emilia Elizabeth Marzadro,” January 14, 1920, *U.S., Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007* [database on-line], <http://search.ancestry.com> (accessed November 11, 2015).

⁴¹ Virginia Department of Health, “Birth Certificate for Charles Drewery Marzadro,” April 10, 1922, Virginia, Births, 1864–2014. Virginia Department of Health, Richmond, Virginia, <http://search.ancestry.com> (accessed November 11, 2015).

⁴² R. L. Polk, *Polk’s Atlantic City Directory* (Philadelphia: R. L. Polk, 1924), 843.

⁴³ R. L. Polk, *Polk’s Atlantic City Directory* (Philadelphia: R. L. Polk, 1926), 68, 1044.

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regarding Marzadro's academic background, his design for Texas Gardens conveys a sophisticated understanding of both the prevailing trends in residential housing during the World War II years, and the stylistic tenets that defined the Art Deco Movement.⁴⁴

Marzadro is listed on three building permits issued in the District of Columbia. In addition to the permit for Texas Gardens, he is named as designer on a 1943 repair permit for the National Laundry Company building at 21 Pierce Street, N.W.⁴⁵ Marzadro is named as architect on a 1947 permit for a one-story brick addition onto a restaurant located at 4840 Georgia Avenue, N.W.⁴⁶ Charles E. Marzadro died in Washington in 1962.⁴⁷

Conclusion

Texas Gardens represents the evolution of apartment building design in the District of Columbia during the first half of the twentieth century, which was influenced by economic and demographic trends, zoning laws, and the Garden City Movement. As an example of the purpose-built Conventional Low-Rise apartment building, Texas Gardens was constructed to meet the challenges of housing the Washington region's rapidly expanding population during the 1930s and 1940s. Built in the Randle Highlands subdivision, part of the working-class Anacostia community which developed primarily between 1920 and 1950, Texas Gardens provided housing for a range of both single and married workers, who were indicative of Washington's economic diversification during this period. The building also embodies the defining characteristics of the Art Deco style, and serves as an excellent and noteworthy example of the early modernist aesthetic—part of a broader modernization impulse that was transforming American tastes, perceptions, and lifestyles during the mid-twentieth century.

⁴⁴ *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, 1940, Washington, District of Columbia.

⁴⁵ "Building Permits Issued in D.C. Total \$28,680," *Evening Star*, May 8, 1943, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

⁴⁶ "Building Permits," *Evening Star*, September 13, 1947, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015).

⁴⁷ "Deaths," *Evening Star*, December 3, 1962, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed November 9, 2015); "Charles Emilio Marzadro," <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=153354117&ref=acom> (accessed November 11, 2015).

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1984.

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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:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.5 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.867992 | Longitude: -76.968248 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots numbered One (1) to Eight (8), inclusive, in Square numbered Fifty-six Hundred and Thirty-five (5635) in the United States Trust Company, Trustee's subdivision known as "Randle Highlands," as per plat recoded in the Office of the Surveyor for the District of Columbia in Liber 36 at folio 20; now known for the purposes of taxation as Lot numbered Eight Hundred Three (803) in Square numbered Fifty-six Hundred Thirty-five (5635).

Boundary Justification

This is the current description of the property as it appears in the land records of the District of Columbia.

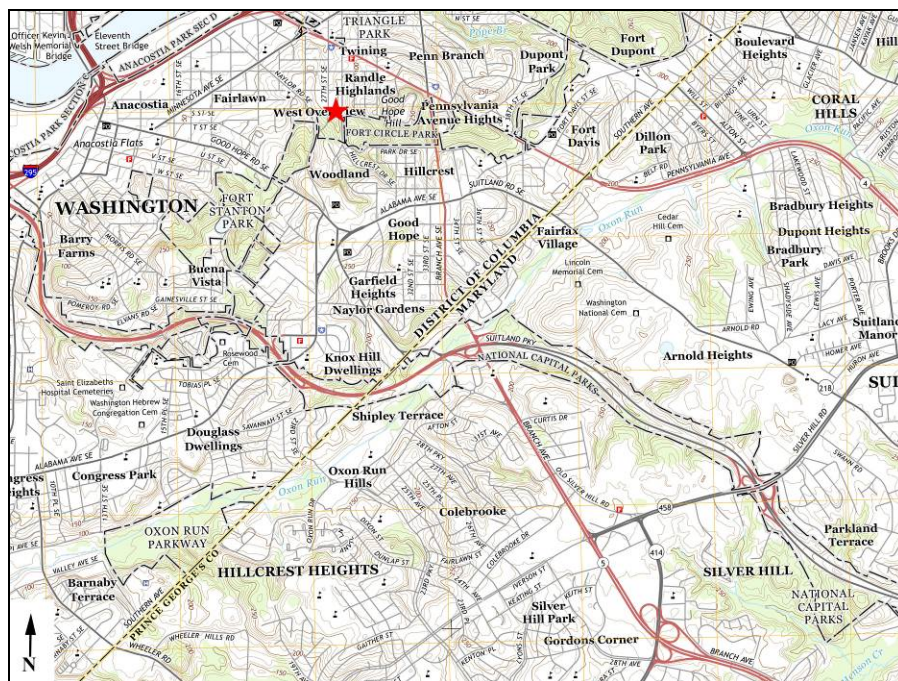
11. Form Prepared By

name/title: John Gentry, Architectural Historian
organization: EHT Tracerics, Inc.
street & number: 440 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20001
e-mail: john.gentry@tracerics.com
telephone: 202-393-1199
date: September 21, 2017

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Additional Documentation



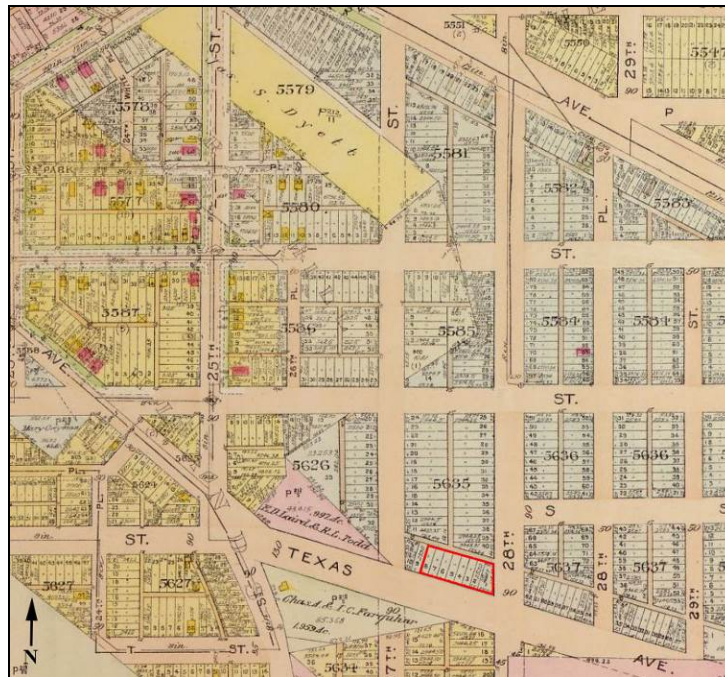
USGS Anacostia quad (1:24,000) with location of Texas Gardens annotated (U.S. Geological Survey).



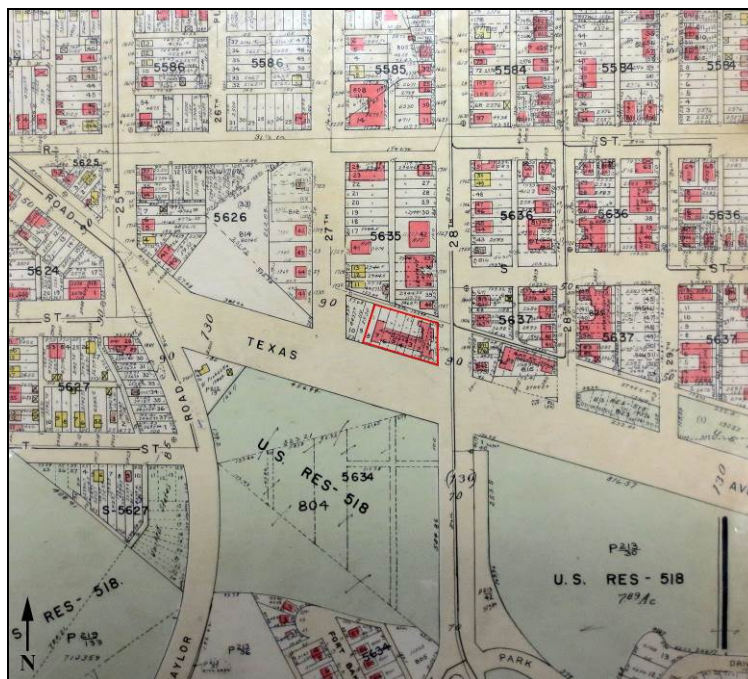
Landmark boundaries, annotated in red (D.C. Atlas).

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Detail from 1919 Baist map, with property annotated (Library of Congress).



Detail from 1959 Baist map, with property annotated (Historical Society of Washington, D.C.).

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(Answer all questions with ink)

APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO BUILD (NEW BUILDING)

Owner's name ABE FEINSTEIN Lot No. 1-700
Premises number 1741-28TH S.E. Square No. 1630
Purpose of building APARTMENTS Material of building BRICK-CONCRETE-CLAY
How many buildings? ONE Stories high? 3.25 Estimated cost \$ 100,000.00
Number of rooms 152 Number of families 12 Number of bricks 300,000
Concrete TRANSIT MIX (cu. yds.) Cubic contents of each building 418,000

To the Inspector of Buildings:
The undersigned hereby applies for permission to build by the following specifications:

Name of builder Abe Feinstein Address 701 Harrison St. NW
Name of (architect) C. E. Mangada Address 131 Woodward Bldg.
Have dimensions of all buildings and yards been properly indicated on plat? YES 5/13/43
Will any part of building be used for commercial purposes? NO Partial res at
Will there be any projections beyond the building line? YES dollars 100.00

If so, check below:

Main steps	Areas	✓
Porches	Marquises	
Bay windows	Vaults	
Show windows	Area steps	

Submit separate application for projections (see note on back).

Size of lot: Width 115 ft. Depth 216 ft.
Wall bearing _____ Skeleton _____

Height of building at front center, from sidewalk to highest point
of roof 40 ft.

Height of terrace above sidewalk 1 ft. Height of first floor above sidewalk 2 ft.

Give MATERIAL and THICKNESS of external walls: Foundation to 1st floor 16" BRICK
1st to 2d 12" BRICK 2d to 3d 12" BRICK 3d to 4th 12" BRICK 4th to 5th _____

Give MATERIAL and THICKNESS of party walls: Foundation to 1st floor _____
1st to 2d _____ 2d to 3d _____ 3d to 4th _____ 4th to 5th _____

Will the roof be pitch, mansard, or flat? Flat Roof covering SLAB

Will the front wall project beyond the front walls of other buildings in block? No

Will building be wired for electricity? Y.E.S. How will building be heated? Hot water

Number and type of elevators _____ Have elevator plans been filed? _____

Is there a sidewalk, curb, or improved roadway in front of proposed building? YES

Has the curb grade been obtained from the Engineer of Highways? yes Alley grade? yes

Has a certificate of parking been obtained from the Superintendent of Parking? Applied for

Approval of plumbing plans must be obtained from the Plumbing Inspector before this application will be considered by the Inspector of Buildings.

Abe Feinstein
(Signature of owner)

JURAT
I, C. E. Mangada, having been duly sworn, on oath depose and say that I am the authorized agent for the lawful owner of the property mentioned in the foregoing application, and that the statements contained therein are true.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____ 1943

Be sure to read instructions on back of this application.

NOTARY PUBLIC

TO BE FILLED IN BY CLERK
USE DISTRICT 10
HEIGHT DISTRICT 9
AREA DISTRICT 11
Fee \$ 240.00 (Outline)
Date received 5/13/43
Fee Applic 7/1/43

RECOMMENDED FOR PERMIT

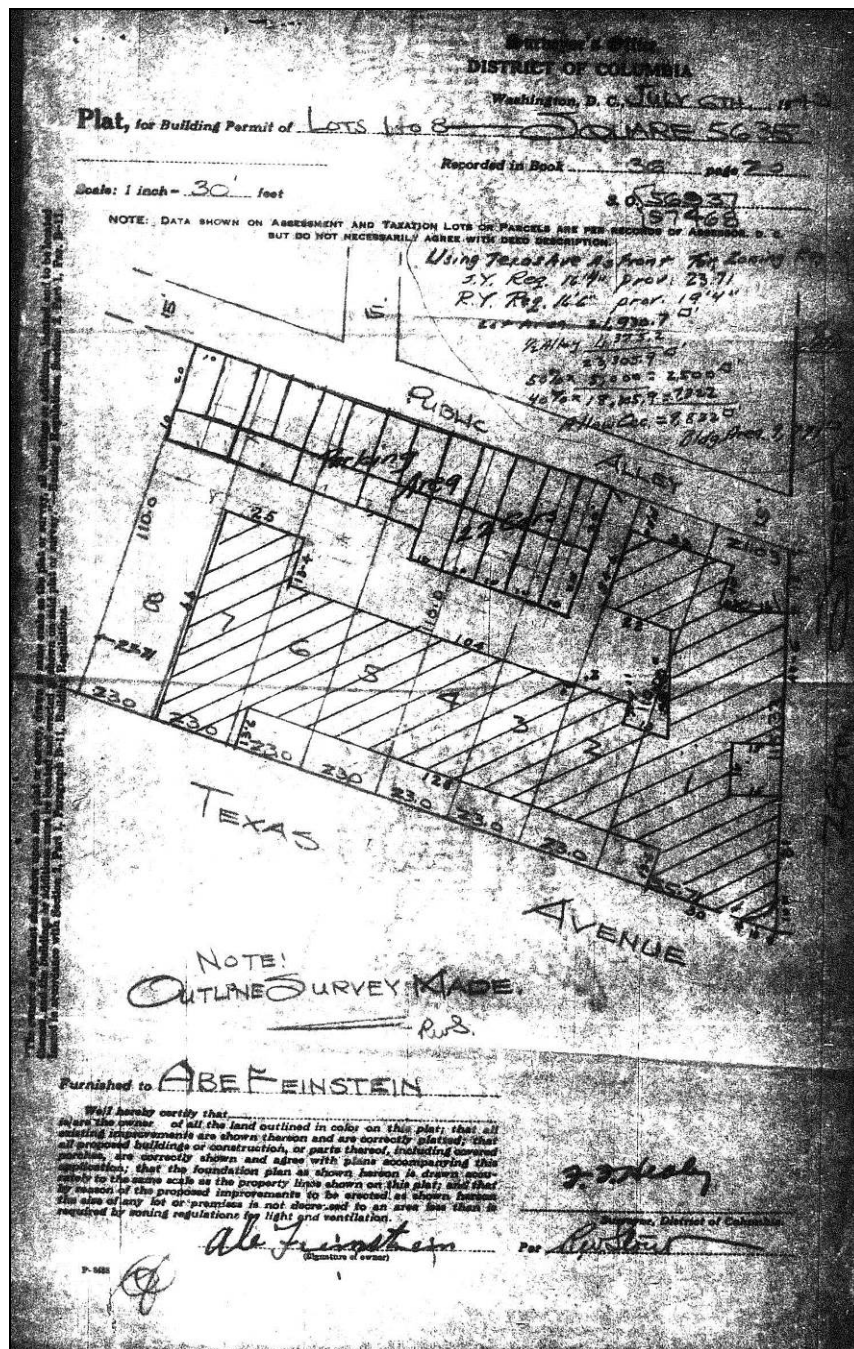
Complies with requirements of zoning regulations

PH 1-28-43

Application for Building Permit 262197, July 13, 1943 (National Archives).

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Survey filed with Building Permit 262197, July 6, 1943 (National Archives).

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Texas Gardens, photograph dated July 31, 1949 (Historical Society of Washington, D.C.)

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Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Texas Gardens Apartments

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: N/A

State: DC

Photographer: John Gentry

Date Photographed: November 20, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Texas Gardens, east elevation, looking west from Twenty-Eighth Street, S.E.

1 of 12.



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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: east entrance, looking west.

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Texas Gardens Apartments
Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: east and south elevations, looking northwest from Twenty-Eighth Street and Texas Avenue, S.E.

3 of 12.



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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: south elevation, looking west.

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: south elevation, looking northeast.

5 of 12.



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Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: south elevation, looking west.

6 of 12.



Texas Gardens Apartments
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: south entrance, looking north.

7 of 12.



Texas Gardens Apartments
Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: south elevation, looking east.

8 of 12.



Texas Gardens Apartments
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: west elevation, looking northeast.

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Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: north elevation and parking area, looking south.

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Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: junction of north elevation and projecting wing, looking southeast

11 of 12.



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Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: north elevation, projecting wing, looking south.

12 of 12.



Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.