



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

LPB 691/18

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Name and Address of Property: **Roy Vue Apartments**
615 Bellevue Avenue East

Legal Description: Lots 6, 7, 8 of Block 31, Supplementary Plat of Pontius Second Addition to the city of Seattle, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Volume 5 of Plats, page 76, in King County, Washington.

At the public meeting held on November 21, 2018 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Roy Vue Apartments at 615 Bellevue Avenue East as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standard for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

- D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or a method of construction.*
- E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.*
- F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the City and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.*

DESCRIPTION

Site and Neighborhood Context Description

The Roy Vue Garden Apartments (“Roy Vue”) building is located on the southwest corner of Bellevue Avenue E. and E. Roy Street, in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle. The site is located on the lower part of the western flank of Capitol Hill; Melrose Avenue E. defines the western edge of the block, and abuts the east edge of Interstate 5. The Roy Vue site is defined by this alley to the west, E. Roy Street to the north, Bellevue Avenue E. to the east, and three

parcels to the south which front on E. Mercer Street. The site is 194 feet by 120 feet, oriented north-south. The block is divided by a north-south running alley that connects E. Roy and E. Mercer Streets. Across the street to the north is the Bel-Roy apartment building, a designated Seattle Landmark. Next door to the south, on the northwest corner of Bellevue and Mercer, is Harry's Fine Foods, an example of small commercial uses typical of this neighborhood. Three single-family houses and a mid-twentieth century apartment building face the Roy Vue across Bellevue Avenue E. Another City Landmark is located a few blocks southeast of the subject property at 606 E. Thomas Street—the distinctive San Remo apartment building. The landmarked Republican Street Stairs once connected this part of Capitol Hill to the Cascade neighborhood at the bottom of the hill, although the Interstate 5 freeway now bisects them. Parts of the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District are located just to the north and east of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments. Bellevue Avenue was the location of one of Seattle's early streetcar lines, offering easy access to downtown. Thus, the neighborhood developed with a dense collection of apartments and small commercial buildings. This stretch of Bellevue is characterized by mature street trees; several weeping birches are planted along the street in front of the Roy Vue. A 1937 photograph suggests that no large trees were planted originally in front of the building.

Building Description

The Roy Vue sits prominently on Bellevue Avenue E. and occupies most of the block. The building was designed as a wide “U” shape in plan, with three stories enclosing a generous (50 feet by 100 feet) landscaped courtyard. The open section of the building faces west toward Lake Union, Puget Sound and city views, and the base of the “U” fronts on Bellevue, comprising the primary facade. The northwest portion of the site drops more steeply to the west than the southern portion, and so the northern arm of the building drops about a half-story below the rest of the building. The sloping site allowed for daylit basement apartments on the western ends of the building. The exterior dimensions of the building are 186 feet by 101 feet. It was constructed of a wood frame structure with brick veneer over a concrete foundation. The roof is flat with built-up roofing material. A 1924 advertisement describes the architecture as “semi-Gothic”; indeed, the English Gothic was a common architectural revival style in Seattle in the early 1920s, and the Roy Vue is a good example. The materials listed on permit records indicate “burlap brick veneer and pressed stone.” The concrete foundation wall of the building is exposed and meets the brick veneer with a cast stone drip mold. Two terra cotta belt courses are located between the first and second stories, as well as above the third story. The parapet and its three projecting gables on the Bellevue facade are outlined with terra cotta coping and are decorated with shield and quatrefoil medallions and other English gothic motifs. The north and south (side) elevations exhibit more restrained ornament while the interior courtyard facades repeat the details on the Bellevue Avenue E. elevation.

The primary entrance at Bellevue Avenue E. to the Roy Vue Garden Apartments, itself centered on the central projecting bay, is called out by an ornate Gothic arched opening framed by cast stone pilasters and an architrave decorated with a row of quatrefoil decorative elements set within a molded frame and panel motif. The entry is flanked by a pair of light sconces (not the original fixtures). The building's name is prominently displayed above the portal with raised metal letters, which were originally made from cast stone.

Once inside the vestibule of the elaborately decorated terra cotta “arcade” (the architect’s term for the passageway through the building) the lush garden courtyard views and glimpses of the city, sound, and mountains beyond are framed by the arched arcade through the ornate wrought iron gate, over a foreground of the historic garden and its central pond. Beyond the pond, a stairway leads one down to the alley and the parking garages. This entry sequence is an unusual configuration, as garden apartments would typically be entered through a courtyard opening onto the street. Passing through the arcade, into the historic garden, one negotiates a winding, picturesque concrete path through the garden to any of six separate entry doors to the individual apartments. Each apartment stair entry is identified by an ornate arched opening, framed by brick quoins and cast stone arches. Depending on the opening size, the original wood doors were designed either with a single leaf, or with two sidelights; framed transom panels provide a transition between the rectangular doors and the arched openings. The nine-light doors are framed over a two-panel base. Original electric light fixtures still hang over each entryway.

Windows

According to the tax assessor’s 1937 photograph, most windows were single hung, with multi-light sashes fixed over operable single-light sashes below. Groupings of three windows (a large window framed by two smaller windows) were typical for larger public rooms. Single windows were located in smaller rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms. The windows at service stair landings on Bellevue were differentiated from apartment windows. They were designed as multi-light casement windows below, with awning panels above pierced with pointed arched glazed panels. These windows appear to be original. All of the single-hung apartment sashes were replaced at some point with vinyl approximations of the original multi-light configurations; it appears that the original wood jambs, heads and sills remain in place.

Circulation

Each vestibule, with original mosaic tile floors, provided access to the main stairways, with two apartments typically entered from each landing. The simple but elegant stair railings of square vertical balusters, large newel posts and curving handrail all remain as originally constructed, according to historic drawing details. Situated behind the primary stairs and facing the building exterior were secondary sets of stairs. These four banks of “service porch” stairs could be accessed from the exterior of the building, with two doors on Bellevue Avenue E., two on E. Roy Street and another on the south side of the structure. Refrigerators were originally situated on landings of the service stairs (located behind the main stairs) and were accessed from each unit’s kitchen; floor drains in these locations accommodated defrosting of the early appliances. Each landing of these stairways can be noted from the street because they have casement windows with arched transom windows. Basement apartments were accessed by the main stairways or by exterior doors. The circulation scheme at the Roy Vue is noteworthy in that there are no interior corridors in the building, other than a large service corridor at the basement level which connects the utility rooms along the east side of the building to the apartments above.

Apartment Types and Features

Permit records indicate that the building originally contained 33 apartments, with ten units on each of the first, second and third floors and three additional apartments located on the basement level (on the west side of the building which, due to the grade change, were above ground level). Five maids' quarters, two laundry rooms, three storage rooms and a boiler room were also located in the basement. At some point, three of the maids' rooms on the south wing were combined into one additional apartment. The two remaining basement maids' quarters now serve as a manager's office and a guest suite for tenants. There are four two-bedroom apartments (located on second and third floors, over the arcade on the east side of the building); the remaining thirty apartments are one-bedroom units. A garage was constructed under a separate permit along the alley, beneath the courtyard garden. A *Seattle Times* advertisement noted that "under the court are 20 garages for the exclusive use of the tenants."

A 1924 advertisement describes some of the features and finishes of the newly constructed building. The descriptions reflect higher end apartments designed to offer some of the features of single-family homes, with the convenience of being close to the downtown core. Most of the apartments are very spacious (around 1,100 square feet) and bright, with generous windows offering exposure on multiple sides, and views into the courtyard garden. The interiors featured refrigerators, hardwood floors, cabinet coolers (cabinets ventilated to the outside where vegetables and other items not requiring refrigeration could be stored), ceramic tile bathroom floors and kitchen counters. A variety of plumbing fixtures were used, including an unusual bathtub, which allowed one to sit in a shortened tub with a square recess at the bottom to place one's feet. Many of these interior features from the original construction remain in place.

One interesting feature of the Roy Vue design was for the inclusion of "Murphy In-A-Dor" beds. The bed mechanisms were mounted vertically on hinges on the door jambs, allowing the beds to pivot into the room before folding down. Most one-bedroom floor plans of the Roy Vue included the large "bed closets," typically in the dining rooms, to accommodate storage and deployment of the beds. As the beds were removed over time, the generous dimensions of the former bed closets (typically about 5 feet by 8 to 10 feet) facilitated conversion to various other uses including small offices, nurseries, or additional storage.

Alterations

There have been very few alterations to the Roy Vue Garden Apartments during its 94-year history, to the interior or exterior. The exterior form and materials are intact; details such as courtyard exterior light fixtures, doors, the arcade entry features and gate are all original. The most significant change is the replacement of original, wood, multi-light sashes with vinyl sashes, though a few original wood windows remain, mostly in the basement and at the service stairs. It appears that much of the exterior cast stone and terra cotta elements have been painted. A new apartment entry (steps and doorway) to an apartment adjacent to the arcade just outside the gate was added.

A review of permit records reveals a history of maintenance, rather than major alterations.

<u>Permit</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Comments</u>
233994	1924	---	Apartment
234694	1924	---	Garage?
506152	1968	---	Wire with heat
524671	1971	---	Wire lights
540696	1971	\$4,500	Repair fire damage
B35318	1973	---	Gas burner
551983	1974	\$12,000	Repair fire damage
558961	1974	---	Repair fire damage
557947	1975	\$1,000	?

The authors of this nomination report had the opportunity to visit three apartments: one two-bedroom and two one-bedroom units. The one-bedroom units were highly intact; floor finishes, cabinets, fixtures and tile surfaces were all original. One even had a vintage wall-mounted refrigerator inside the unit. The two-bedroom unit had undergone some updating with changed floor finishes and some replaced fixtures. But the overall configurations remain intact and the units feel remarkably large and enjoy generous amounts of daylight from the large windows. Original stairway details and finishes are intact.

The concrete garage structures are also intact, with wood rollup doors that may have been added later (they were invented in 1921); one garage door has been removed and a chain link gate installed, probably to accommodate landscape and maintenance tools.

Landscape Description

The courtyard garden of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments is noteworthy for its large size, skillful design and high level of integrity. The design of the garden is integral to the architecture of the apartment building. The interaction of circulation, views, public and private spaces creates a unique experience for such a dense in-city neighborhood. The garden is private, but it provides an alluring welcome to those who are able to pass through the ornate gate leading into the arcade. It is visible from the street; passersby often stop to enjoy the garden view from the sidewalk.

The 1920s marked a rise in the burgeoning profession of landscape architecture in Seattle. It was common for nurseries to offer design and installation services, and this was the model for the Malmo & Company-specified landscape at the Roy Vue. The landscape consists of a central lawn with concrete paths linking all the apartment doors to the central entry. The path continues around the courtyard, formally enclosing the pond, which is on axis with the entry. The yard slopes downward to the west and at the low point, slightly off axis with the entry, a set of stairs connects the garden to the alley and garages below. Two pergolas once flanked the garden near its west edge, just off the perambulatory path; the remaining patios still provide places to rest and enjoy the views and the courtyard environment.

Landscape architect and former Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board member Aaron Luoma had the opportunity to view the courtyard gardens on May 30, 2018, with Historic Seattle staff and some residents of the building. He described how the landscape design complemented the architecture of the Roy Vue building, and reinforced the idea that a garden apartment building could offer a middle-class alternative to the single-family house:

One of the more unique aspects of the location and design of the courtyard is how it took advantage of the terrain to increase privacy, providing a peek-through portal for would-be tenants and the public, and grabs more of the view to the west. A similar courtyard at the same street or alley grade would have had a much different experience, and the views from this location to Lake Union and Elliott Bay would have been very beautiful. The view "borrows" additional landscape, so it felt and to some degree still feels larger than it really is. The symmetry and repeating plant types and forms help frame this view, complimenting the building architecture. Its design represents the wealth and prosperity of the 1920s, taking portions of high-styled designed gardens, reducing them in scale and applying to an urban context. Upper class residents could then enjoy the same pleasures as they did on their larger more rural estates in a compact urban setting, while being closer to work and business. Based on the history of Malmo, there would not have been many local designers and nursery suppliers until the turn of the century, nor the plant availability where one could choose landscape materials nearby. The Roy Vue represents a step in a direction that demonstrates plants could be used for more than just eating or parks, but could also enhance the quality of one's domestic life. This notion of investing in gardens and plants for aesthetic purposes extended to the middle class with the increased availability of local, relatively inexpensive plants; previously, plants were shipped long distances and were reserved primarily for the wealthy elite.

Luoma also offered his opinion on the integrity of both the "hardscape" elements and the plant materials in the garden:

The concrete path certainly matched the original layout and design, but portions of it may have been repaired in-kind over the years. The location and general shape of the water feature matches historical records, though it has been altered some to retain water with a new skim coat of concrete and power connections for operating a fountain, which is not historic.

Below is a list of the larger and older plants identified and additional notes from Luoma:

- *Photinia serrulata* (Chinese Photinia) – large broadleaf evergreen trees on the north and south ends, closest to the alley. Small white flowers. This is an uncommon variety compared to typical Photinias planted today, which you would recognize more as a shrub with distinctive new red foliage. There are older tree forms of *Photinia serrulata* in Queen Anne, Volunteer Park, University of Washington, and at the Ballard Locks, all which date to a similar era. The one in the southwest corner of the courtyard certainly could compete with one of the largest in the city according to the other ones identified in Arthur Lee Jacobson's *Trees of Seattle* book, page 253.

- *Pyracantha* (Firethorn) - evergreen shrub with orange berries, white flower, and thorns neatly trimmed on the north and south entries. Historic advertisements by Malmo list this exact plant. If they are not original, then an identical replacement to maintain the character was planted.
- *Rhododendrons var.* (Rhododendron) - the larger evergreen broad leaf shrubs in center of courtyard. Several varieties exist, and because Malmo was known for these particular plants, it is likely these date from the original planting based upon the current size, or they are at least 70 years old.
- *Pieris* (Japanese Pieris) - evergreen shrubs with narrower leaves and bell-like white flowers, similar to a Salal flower, flaky bark, adjacent to the Rhododendrons. Many varieties exist today, and it's difficult to identify which ones these are, but based upon the size, and the fact that they are very slow growing, these easily could date from the original planting.
- *Crataegus laevigata* (English Hawthorne) - deciduous tree with small berries, thorns, and distinct three rounded lobed leaves. This tree was very popular in the middle of the 20th century. It's questionable if the tree is 94 years old, however. Often used as a street tree in mid-century neighborhoods throughout Seattle, distinct for their spring flowers and very dense branch habit. They are not of particular high value today, and have fallen out of popularity as a street tree. There are native varieties that are used today more often in shoreline and native habitat restoration projects.
- *Camellia japonica* (Japanese Camellia) – broad leaf evergreen shrub, showing red, white or pink flowers. It's possible these are original.
- *Pinus mugo* (Dwarf Mugo Pine) - evergreen conifer shrubs that have outgrown the space adjacent to the smaller patio space with the 1970s-1980s era exposed aggregate concrete with wood joints. These were probably once small, compact pine shrubs as are often planted today, but most don't realize they can grow to 10 feet in as little as 10 years. The existing shrubs show new growth nearly 6" long, which implies it's not 94 years old, but probably date to when the wood pergolas were removed and the exposed concrete patios were added.
- *Syringa vulgaris* (Lilac) - deciduous shrubs with very aromatic flowers on either side of the stairs coming up from the garages. These are large shrubs, but based upon others in the Seattle area that have been observed, these are not 94 years old so it is doubtful they are original. They may be 30 to 40 years old. Typical life span is around 50 years, though in perfect conditions they could grow to be much older.

Luoma commented that he was impressed that a garden courtyard that is 94 years old would be so intact; he noted that while the integrity to the original is not perfect, this would be difficult to achieve with most shrub species. The garden has maintained the same use, and has generally incorporated in-kind, sensitive replacement plantings. The only significant change from the 1920s is the removal of the wood pergolas which once flanked the stairway to the alley and

provided a place for residents to gather. These structures were replaced with concrete pads, probably around the 1970s; the locations are still used by residents to enjoy the outdoors and to interact with other neighbors in the private garden setting.

While not necessarily significant, it should be noted that there is a narrow, planted area between the sidewalks and the building on Bellevue Avenue E., and there is also a landscaped area along the southern setback. Columnar Italian Cypress (not original plantings) punctuate the primary facade of the Roy Vue, interspersed with a low foundation hedge.

SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Context

Development of Capitol Hill's Summit District

The Roy Vue Garden Apartments is located in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood, in an area historically known as the Summit district. Today that district is bordered on the north by the Harvard-Belmont Landmark District, on the west by Interstate 5, and on the south by Denny Way and Olive Way. On the east it ends around Belmont, before the crest of the hill at Broadway.

When the Roy Vue was constructed in 1924, the neighborhood was already a built-out residential district. There were very few development opportunities for large apartments on two adjacent lots without purchasing and demolishing houses. The Roy Vue was built on the only block with three adjacent empty lots. These lots were located on a streetcar line, so it's remarkable they had remained undeveloped.

To understand the neighborhood context in which the Roy Vue was constructed it is necessary to review major forces of development that shaped it: the Pontius family's real estate plats, James Moore's Capitol Hill plat, the confluence of several regrades, and municipal planning that led to the creation of the Summit streetcar.

Platting and Street Names

The three lots on which the Roy Vue parcel was ultimately constructed were first recognized as being owned by Jacob Wiebens, who received it from the U.S. Government as part of a bounty land warrant in 1865 for his service in the "War with Mexico" in the mid-1840s. Wiebens sold it to Seattle's Rezius Pontius, who settled on it with his family in the late 1860s. The land stretched from the south shore of Lake Union east up towards what would eventually become Broadway. The Pontius family first subdivided the westernmost section in a plat titled the Fairview Homestead Association (For the Benefit of Mechanics and Laborers) in 1875. The remainder of the bounty claim was platted out in progressively eastward developments up the hill.

The Pontius family would transition from farmers to real estate brokers. They slowly sold lots in their plats over the course of several decades. The three Roy Vue lots were owned by Rezius and Margaret Pontius's daughter, Mary Pontius Dyer, until at least 1901.

Pontius's Second Addition, on which the Roy Vue would be constructed, was filed in 1882. The Roy Vue's legal description first appears in the Pontius Second Addition Supplement[ary Plat], a revision that was filed in 1890.

The Pontius Addition in 1880 first named the north-south street today called Bellevue Avenue. It first called Mary Street, named after Mary Pontius. In 1895 this street was renamed Bellevue Avenue by the city engineer in honor of Sarah and William Bell, whose land claim abutted the western edge of some length of the street. The new name came as part of a major rationalization of all of Seattle's addresses, street names and pier numbers.

A few years earlier, in 1892, the Pontius family successfully petitioned the city to rename a street two blocks east of Mary from Wall Street to Dyer Street, in honor of Mary's husband. However, Mary and Trusten Dyer divorced in a messy trial from 1894 to 1895, leaving the Pontius family with no desire to remain associated with Trusten Dyer. According to a story recounted in the *Seattle Times* in 1945, Margaret Pontius asked City Engineer R. H. Thomson directly to rename Dyer Street, saying "Take out that damn Dyer!" Dyer became Belmont Avenue in 1895, presumably also honoring the Bell family.

Throughout Seattle, significant regrading and re-engineering of roads preceded a new wave of residential construction. Later access by streetcar or cable car would further form them into neighborhoods with commercial activity and increased density. Prior to the Roy Vue's construction, these forces led to the inception of the Summit district.

Bird's eye views of Seattle from the 1870s to 1920s showed a drastic change in the area that became the Summit district. An 1878 map by Bancroft & Company portrayed the area north of Pine Street as forest, with a few buildings scattered south of Lake Union and nothing on the slopes of the hill to the east. In J. J. Stoner's 1884 map, only a couple of buildings were indicated up the slope, clearly on the edge of the developed city. The 1891 Hughes Litho Map showed that streetcar lines sandwich the neighborhood on Eastlake Avenue (named Albert Street at the time) and Broadway (De Forest)."

The 1891 map shows the area around the Roy Vue site bound by cliffs to the north and a steep but barely traversable grade to the west. The walk to Broadway to catch the Union Trunk Line (UTL) streetcar would have been less steep, but the UTL required transfer to a cable car on Madison or James to reach downtown. Residents on Mary Street presumably walked down to Eastlake to access transit in what became known as the Cascade district. Based on the concentration of buildings visible on the map, Mary Street was at the edge of that neighborhood.

Despite the difficult walk uphill or downhill to the streetcars, the neighborhood continued to grow. In 1901 Pike Street was regraded, allowing easy access to downtown for the first time in the several subareas that now comprise Capitol Hill. New streetcar connections on Pike were a

major marketing factor and perhaps the inspiration for the development of James A. Moore's Capitol Hill Addition. Advertisements touted the "Six [Street] Car Routes to Capitol Hill". A new line on 15th Ave carried the destination placard "Capitol Hill," which eventually became the Broadway district and other surrounding Capitol Hill neighborhoods.

Likewise, it was a streetcar destination placard that would name the Summit district. A monopoly streetcar system was assembled in Seattle by outside financiers over the course of several years around 1900. In 1905 this system, called Seattle Electric Company (SEC), applied to the city for franchises to greatly expand their lines. Progressive citizens were already disappointed in SEC's monopoly, though, and a strong movement quickly developed to encourage the city to deny the new franchises and instead build its own streetcar system reaching unserved areas. The Seattle City Council agreed, and voted to request City Engineer R. H. Thomson to draw up a proposal for a municipal system.

By 1905, the neighborhood in the Pontius Second Addition was mostly built out with houses. This led Thomson to include a short loop line down Bellevue to downtown via Pike, and back from downtown up Summit where it ended at Belmont. The city's plan failed a vote, but SEC had won some votes by promising to expand the system. One of the lines that it built in 1907 was Thomson's little loop. Like the Capitol Hill streetcar, the short loop had a placard to indicate its terminus on Summit. Within a few years, real estate listings and other articles began to refer that area to the "Summit district."

In the years leading up to World War One, a number of brick-clad apartments were added to the Summit neighborhood. Several of them still exist: The Carroll at Bellevue and Thomas; The Bronx (now El Mondo) at Summit and Republican; The Mignon (now Steil & Steil) at Melrose and Mercer; and The Carlyle on Summit at Thomas and Harrison.

The Roy Vue was among many new brick-clad buildings in the 1920s, though its scale and class differentiated it from the rest.

Early Apartment Development in Seattle

Seattle apartment development in the early twentieth century flourished in response to the burgeoning population of the city. The city's population in 1900 was 80,000. By 1910, the population had tripled to 237,000 and by 1910, Seattle had 315,000 residents. Rapid growth meant an acute need for housing. After the "Great Fire" of 1889 destroyed Seattle's downtown commercial district, more robust and fire resistant urban buildings became required. Instead of two- and three-story wood commercial buildings, a more "metropolitan" scale of four to six story brick buildings with rich detail characterized the downtown. The new downtown was increasingly commercial and institutional in use, and by 1910, residents were moving out of the central business district to nearby neighborhoods such as Wallingford, Queen Anne and Capitol Hill, resulting in increased residential development in these areas.

The first purpose-built apartment building in the city was constructed in 1901. Named the St. Paul Flats (after the birthplace of the developer), the three-story building was located on First Hill, on the northeast corner of Seneca Street and Summit Avenue. The building held eighteen

large units, averaging 1,400 square feet, and offered many modern features. Following the success of the St. Paul, many of Seattle's earliest and most prestigious apartment buildings were constructed in the First Hill neighborhood.

Apartment Development on Capitol Hill

James Moore began selling parcels in his Capitol Hill tract in 1901; however, few apartment buildings were among the early buildings constructed. The tract was intended to contain a community of significant homes for Seattle's wealthy, including Moore's own family mansion on "Millionaire's Row," just south of Volunteer Park. Given its proximity to downtown, apartment development expanded north to Capitol Hill and by 1920, numerous buildings had been constructed to house a growing middle-class population. To overcome public opinion that apartments were built to house the poor (driven by association with tenement buildings on the east coast), designer-builders such as Frederick Anhalt and Arthur Loveless began to build revival style apartments of distinct architectural quality. In the 1920s and 1930s, Capitol Hill became a cultural hub in the city, with the construction of a new building for Cornish School for the Arts in 1921 (A.H. Albertson) and the art deco Seattle Art Institute (Carl F. Gould, now Seattle Asian Art Museum) in 1933 in Volunteer Park. In the vicinity of the Roy Vue, the Daughters of the American Revolution constructed their chapter house on E. Roy Street in 1925 (James Schack) across the street from the Woman's Century Club (Pierre Horrock), also in 1925. Architects also were designing upscale apartments in the Capitol Hill neighborhood to complement its grand homes and cultural institutions.

Land Use and Transportation

Zoning ordinances impacted where apartments could be constructed in the city. In 1923, the city adopted an ordinance to regulate land use. It divided residential development between "First Residential" (only single-family homes) and "Second Residential" (apartments allowed) zones. The Second Residential zones were located in a ring around downtown and included neighborhoods that were already increasingly dense: Belltown, First Hill, and western Capitol Hill.

Finally, Seattle neighborhoods developed with streetcar transportation to enable their residents to negotiate the city's steep hills. The Roy Vue Garden Apartments were located at the turnaround point on E. Roy Street of the Bellevue-Summit streetcar line. While the streetcar is gone, a community of dense, low-scaled and often high-quality apartment buildings remains along its route. Before the construction of the interstate freeway created a barrier, the western edge of Capitol Hill blended into downtown at its south end and the Cascade Neighborhood closer to E. Roy Street.

Courtyard Apartments

Courtyard apartments were popularized in Los Angeles during a population boom in the early 1900s. The earliest examples appeared in 1916 as bungalow courts, a perimeter grouping of small cottages around a shared central landscape. In temperate Los Angeles, the majority of these increasingly upscale apartments were built in the romantic Spanish Colonial Revival

style. By the 1920s, courtyard apartments became one of the most popular multi-family housing types in Seattle. Courtyard apartments allowed residents to enjoy a shared garden space in the mild Northwest climate. Most examples in Seattle were designed in English Tudor or French Norman styles, although some courtyard apartments of Spanish or Mediterranean revival style also exist. The Roy Vue Garden Apartments exemplify the courtyard apartment typology, and represent an early example in the city of Seattle. It is a unique design for its “flipped” plan, in which one enters the garden court through the building, with the courtyard becoming the occupants’ private garden, rather than an entry court. The large size of the courtyard, consisting of over 5,000 square feet, is also unique in the city.

The Development of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments

Plans for the construction of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments were revealed in an April 13, 1924 article in the *Seattle Times*. The article noted the building’s uniqueness, which set it apart even during a time when many other apartments were being constructed. Here’s an excerpt: “What undoubtedly will prove to be one of Seattle’s most novel apartment houses is scheduled for immediate construction...Each tier of apartments will have its own private entrance, thereby eliminating the ordinary large halls and corridors which utilize so much valuable space in the building from front to rear, thereby insuring maximum light and ventilation. The site commands a wonderful view of Lake Union, Queen Anne Hill, the Sound and mountains, and the spacious grounds, including a large court yard surround the building, will be laid out as a beautiful gardens spot with several pergolas over the walks, a fountain in the center, several bird baths, imported and domestic shrubbery of all kinds and an exceptional electric lighting effect.”

Except for the development that has occurred throughout Seattle, impacting views from the Roy Vue to the west, the subject building itself and its setting have changed little.

The *Seattle Times* provided prominent coverage of the construction and completion of the Roy Vue. A July 6, 1924 article on the development of Seattle apartments titled, “Seattle Excels in Apartments, Palatial Living Quarters Have New Comforts,” described the Roy Vue Garden Apartments as being “among the most beautiful and novel.”

An October 19, 1924 article, “Roy Vue Garden Apartments Nearing Completion,” commands two-thirds of a page featuring a large photograph of the building, advertisements for products used in the Roy Vue and advertisements for project team members such as Hans Pederson (contractor) and Malmo & Company (garden plantings). Developers and operators of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments, W.H. and Guy Bergman, invested more than \$200,000 in the project. The article predicts the building will be one of the most attractive apartment houses in the city: “The building contains 134 rooms, comprising thirty-two apartments of three, four and five rooms each. All apartments face on the street and on the court, assuring an unusual amount of light and air to every suite. Large rooms are another noteworthy feature of the apartments, the living rooms particularly being of large dimensions. The building was designed to afford a maximum of comfort, liveableness, sanitation and convenience.”

This 1924 description of the original design of the Roy Vue and its livability is still true today.

The Original Owners/Developers of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments: The Bergmans

Real estate investors Willis H. Bergman and son Guy H. Bergman commissioned the construction of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments in 1924. They were both career commercial steamship captains with ties to the Klondike Gold Rush.

Willis H. Bergman was born in Walla Walla, WA on March 23, 1864, two years after the marriage of his parents, Herman and Mary (Luark) Bergman. They were a family of farmers who were living in Grays Harbor County (then known as Chehalis County) as early as 1870. However, in March of that year, Herman died at 29, just one month before the birth of his third child, Edward. The family then lived with the Luarks until Mary remarried to an Isaac Spencer, a farmer, on August 12, 1871.

The family later grew to include Mary and Isaac's daughter, Mattie and son, William. By 1880, the eldest son Willis left home to take up residence with the nearby Holman family, for whom he worked as a farm laborer. In 1885, Willis married Emma Benham, who gave birth to their son Guy H. Bergman on December 15, 1886 in Hoquiam, WA.

Willis left farming life to start a maritime career. By July 7th of 1890, he was Captain of his own ship, the passenger steamer *Typhoon* which he had acquired in Portland, OR on behalf of the Northwestern Lumber Company. The *Typhoon*, under Willis's helm, plied the waters of Grays Harbor. Within a few years, he chartered two more ships, the *Montesano* and the SS *Edgar*, dominating harbor travel. By November 1892, he had given up command of the *Typhoon* to take up work as a wharfinger at Seattle's City Dock (formerly the C. & P. S. R. R. Company). He worked his way back up from wharfinger to mate, and finally to the rank of pilot for the steamer *Lydia Thompson* by the fall of 1895. The *Lydia Thompson* had handled mail delivery between Seattle and the San Juan Islands since 1894, but frequently shipped other cargo and ferried passengers, as well.

In the spring of 1898, at the peak of the Klondike gold rush, Willis left to go command his own ship along the Yukon river. His task was to transport prospectors and supplies between St. Michael on the Pacific coast and Dawson City in the heart of the Yukon territory. Willis and his family returned to Seattle in the fall of 1899 after the gold rush had wound down. They rented out space at a residence, 1510 11th Ave W, which they eventually purchased and by November, Willis was working for his former employer, John Thompson, who promoted him to captain of the *Lydia Thompson* in January 1901.

Willis's son Guy followed in his father's footsteps into the maritime industry. In 1905, at age 19, Guy's first known job was with the Portland Cordage Company, a rope manufacturer, just a few blocks away from their home. Having gained enough experience by 1910, he and his mother shipped out to Alaska to join Willis no later than 1912. Guy eventually became pilot of his father's ship, the *Jeff Davis*, headquartered at Fort Gibbon. They settled in the nearby village of Tanana, situated at the confluence of the Yukon and Tanana rivers in the very center of Alaska.

While working on the *Jeff Davis*, Guy invented an improved combined shaft log, stuffing box, and adjustable bearing for use in propeller shafts of motorboats. He filed the patent on September 22, 1916. Guy married Florence Cook, daughter of Charles Cook, a tinner and sheet-metal worker, and Emma Cook, on or near September 23, 1920 and left for Seattle two months later.

Once the family reunited in Seattle, it appears they took the remainder of the year to get settled in, but by 1921 their lives changed dramatically. Though they had dabbled in real estate since their days in Grays Harbor and still owned some property scattered throughout Washington, the family decided to make property management their primary occupation. Their interests were very clear: they specifically wanted to own and manage ornate Capitol Hill apartment buildings.

They started by offering two parcels of land (one at the northwest corner of Pine and Harvard and the other on the east side of 1st Ave W just south of W Galer St.) they had purchased in 1913 and a \$5,000 mortgage to Hermiston Company in exchange for the Lacrosse Apartments at 302 Malden Ave E on January 28, 1921. Two months later they approached Mary E. Shorey, owner of the Moana apartments at 1414 E Harrison St (one block north of the Lacrosse) and offered her \$40,000 to be paid in monthly installments. The Bergmans split the duties of managing the two buildings.

The Bergmans next moved into real estate development. The site of what would be their crowning achievement in real estate spanned three undeveloped parcels at the southwest corner of Bellevue Ave E and E Roy St. In exchange for these parcels, they offered the Maxim Land and Insurance Company (the owners) the Moana Apartments on an installment plan on November 9, 1923. The following spring, they took out a series of mortgages to fund their new project.

This new project was the Roy Vue Garden Apartments at 615 Bellevue Ave E, which they completed in November 1924. Guy and Florence Bergman moved into Apartment "B" of the Roy Vue and proceeded to manage the building while Willis and Emma Bergman remained as resident managers of the Lacrosse Apartments for the duration of 1925. However, the following year, Willis and Emma appear to have left Seattle permanently, while Guy and Florence continued living at the Lacrosse apartments for another year, while Guy worked as a salesman for International Correspondence. Little is known of them from 1927 until 1930, when the U.S. Census lists Willis and Guy as ship captains for the U.S. Army on the Panama Canal. In the intervening years, they defaulted on their mortgages, allowing the Roy Vue and Lacrosse to fall into the hands of a group of receivers and insurance companies including the Marie Pederson estate (wife of Hans Pederson, building contractor of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments). The Roy Vue remained in this state of uncertainty until November 1937, when a Carl Rubinstein agreed to purchase the property.

The Bergmans continued to work the Panama Canal for the rest of their careers. Willis and Emma returned to the United States to retire in Pensacola, Florida 1935 and died in 1939. Guy continued to work as a ship's captain on the Panama Canal until at least 1940 and died in Orange County, California in 1962.

Roy Vue Garden Apartments Ownership History

1924 - 1933: Willis H. and Guy H. Bergman
1933 - 1936: Marie Pederson Estate
1936 - 1937: Marie Pederson Estate and New York Life Insurance Company
1937 - 1941: Carl Rubinstein
1941 - 1946: Sam Rubinstein
1946: A.E. Peterson to R.P. Sutherland
1946 - 1948: Floyd R Clotfelter
1948 - 1950: Rainier Motors
1950 - 1954: Thomas Gregory via a short-term mortgage to J.W. McFarland
1954 - 1955: Mr. and Mrs. William M. Williams
1955 - 1963: Bertrand Currand
1963 - 1964: Gilman L Pederson via short-term mortgage to Mr. & Mrs. William M. Williams
1964 - 1976: Priscilla Van Gries
1976 - 1980: Melvin G. & Larayne M. Heide
1980 - 1986: Capretto Clark Real Property Management Co, Lagerquist and McConnell Inc.
1986: Shoreline Savings Bank
1986 - 2009: Roy Vue Associates
2009 - Present: Roy Vue Associates LLC

Roy Vue Garden Apartments Resident History

With its distinct architecture and beautiful garden views, the Roy Vue has been a popular choice for renters since the building's first year. From dressmakers to drag queens, Roy Vue residents have both reflected and contributed to the storied history of Capitol Hill. Early residents of the building included a mix of individuals, married couples, and families of various configurations. Many were professionals who worked in fields ranging from insurance to medicine. Notable residents of the early years included Roy Vue architect Charles Haynes, himself, who lived in Apartment H308; Charles Sengfelder, "Alaska Pioneer" and entrepreneur who owned a commercial sign business on Madison Street; Samuel Bornstein, hotel supplier; Samuel Rathbun, multi-term Treasurer for the City of Seattle and Washington State Superintendent of Game and Fish; and Earl Eba, whose family grocery grew from a single location in the Pike Place Market to a chain of stores across the city, including one in the Summit Neighborhood near the Roy Vue. The impact of nearby "Auto Row" was reflected, too. Two branches of the Job family, who ran the Jerry G. Job, Inc. Ford Dealership on 12th Avenue, shared a first-floor apartment.

The Roy Vue was home to a variety of independent working women as well, including E. Gertrude Markham, whose career included work in accounting and management, and Julia Button, who survived WWI as a field nurse and then returned to Seattle to work as a physiotherapist for the Veterans Administration. Perhaps their paths crossed at some point with Emma Cary, who was the top female golfer in Washington State in 1924. Wenonah Blackwell, who grew up in James Moore's high-end Lincoln apartment hotel, which was operated at one point by her parents, lived in the Roy Vue for several years. Her entrepreneurial spirit was noted in a 1929 *Seattle Times* article about Seattle women running successful business from

home. Sisters Agnes and Mary Parker were just two of many Seattle School District teachers who called the Roy Vue home. Agnes likely walked to her final teaching assignment at nearby Broadway High School, where she taught both History and Social Science. Mary died at home in the apartment they shared at the Roy Vue, but Agnes, a lifelong traveler, died two years after her retirement in Beverly Hills, California while visiting Broadway High School alum and Hollywood producer John Considine of the famous Considine theater dynasty.

It should be noted that numerous Roy Vue residents also contributed to the city beyond the boundaries of the workplace. Several were leaders in local, state, and national charitable and civic organizations, including the Soroptimists, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the North Broadway Club, the Women's University Club, the Children's Orthopedic Hospital fund, the Masons, and B'nai B'rith. During the Second World War, Roy Vue resident Joseph Gluck was the number one seller of war bonds. He sold over 37 million dollars' worth, according to one article in *The Seattle Times*, more than any other individual in the nation. Gluck was also a member of the National Democratic Committee, connected to leaders from FDR to JFK, earning him the nickname "Mr. Democrat." Dark political episodes were represented at the Roy Vue, too. Resident Mildred Gellerman put herself on the line as a character witness for Florence Bean James of the Seattle Repertory Playhouse, who was put on trial for refusing to say whether she had ever been a communist during the infamous 1948 Canwell UnAmerican Activities Hearings.

Speaking perhaps to the stabilizing influence of a beautiful setting, one notable aspect of the Roy Vue population is how long so many of the residents stayed there. Joseph Gluck, who as a financier and diamond merchant could certainly have afforded a fine home in the neighborhood of his choice, chose to live in the Roy Vue with his wife Bertha for 50 years. Numerous other residents also stayed for many years, including Charles Haynes, who with his wife Alma remained in the building he designed for roughly 15 years.

The Roy Vue continues to retain long-term residents. One resident of 48 years, artist Linda Papaso, whose apartment was respectfully maintained by another member of the community while she was in hospice, recently passed away. She counted among her neighbors an eclectic and interesting group who, like their historical counterparts, are making their mark on the city. Recent or current Roy Vue residents include Ashley Bullitt of the renowned Seattle Bullitt family, and Robbie Turner, local drag queen and Season 8 competitor on the nationally televised reality show, Ru Paul's Drag Race. Neighborhood business owners are represented in the owners of Broadway clothing, jewelry, and home goods shop Revival, and one resident-musician plays weekly next door at Harry's Fine Foods. Families continue to raise children in the Roy Vue, and numerous teachers, doctors, entrepreneurs, artists, and professional creatives of all sorts still find themselves inspired by the beautiful setting and garden views.

The Architect: Charles Lyman Haynes

Seattle architect Charles Lyman Haynes designed the Roy Vue Garden Apartments for Willis and Guy Bergman. Born in Santa Cruz, California in April 1870, Haynes came to Seattle via San Francisco in 1907. His formal architectural training is unknown but he gained valuable experience working for San Francisco architect Alexander Cantin before arriving in the Pacific

Northwest. *Shaping Seattle Architecture* states that Haynes established the Seattle office of Haynes & Cantin in 1907. The following year, he opened his own independent architectural firm at the age of 38, maintaining an office in the Melhorn Building. During his 30-plus year career, Haynes designed a variety of buildings throughout Seattle including single family residences, apartment houses, commercial buildings, and automobile showrooms.

In 1919, when Washington began licensing architects, Haynes received his Washington license under the grandfather clause. As the official architect for the Hunter Improvement Company, Haynes prepared plans for over 100 homes to be erected by the company in the Mount Baker neighborhood. Notable single-family homes include the M.L. Baker residence (1908-1909); Robert B. Kellogg House (1912); the Frank Buty House (1915); and the Amelia Hemrich House (1923). Several of Haynes' designs were published in *Bungalow Magazine*, and his Prairie style home for the Margaret Calvert (1913) brought him much attention and further commissions. Other residential commissions include the Robert P. Greer(n) residence (1910); George Carson residence (1908-1909); Kappa Sigma Fraternity (1914); and T.A. Davies House (ca. 1925).

Haynes also completed designs for numerous Seattle apartment buildings, in addition to the Roy Vue Garden Apartments, including the Narada Apartments (1924-1925); Bonair Apartments (1925); Dunlap Apartments (1928-1929); and the Brooklyn Building (1930). Auto row-related buildings included Tyson Oldsmobile Company Showroom (1912); Packard Automotive Showroom (1911); J.W. Leavitt & Company / Rowland Motors Building (1910); Motor Distributing Co. (1912); Packard Automobile Co (1911-1912); and Central Ford Agency (1920).

Other works include Hotel Hudson (1908-1909); hotel and store for Gaffney & Hyde (1908-1909); Reliance Hospital (1910); Donohoe Garage (1921); Broadway Market (1927-1928); Rex Land Company Garage, now the Champion Building (1927-1928); the Butterworth & Sons Mortuary (1922); Farmer's Public Market (1923); and Russell Building (1924).

Charles Haynes died in Seattle on July 15, 1947 at the age of 77. His obituary in the *Seattle Times* stated that Haynes was active in "construction of homes, apartment buildings and industrial structures," and was a member of Arcana Lodge, F. & A.M.

The Landscape Designer: Malmo & Company

The original landscape design and installation of plants and trees for the courtyard of the Roy Vue Garden Apartments were executed by Malmo & Company. Founded by Charles Malmo, a Norwegian immigrant who came to the United States in 1878, arriving in Seattle in 1891, the company was first established as the Malmo Seed and Nursery Company in 1893. He opened his first small garden store at Second Avenue and Madison Street (916 Second Avenue) in downtown Seattle. Before 1920, most ornamental plants, seeds, and bulbs were imported to the Pacific Northwest from Japan, England, and Holland.

Pest outbreaks in nursery stock in the United States precipitated the Plant Quarantine Act passed by Congress in 1912. A subsequent embargo of plant imports from other countries

provided Malmo with the opportunity to grow the business by propagating its own nursery stock locally with existing plant inventory. Charles Malmo is credited with being the first in the Northwest to propagate his own plants. By the early 1920s, Malmo & Company was thriving. In addition to selling seeds, plants, and trees, Malmo developed a landscaping business. In 1923, the business operated out of a large store on Sixth Avenue and Stewart Street at Westlake. The company had 25-acres of greenhouses and fields in Georgetown that supplied the retail and landscaping businesses. The 1920s was a decade in which Malmo & Company thrived due to the booming construction of houses and apartment buildings that needed landscaping. Some of these projects included the Home Beautiful demonstration house (1925), Astor Court Apartments (1926), Garden Court Apartments (1929), Acacia fraternity house (1926-1928), Buckley Apartments (1927), Parkview Apartments (1927-1928, demolished), Rhododendron Apartments (1928), Francavilla Apartments (1929-1930), and the Wilsonian Apartments (1923).

In 1930, Malmo opened up Garden Square, an open-air garden center at Westlake and Sixth Avenue at Virginia Street. In 1937, Charles Malmo's son, Clark Malmo, purchased 30 acres at the present site of University Village, opening up a suburban nursery. The company continued to do well in the mid-twentieth century. It was purchased in 1962 by Ernst Hardware and Pay 'n' Save stores, becoming a wholly-owned subsidiary. By 1975, there were 22 Malmo Nurseries operating in Washington State. On July 12, 1996 Ernst Hardware filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and began its final going-out-of-business sale in November 1996, closing 53 stores and selling off the remainder of its operations, including the nursery business.

The Builder: Hans Pederson

The Bergmans contracted with builder Hans Pederson to build the Roy Vue Garden Apartments. Pederson was the most prominent contractor in Seattle during the early part of the twentieth century. Born in Denmark on September 2, 1864, Pederson received a common school education and completed the required term of military service before coming to the United States to seek better opportunities. He first settled in Minnesota in 1884, working as a farm hand. He then journeyed westward in 1886, working on the construction of the Northern Pacific tunnels through the Cascade mountains. He arrived in Seattle in 1886 and worked on the railroad construction along Lake Union. After the June 6, 1889 "great fire" in Seattle, he helped rebuild the city's business district and continued in the building business. Pederson's spirit of adventure and desire to "strike it rich" took him to Alaska during the Klondike Gold Rush in 1898. He came back to Seattle unsuccessful and returned to the contracting business.

He excelled as a builder and soon became one of Seattle's most prominent and prolific contractors. The first decade of the twentieth century was a good time for builders and architects in the city—Seattle and Puget Sound were bustling with the biggest population growth in history and building had to keep pace to provide residential, commercial and public buildings, and infrastructure (streets and bridges) to meet and support demand. Seattle continued to do well into the 1910s and 1920s before the stock market crash.

His projects number in the hundreds over the course of over thirty years and range from nearly forty apartment houses, to sidewalk and road paving projects, to large skyscrapers and

individual homes. Among Pederson's most notable projects are the Arctic Building (1916, City of Seattle Landmark), Seaboard Building (1909, City of Seattle Landmark), Washington Hall (1908, City of Seattle Landmark), Milwaukee Hotel (1911, contributing resource – Seattle Chinatown National Register Historic District), St. Regis Hotel (1909), the Rex Theatre (1915, demolished), Alhambra Theatre (1909, extensively altered), Blue Mouse Theatre (ca. 1920, demolished), the 15th Avenue NW (Ballard) Bridge and viaduct (1917), Ford Assembly Plant in Seattle (1913, City of Seattle Landmark), Temple of Justice (1920) in Olympia, Terminal Sales Building (1925, City of Seattle Landmark), and the King County Courthouse (1930, King County Landmark). He also constructed many country roads throughout the state of Washington and worked on reclamation projects. No project was too great or small for Pederson. A March 27, 1931 article in the *Christian Science Monitor* noted Pederson's credo was to take any job to keep crew employed and paid. His reputation reached back to Denmark, his native land, where a book about him was published titled, *Kong Hans ved Stillehavet*, or *King Hans of the Pacific Ocean*.

Pederson married Marie Madsen in 1900. Their adopted son, Hans Jr., died at the age of nineteen. Marie died in March 1932. Pederson soon remarried to Doris Huchulak of Edmonton. They had a daughter, Paula, who was only 28 days old when Pederson died in Seattle on September 6, 1933 at the age of 69. His legacy to Seattle's built environment is evident in much of his work, which remains today.

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved include: *the site; the exterior of the apartment building including the central arcade; and the courtyard and elevated garden spaces.*

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Sarah Sodt
City Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Ellen Mirro, The Johnson Partnership
Ian Morrison, McCullough Hill Leary PS
Mike Roeter, Roy Vue LLC, c/o Alliance Multifamily Investments
Roy Vue LLC, c/o Alliance Management, Inc.
Eugenia Woo, Historic Seattle
Save the Roy Vue
Capitol Hill Historical Society
Jordan Kiel, Chair, LPB
Nathan Torgelson, SDCI
Maria Cruz, SDCI
Ken Mar, SDCI