



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

LPB 244/20

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Name and Address of Property: **Villa Camini**
1205 NE 42nd Street

Legal Description: Lot 24, Block 15, Brooklyn Addition to Seattle, according to the Plat Thereof Recorded in Volume 7 of Plats, Page 32, in King County, Washington.

At the public meeting held on July 1, 2020 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Villa Camini at 1205 NE 42nd Street 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 of a method of construction.*
- 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

Neighborhood Context

The property is situated at the northwest corner of a residential block that is bounded by Brooklyn Avenue NE on the east, 12th Avenue NE on the west, NE 42nd Street on the north and NE 41st Street on the south. A 16'-wide alley runs along the east property line. The King County assessor's property record card from ca. 1937 notes the neighborhood at that time as a "Med-New" apartment district. This citation is still reflected in the mix of multi-family residences in the immediate surroundings.

Neighboring buildings include a three-story Modern style apartment building, the Brooklyn, to the east of the alley at 4141 Brooklyn NE 42nd (1960); a newer four-story congregate apartment building at 4142 12th Avenue NE (1985) to the south; a triplex within a Four Square style, former single-family residence (1918) 4202 12th Avenue NE to the north; and a two-story apartment building (1957) at 1113 NE 42nd Street to the west.

The site is within the current SM-U/R 75-240(M1) Zone, and the block of 12th Avenue NE on which it is situated contains several recently constructed six and seven story apartment building at its south end, as well as two former Four-Square style houses that have been transformed into small apartment houses, and several low-scale mid-century apartment buildings.

The University District emerged in the early 20th century and many buildings in it have been recognized in a city-sponsored 2002 historic survey and in an urban inventory for Historic Seattle in 1976. Some buildings have been recognized also for their historical and architectural significance by local landmark designations. The closest of these to the subject property is the University Methodist Episcopal Church and Parsonage (1902 and 1907), at 4142 and 4138 Brooklyn Avenue NE.

Other locally designated landmarks in the District include Neptune Theatre, 1303 NE 45th Street (1921, designed by Henderson Ryan); Wilsonian Hotel/Apartments, 4700-10 University Way (designed by Frank Fowler, 1923); Church of the Blessed Sacrament, 5041 9th Ave NE (1925); University Heights School, 5031 University Way NE (designed by Bebb & Mendel, 1902-1906); University Presbyterian Church, 4555 16th Ave NE designed by (Ellsworth Storey, 1915); University Branch Library, 5009 Roosevelt Way NE (designed by Somerville & Coté, 1910); and the Cowen Park and 20th NE Bridges. Recently designated landmarks include Anhalt Hall at 711 NE 43rd Street (1928), and Eagleson Hall, the former YMCA Building on 15th Avenue NE, which is owned by the University of Washington (1923). The chronological list below cites other buildings recommended as eligible for local designation or for listing in the National Register according to the 2002 historic survey of the University District. (This list is limited to properties located between 15th Avenue NE and the I-5 freeway and south of NE 50th Street):

- Masonic Building, 4340 University Way NE (ca. 1903)
- University Manor, 1305 NE 43rd Street (1926, designed by Earl Roberts)
- College Center Building, 4560 University Way NE (1927, designed by McClelland & Pinneh)
- Gelb Building, 4534-36 University Way NE (1927, designed by Schack, Young & Meyers)
- El Monterey Apts., 4200 11th Ave NE (1928, designed by Everett J. Beardsley)
- The Malloy Apts., 4337 15th Ave NE (1928, also designed by Earl Roberts)
- Varsity Arms, 4235 Brooklyn Ave NE (1928, designed by R.S. Lipscomb)
- Canterbury Court, 4225 Brooklyn Ave NE (1929, designed by Henry H. Hodgson)

Several of the previously listed buildings were cited also in the 1975 Nyberg-Steinbrueck urban inventory. In this inventory, the Villa Camini was categorized as “significant to the community.” The recent city survey report on the University District did not specifically site it, but noted, “Additional properties from the survey may qualify for designation; this list includes only those that the consultants believe are the highest priority for designation.”

The Site and Setting

The apartment building at 1205 NE 42nd Street is situated on a 40.01' by 103.03' site at the northwest corner of its block. Its long, primary north facade and main entry face toward NE 42nd Street. A smaller, non-original entry porch is placed on the secondary west facade, which faces west toward 12th Avenue NE. Another non-original entry, consisting of concrete steps and covered landing, faces east toward an alley, which runs along the east side of the site. According to a former owner, the east setback was once a small private yard surrounded by a hedge. This landscaped yard has been changed into a small paved parking lot. The County Assessor's 1970 property record card cites four parking spaces. One of these spaces currently contains recycle containers.

A site survey indicates the north and west setbacks are 8' deep, while the east setback is 18' deep, and the south setback approximately 5' deep. A low decorative metal balustrade and portions of the exterior steps to the basement project into the north right-of-way, and concrete steps at the southwest end project into the west right-of-way.) The shallow north and west setbacks result from the original siting of building; the west setback and the reverse-corner conditions were also the basis of a 1975 Seattle Hearing Examiner's favorable approval of an appeal and zoning variance to allow the exterior stairs to be placed in it.

King County aerial map contours indicate the site slopes approximately 8' downward from the northeast corner to the southwest corner. This topographic change is accommodated by the building, which sets both the first floor at the northeast corner and the basement floor and entry near the southwest corner near grade level. In addition, there is a concrete retaining wall and concrete stairs in the south setback. A chain link fence runs along the south setback. According to a current title report, several elements in the south setback – the existing concrete stairs and retaining wall, and a chain link fence – extend up to 0.7' over the south property line onto the neighboring property at 4142 12th Avenue. The title report also notes a concrete retaining wall that extends up to 1.6' over the property line along the western border, and concrete stair over the property line along the northern border. Currently there is a basement service entry from the south setback.

The main entry, on the building's north side, is centrally located and accessed by a short paved walkway and a set of five shallow brick masonry steps, which rise some 3'. This entry originally led to an interior stair that accessed a single basement apartment, and two apartments each on the first and second floors. Secondary stairs on the south side of the building also accessed the upper floor dwellings.

An early site photo, from a 1925 newspaper article, suggests the completed construction was on a bare site. The ca. 1937 King County Assessor's property record card notes the site condition as "good" with landscaping of lawn and shrubs. Landscape materials have been added over time, including grass lawns in the front (north) and west side setbacks, along with what is by now mature foundation plantings and several trees. Photos from the owner's collection show landscaping with hedges and grass yards in the mid-1970s. These have been replaced by the paved parking lot on the east, and by ornamental and flowering trees, shrubs and perennials in

the north and west setbacks. The landscaping is densely planted around the west porch and in plant beds on either sides of the main entry.

The Structure and Exterior

The 1937 King county property record cites the building as having “ordinary masonry construction,” frame-joist roofs and 2x6 stud walls, 6x8 columns, 14 footings, 2x10 joists at 16” on center, and bridged. The record notes its outer dimension as 26’ by 77’ and general footprint area as 2,156 square feet. The original building was constructed with five units, cited in the 1937 property record card as “apts-office”. This was a likely reference to the three-room basement unit, which may have been an on-site manager’s office or a dwelling. Over time, the occupied space within the building has been changed by internal remodeling to accommodate seven units. Villa Camini currently contains 6,468 square feet, including the full basement with three apartments, and two upper floors, each containing two apartments.

The rectangular mass, 28’ by 77’, is arrayed along the length of the 40’ by 103’ site. It features a hipped roof with elongated ridgeline and soffitted overhangs, estimated at 2’-deep. The stucco-clad walls are flush on the south facade, and east and west ends, and features full-height stepped sections on the primary north facade. This primary north facade is composed symmetrically, with a 3’ by 11’ portico and main entry situated between the two engaged fireplace chimneys. The slightly battered chimneys, each approximately 5’-wide, project 1’ from the surrounding walls, which step forward from the perimeter walls. With curved sides near the top of the wall, the chimneys penetrate the roof overhang and rise an estimated 10’ above the eave line. The stucco-clad chimneys are each decorated with flush quarry tiles, both above and below the roof level. They terminate with bands of tile and chimney caps. The original tar and gravel composition roofing has been replaced repeatedly, most recently in 2003 with reddish-color metal roof tiles that emulate Mission Style roof tiles. Similar reddish colored flashing wraps the chimneys above the roof. As prominent features of the building, the chimneys gave rise to the apartment building’s current name, given by one of the former owners. (Camini meaning chimneys in Italian.) Signage with the name is painted on the west facade, and provided above the north entry.

The original main entry is centrally located and accessed by short paved walkway and a set of five shallow brick masonry steps, which raise about 3’. It features a multi-lite wood door and relights. Directly to the east of it there is another entry with brick and concrete steps that lead down approximately 5’ to the northeast basement apartment unit, which was added in the 1970s. Other non-original entries from this period include the 6’-square west entry porch, with a hipped roof and an interior stair leading to the west second floor unit; and an east exterior stair with hipped shaped rooflet, which leads to the east unit.

The main entry portico is supported by a cast concrete landing and steps, which extend along the sides of the cheek blocks that are clad in stucco with a detail course of brick masonry. The portico features Colonial Revival style elements: paired columns and engaged pilaster to the sides of the multi-lite wood door and relights, each with a simple base and capital, supporting a denticulated frieze and slightly overhanging flat roof with wood balustrade that seems to extend the columns and pilasters, capped by stepped wood rail. The main stairs has a single ornamental

metal handrail, which is matched by a guardrail and handrail on the adjacent steps to the basement.

The symmetrically composed facade contains a tripartite window assembly above the portico, made up by three, eight-light wood framed sash. Other windows are largely double-hung types with divided six over one windows set in single openings on either sides of the chimneys and tripartite assemblies near outer northeast and northwest corners, and divided-lite casements on the west facade at the basement. All of the window openings are vertically aligned on the first and second floors. The east and west facades also contain tripartite assemblies near the northern corners, along with a small, divided lite window over the current east entry and a narrower single window near the southern corner. The back (south) facade contains smaller and narrower double-hung types. The large openings on the north and east and west facades correspond with the original living and dining rooms of the apartment units. Smaller divided-lite windows correspond to bedrooms and bathrooms on the south façade, with exception of paired windows that replaced larger original units at stairwell landings.

Interior Layout and Features

The building currently contains four 3-bedroom flats, two 4-bedroom flats and one studio, and its wood-frame construction quality is noted in current King County records as “Average/Good.” Earlier conditions, cited in the ca. 1937 property record card, include the construction quality, which was noted “Good” on the exterior, interior and foundation, and overall as “Dbl-Good Construction.” Unique features – such as five brick fireplaces with tile facades, tilework in five bathrooms and five kitchens. It was provided with hot-water heat and hot running water, both from a central boiler, and a “Central Frigidaire Unit [and] five Rfgrs” – systems that were very modern advancements when the building was built in 1924. (Later changes included electrical baseboard heat and individual hot water tanks in each unit.) The interior was noted in 1937 as having “19 rooms with five “Apts-Offices” – one 3-room in the basement, and four similar, 4-room apartments above. The basement studio unit was provided with a built-in Murphy bed. Ceiling heights were noted as 8’-6” in the basement and upper two floors.

The June 22, 1970 property record card notes that, by that date, the building then contained a 1,611 square foot basement with concrete floors and one 630 SF apartment, and a remodeled ceiling. In 1970 the estimated rent was at \$120/month. Later, in the 1982, 1989 and 1993 Assessor’s records, the building was cited as having six units, a gross area of 6,468 square feet, and rentable area of 5,200 square feet. The assessor’s recent record from 1993 noted its construction quality as “average” and indicated the two studio and four 1-bedroom units then commanded estimated monthly rent of \$400 and \$475 respectively.

Original drawings and plans of the interior have not been discovered to confirm the conditions noted by the King County Tax Assessor. However, a ca. 1976 “Reference Plan” shows a symmetrical design of the upper two floors, each with two flats. Each of the original apartments was accessed by the central main stairs which led directly into their living rooms. In these larger flats, the living rooms and the adjacent dining rooms were placed along the northern half of the building, where they were separated by corridors from bedrooms and a bathroom in the back, and kitchens were placed at the southeast and southwest corners. The plan shows the

arrangement of bathrooms and the original kitchens, each with an adjacent breakfast nook with built-in seating and table. The original kitchens and nooks remain in place while appliances, cabinets, and fixtures are newer. Two secondary stairs provided service access to the south entries and to a laundry room in the basement.

The interior of the building has been remodeled over time to add two apartments (units #6 and #7) in the basement; reconfigure basement unit #1; and create additional bedroom spaces within the upper four flats (units #2-5). Other changes resulted in the addition of exterior stairs and removal of interior stairs. Unit #1 was modified in ca. 1974 to move its entry from the central staircase to an exterior entry door near the south end of the west facade and create two bedrooms in the former living room. Two large storage spaces at the basement, once accessed by the south stairs, and with lengthy interior corridors, were also changed.

In the late 1970s two exterior stairs were built, each one providing access to an upper floor unit. The current layout retains the original sized living rooms of apartments on the first and second floors, each with an original working fireplace with tile surround. Folding doors have been added to allow original dining rooms to serve as additional bedrooms.

Changes over Time and Current Conditions

No original drawings have been discovered, although there is an original permit dated 7.14.1924, #235767, which notes, “Erect Apt. House per Plans.”

A single older permit in SDCI microfilm records, from 1945, #367186, calls for replacement of the lower portion of a center beam of the wood frame construction. All of the later permits and permit drawings date from 1975 through 1979. These cite the owners, John Aylward & Warren Bakken, located at 4210 12th NE, as the contractor, and sometimes also as the engineer/architect, for work associated expansion of the existing apartments within the building to have more bedrooms, and the addition of units at the basement level, and the west and east entry porches. Current conditions appear consistent with the changes made in the 1970s, with exception of appliances, plumbing fixtures, and finishes, which have been upgraded.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Permit Number</u>	<u>Permit Scope</u>
7.11.74	BN49244	Alter exist. bldg. convert existing 4 rm unit to a 6 rm unit, VN, H-Apt (5).
7.29.74	69163	Replace existing meters, replace wiring; correct portion of [Housing Ordinance] Egress requirement as not on plans.
11.13.74	Insp. Report	OK for covering.
5.26.75	Insp. Report	Work covered without prior inspection – appears OK, instructed owner to install proper landing and stairs from basement unit – complete work on H.C. letter and call for final.
7.1 & 7.2.75	Insp. Report	Final OK.
11.29.76	567160	Construct partial basement existing 5-unit apartment building per plan. Underpin exist. footing
3.25.77	Insp. Report	OK, place concrete foundation, permit 567160.

5.12.77	582577	Extend [electrical] 4 lighting and appliance circuits
8.21.78	Insp. Report	Final OK.
5.18.77	569939	To alter interior or exist 5 unit apt. bldg. & occupy as 6 unit apt. bldg. per plans. (One new off street parking space required.)
3.16.79	NA	Permit Expiration Letter #1 (permit expires 5.18.78)
3.26.79	577226	Permit renewed
4.25.79	NA	Findings and Decision, Variance File X-79-034, granting approval for an application by Aylward & Bakken, for construction of a west porch on the non-complying five-unit apartment building on a reverse corner lot within the required 10'-setback. This porch was cited as part of a required exit "to bring the existing building up to code. The interior design and unit placement requires that the exterior staircase be located on the west." The findings cite the hardship that the existing setback presented, and also seem to favor increased density in the area by noting, "The subject property is a few blocks west of the University of Washington Campus. Most of the buildings in the area are multiple unit apartments."
7.26.79	584296	To complete work authorized under permits 569939 & 577226
7.27.79	NA	Stop Work Order, inspection called for outside work not under permit
7.29.79	69163	Replace existing meters, replace wiring from meters to subpanels. Replace fuses with C.B. Add circuits for electric HT. Extend existing circuits and change to service req'ts.
8.1.79	585116	Construct new covered front [west] porch per plans and variance X-79-038 granted 4.25.79, also construct concrete uncovered back [east] porch subject to field inspection
3.30.80	Insp. Report	OK cover front entry, permit 585116
7.14.80	Insp. Report	Final OK.

The County property record cards cite few changes to the building, and permit drawings are few. However, photos and sketched drawings provided by the owner and on-site conditions reveal some modifications. In the mid to late-1970s the owner made several changes to the building to expand the apartment units in both size and number. Access and entries were revised, with three newer resulting elements: Concrete steps and a covered landing on the east side; an exterior entry on the north adjacent to and east of the main entry with brick steps that lead down approximately 5.5' to a basement unit entry door; and an exterior stair that leads from the north sidewalk to a covered porch entry on the west side of the building. Within the interior two original stairs were removed and the spaces incorporated into the dwelling units to provide additional bathrooms and bedrooms.

Three sheets of drawings show changes proposed on May 18, 1977, for permit 569939, which called for alteration of the interior of an existing five unit apartment building and its occupancy as a six unit building. (One new off-street parking space was also required.) The plot plan, sheet 1 of 3 drawings in this set, identifies the building footprint as 26' by 79' and the setbacks as 7' on the west, 17' on the east, 8' on the north and 6' on the south. The limited west setback resulted in a variance approval to construction the hipped roof addition and stairway to the

second floor west apartment to meet the code requirements., which extended into the west setback, to 7' from the edge of the west property line.

The 1977 basement floor plan shows the creation of the sixth apartment, a three bedroom unit, at the northeast corner of the basement. It also shows the small exterior stair to the basement unit entry situated directly east of the main north entry. In addition, the drawing set indicates another exterior stair to a south entry to service spaces, and two new windows into the basement on the east facade. Access to the basement storage rooms was provided by retention of the main interior stairs from the front and first floor landing. while the upper floor plans show the removal of three interior stairs and new infill framing with 2x10 joists at the former openings to provide new 8' by 10' spaces to be incorporated into existing apartments as additional bedrooms.

Currently two apartments – units #2 and #3 on the first floor – have retained their entry access at the first floor main hallway, while units #4 and #5 on the second floor were provided with new entries at the east and west ends respectively. As a result of this work each of the apartments on the upper two floors received an additional bedroom, and units #2, #3, #4 and #5 also received an additional bathroom. Since 1993 one additional apartment has been inserted into the building. The original unit #1 was divided into a 4-bedroom apartment on the west end of the basement, and an adjacent studio created in the center with the addition of a kitchen in the former laundry room.

A recent visual tour of the building's interior, which included brief reviews of one existing apartment, indicates that there have been few changes since the late 1970s with exception of kitchen and bathroom remodels to update cabinets, fixtures and surfaces. Interior spaces are relatively modest, with floor-to-ceiling heights as 7'-6" in the basement and 8' at the first and second floors. Flooring is primarily fir covered by carpet on the upper floors, along with resilient flooring, and painted wood base. Heat is provided by electric baseboard units. Walls and ceilings are painted plaster and painted gypsum wallboard, finished with painted trim. Upper floor living and dining rooms are finished with oak flooring, while the original basement unit has fir flooring. The four fireplaces in the upper floor units retain their painted wood mantles and tile surrounds.

SIGNIFICANCE

Residential Development in the University District

The small apartment house at the southeast corner of 12th Avenue NE and NE 42nd Street is associated with the historic development of the University District in the early 20th century. The development of the neighborhood immediately surrounding the property extends back to the city's pioneer period with the acquisition and platting in 1890 of approximately 100 acres that made up the Brooklyn Addition by Seattle real estate developer James A. Moore. Moore named the area and created a street grid with major streets oriented in a north-south direction, including Broadway (the initial name of Brooklyn Avenue NE).

Prior to Moore's initial development, the area that became the University District was a forested land crossed by trails used by the Native Americans for hunting and berry growing. In 1855, the federal government surveyed and divided it into townships. The land was governed initially by the Oregon Territory's Organic Act, which reserved Sections 16 and 36 of each township for the maintenance of public schools. Section 16 later became the University campus. In 1867, Christian and Harriet Brownfield, the first homesteaders in the area, filed a claim for 174 acres adjacent to Section 16. Additional settlers followed. In 1887 the Seattle, Lake Shore, and Eastern Railroad was laid from Fremont to Union Bay on Lake Washington. Development of nearby properties along the rail route commenced, and land values increased. Plans were made also for a ship canal to link Puget Sound and Salmon Bay with Lake Union and Lake Washington. The Brownfield property was repeatedly sold and platted and was acquired in 1890 by developer James A. Moore, who re-platted it as the Brooklyn Addition.

The year 1891 was a formative one for the area. That year the City of Seattle annexed the north end communities of Brooklyn, Fremont, Wallingford, Latona, and Green Lake. Soon after this date the State Legislature voted to move the State's University from its downtown location to Section 16. The move occurred in 1895, prompting a renaming of the area from Brooklyn to University Station. Meanwhile, in 1891-82 Seattle pioneer David Denny built the old Latona Bridge and initiated streetcar service along Eastlake Avenue and across the bridge at what was then 6th Avenue NE, to the northeast onto Columbus Avenue (present day University Way NE), rather than Brooklyn Avenue, to terminate at Franklin Street (NE 45th Street). Later, in 1907, a trolley line from Wallingford was initiated. These transit lines stimulated linear corridors of commercial development. University Way subsequently developed as one of Seattle's primary commercial streets, second only to its downtown, leaving other streets, such as Brooklyn Avenue, as part of nearby residential areas.

The decision to site the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition (AYPE) of 1909 on the University grounds was a critical step in the expansion of the campus and its surroundings. The fair attracted between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 visitors. The AYPE grounds, designed by John Charles Olmsted of the renowned Olmsted Brothers firm from Brookline, Massachusetts, contained a number of the buildings intended as permanent structures to be retained for the University's subsequent use. Because of the AYPE, the neighborhood saw increased residential and commercial development, including construction of the brick and concrete A. F. Nichols Building, at 4205 University Way NE (1907), and the College Inn (also 1907) at University Way NE and NE 40th Street. By 1910 the commercial and residential neighborhoods around the campus were almost entirely platted.

Historic Baist and Kroll maps show the extent of single-family houses, boarding houses and apartment buildings that were constructed in this period. Some initially served visitors to the fair, but all transitioned to house more permanent residents as the city's population rose from 80,671 in 1900 to 237,194 in 1910 (largely through annexation) and to 315,312 in 1920. During this same period, enrollment at the UW rose from 614 in 1900 to 2,200 in 1910 and 5,191 in 1920. Most of these students lived in Lewis and Clark Halls (1899) with family members, in boarding or fraternity houses. Five of these houses were built initially on University Way, but after 1910 they began to cluster in the Greek Row blocks north of the university.

The U District, and the city as a whole, saw increased development between 1915 and 1929, with a sharp rise in commercial and apartment building construction. In the teens this was stimulated by transportation and infrastructure improvements, including completion of the Ship Canal from Lake Union to Elliott Bay, and opening of the Montlake Cut from Lake Washington to Lake Union. The early Latona Bridge was replaced by the University Bridge at the foot of 10th Avenue NE (Roosevelt Way NE) in 1919, the Montlake Bridge was constructed in 1925. The ensuing construction boom extended into the 1920s, along with a streetcar loop that connected the Montlake and Wallingford neighborhoods with the University District in 1928. By this date the residential character of the University District was well established, aided by the presence of the University Heights School, which opened in 1903. The Mission Revival style school, which received a 13-room addition in 1907-08, served more than 800 students by 1927.

In contrast to the residential areas to the north, industrial use of Lake Union continued into the mid-20th century with many resource-extraction industries positioned along its shoreline. Prior to construction of the Ship Canal in 1917, logs and coal were brought by ship via Lake Washington and Portage Bay to Lake Union and from there by railroad lines that ran from Elliott Bay to Ballard, and then past Fremont and Latona. Early maps and photos show the persistence of industries along the north shores of Lake Union and Portage Bay with a mix of mills, shipping facilities, a cooperage, shipbuilding and ship repair facilities along with marinas and boat moorages and the relatively undeveloped southern edge of the university property. In contrast, the south shore of Portage Bay saw residential development.

Growth of the campus and the surrounding University District neighborhood resulted in traffic congestion. Partly in response to this, University President Henry Suzzallo proposed a formal westerly approach to the campus as a parkway. While a broad boulevard was initially suggested in a 1923 campus plan by architects Bebb and Gould, the construction of NE Campus Parkway, two blocks south of the subject property, was not realized until three decades later. Meanwhile, construction on “the Ave” continued, with the opening of the first Wallin and Nordstrom store in 1924, Bartell Drug Store in 1926, and relocation of the University Book Store to its present site in 1925, followed by a J. C. Penny’s store in 1929. A Sears Roebuck store opened on nearby Roosevelt Way NE in 1928. Between 1915 and 1929 “[the] University District was Seattle’s most important commercial area outside of downtown.” Meanwhile in the 1920s, more apartment buildings were constructed near the Ave, while single-family residential development began to focus on the University Park area, directly north of campus, and further north of NE 50th Street.

Subsequent development in the University District neighborhood throughout the city was largely halted by the Great Depression, although some infrastructure improvements were made under the federal government’s Public Works Administration and Works Progress Administration programs, such as street expansions and bridge upgrading. Despite these efforts, the southern area of the University District neighborhood continued to be characterized by older industrial facilities mixed with older low-rise residences, while the blocks from NE 40th Street north to Cowen and Ravenna Parks were firmly established as middle-class housing, served by commerce and transit along University Way NE.

After World War II, returning soldiers flooded the nearby University of Washington seeking college degrees under the provisions of the GI Bill. Enrollment rose from 9,616 in 1945 to 14,500 in 1950 and 18,000 in 1960, and academic and residential facilities both on and off campus were expanded to meet the rapidly growing student body, including housing for married students. In 1948 the University's Campus Plan recommended acquisition of areas to the west and southwest of the traditional campus. Despite some neighborhood opposition to this scheme, the UW carried out its expansion. By the early 1950s construction of NE Campus Parkway was completed along with two new dormitories, Terry and Lander Halls along its south side. Expansion of the University Hospital and other university programs led to additional building construction outside of the traditional campus edges along NE Pacific Street and 15th Avenue NE.

The demise of the traditional neighborhood south and west of the campus was accelerated after construction of I-5, which eliminated the continuity between the University District and Wallingford. The freeway's presence diminished the quality of middle-class family's residential life west of Roosevelt Way NE. Meanwhile, the blocks south of Campus Parkway NE saw plans under Urban Renewal programs realized between 1960 and 1972. The University continued to grow, and in the three-decades between the early 1960s and early 1990s, it undertook 80 major construction projects including two large structures on Campus Parkway NE, Schmitz Hall (1970) and the new law school, Condon Hall (1972-74).

Increased student enrollment brought about increased pressure on the traditional residential blocks between I-5 and the campus, accompanied by changes in zoning that resulted in more apartment buildings and commercial use of Brooklyn Avenue NE and Roosevelt Way NE. University Village opened with a Rhodes Department Store in 1956, followed by a Clark's Restaurant and an A & P Supermarket in 1960, and a Lamont's store in 1970s, and later still by more upscale retail stores that helped establish the popular outdoor shopping mall with ample parking lots for middle-class customers. This saw the parallel closure of many stores on University Way NE and their replacement by cafes and stores that marketed to students. University Heights School, the only public schools within the neighborhood, closed in 1989.

As of 2002, the University District housed an estimated 35,000 permanent residents and an estimated 50,000 faculty, staff and students at the University campus who arrived daily. The latter includes approximately 8,460 students (27% of the total 31,331 undergraduates and graduate students) who reside in University housing, including new large dormitory buildings along NE Campus Parkway and on blocks to the south of the subject property.

Other residential areas in the neighborhood retain many early 20th century houses. Near the campus these include many of which have been converted to rooming houses and multiplexes, as well as many newer five and six story apartment buildings recently constructed in response to market needs and zoning changes. "The area's mix of housing types and the diverse residential population are intrinsic aspects of the University District's character. Despite considerable changes to the district, much of its building stock from 1900-1930 remains in the commercial area, apartment areas, and the single family neighborhoods."

The Building's Ownership and Construction History

The 1912 Baist map indicates that there was construction on the site prior to the subject building, with a single family residence shown in the center of the parcel that year. The King County Assessor's records cite a construction date of 1925 for the subject building, but 1924 appears to be a more accurate date. While original drawings have not been found in SDCI microfilm files to confirm this, a permit was made on July 11, 1924 and issued on July 14, 1924, affirmed by a permit notice in the *Seattle Times*, which also dates it from July 1924. A photo of subject building upon its completion also appeared in a brief newspaper article dated November 2, 1924 along with photos of other new buildings. The article noted, "Every week brings new evidence of the growth and stability of the general real estate and building activities in Seattle. Reports from realtors and builders on last week's operations indicate that the movement is widespread, affecting all parts of the city ... [including a] new \$30,000 apartment house, 1205 E. 42nd St., built for William Coles and to be managed by John Davis & Company..." The construction cost cited in 1924, \$30,000 would be about \$440,000 in current dollars. At that time, the cost was equivalent to \$13.91/square foot for the original 2,156 square foot building. (The cited cost is not consistent with the \$18,000 construction value noted on the original permit record.)

Villa Camini's property ownership reveals a series of acquisitions, and the building appears to have served as an investment for a number of people. On September 24, 1923, a carpenter, Henry C. Epps, who was living at 4303 12th Avenue NE sold the property to William S. Coles, the original owner of the apartment building. Coles was born in Wisconsin about 1860 and would have been about 63 years old at the time he purchased the property. He and his wife, Margaret, lived in the Wallingford neighborhood in 1923, and after 1924 in Laurelhurst. The building appears to have been a development investment, and in mid-May 1925, the Coles sold the property to Gardner J Gwinn, Inc. Gwinn was a general contractor who was born in Canada in the late 1880s. Within a year he sold the property to, Adelaide G Nickels, a 48 year old teacher.

Adelaide Nickels taught at T. T. Minor Elementary School from 1890 to 1902, and at St. Nicholas from 1902 to 1930. While she shared a profession with the many middle-class teachers who were tenants in the subject building, she came from wealth. She was the daughter of a Seattle pioneer, Captain Edward Nickels, and she lived in a large residence on Capitol Hill's Federal Avenue. A series of citations from the late 1920s in the local newspaper social pages notes her attendance at Olympic Hotel luncheons, various benefits events, horse races, and meetings of the Sunset Club, University Club, Junior League, and Fire Arts Society, as well as vacationing on Lake Chelan." Nickels, who remained single, was 90 when she died in May 1963. Until 1962 she also owned the Knickerbocker Hotel property at 1022 Union Street (ca. 1908, demolished 1961), as well as a home on 14th Avenue E on Capitol Hill. During her ownership of the subject building it was named the Nickels Apartments. It was managed by the Henry Broderick Company, which advertised an apartment in it in 1926: "A very desirable four-room apartment in this building; hardwood floors, electrical laundry and kitchen and fireplace are some of the more attractive features."

From 1928 to 1931, at the beginning of the Great Depression the property went through a number of real estate contracts and quit claim deeds between Nickels, and individuals named

D.E. Ferguson and A.D. Shineff , before being sold to an English-born painter, Anthony I. Sadler, in September 1931. Within another year, it was sold again to Isaac W Seaman, the president of a local finance firm, Seaman Investment Company, who resold it to Ralph H. Emerson of a similar firm, Ralph H. Emerson & Co on October 24, 1932. Emerson’s name is cited on the 1937 property tax record. He held his ownership until early 1945 when he quit claimed the building to a neighbor, Ernest Roger. Roger, a German immigrant, and his wife, Frieda, lived nearby at 4143 12th Ave NE in 1948. It appears that they held onto the apartment house property as an investment for nearly three decades, until June 1974, when he granted a real estate contract to John J. Aylward, and his wife.

Early Ownership Summary

1923-1925	William Coles
1925-1926	Gardner J. Gwinn Inc
1926-1931	Adelaide G. Nickels, D.E. Ferguson, & A.D. Shineff
1931-1932	Anthony Sadler & Frances L. Atkin
1932	I.W. Seaman Inc
1932-1945	Ralph H. Emerson
1945-1974	Ernest & Frieda Roger

In June 1974 John J. (“Jack”) and Francine Aylward and Warren Bakken purchased the property from Ernest and Frieda Roger. This purchase was made on contract, and the new owners made payments to the Rogers until Earnest's death in 1982, and subsequently to Frieda until her death in 1984. Heins Loesch was the executor of Frieda's estate, and the contract was passed to Robert and Gertrude Levy, the heirs to the estate. Bakken and John Aylward then made payments to Robert E. Levy from May 1984 through June 1985, to complete the contract. Warren Bakken and the Aylwards owned the property together until 2002 when the business was divided, at which time the Aylwards Quit Claimed the property to Warren Bakken and his wife, Jocelyn Phillips. Twelve O Five, LLC, owned by Margaret Johnson and Shauna Aylward, purchased the property from the Bakkens in October 2012. Thus, the building has been within the ownership and operation of members of the same family, along with business partners, for over 36 of the past 45 years.

As an investment, the property has served its owners and occupants well. Historically it has had low tenant vacancy. Its assessed value of \$6,420 in 1938 rose to \$8,800 in 1964, \$25,750 in 1972, \$195,000 in 1985 and \$882,000 in 2012, and in 2018 it was assessed at \$2.4 million. A developer, , Greystar GP II, LLC, has agreed to purchase the property for \$3,914,000 from the current owners, Twelve O Five LLC. The closing date is set for December 31, 2019. The new owner plans to maintain the building while it develops two separate properties to the south on 12th Avenue NE.

The Tenants

Reviews of *Polk Directory to Seattle* from the mid-1920s through 1990 indicates some specific information about the residential tenants of the Villa Camini, and their occupations and lives. It

also explains something about the overall development and history of the neighborhood during this seven-decade period.

In 1926 the apartment building's residents included two teachers at Ballard High School, Edna E Voight and Edith Van Winkle, a widow named Carrie M Voight (widow Lewis) and Arthur J. Johnson (assistant manager of a title insurance company) and his wife, Alice S. Johnson. The Johnsons remains in 1928, along with two other couples, Frederick P. and Alice Matthys, and Jeannie and Carl P. Benson, who was the on-site caretaker of what was then known as the Nickels Apartments. Other tenants in the late 1920s included an insurance salesman and his wife; a salesman and his wife and their daughter, a student; a sales manager and student daughter; a widow and student daughter; a single student, a bookkeeper and Frederick & Nelson salesman.

Similar occupations characterize the residents the early 1930s: a salesman and student daughter; a service station employee; and a single man; a factory worker and his wife, a UW secretary, and D. E. Ferguson, who was the manager of the Nickels Apartments, as it was known in 1930. In 1933-38 another tenant, Robert C. Miller, was an associate professor of zoology known for eccentric collections. Ralph H. Emerson and his wife, Charlotte, were on-site owner-occupants in 1933 to around 1938 at a time when he was the president of his own finance company. Their tenants and those who followed in the 1950s included a social worker, a widow, and five teachers at local high schools, a train dispatcher and an attorney and his wife. At least three of the teachers resided in the building from 1938 to the mid-1950s. From 1939 to 1942 the building was managed by Barbara McMeekin, who lived with her husband, a warehouseman. A later tenant in 1948-1951 was a State Grain Inspector and his wife.

The occupations of tenants in the 1950s and 1960s suggest they were middle-class individuals or couples. They included a bookbinder, a city engineer, a salesman, a UW utility man and his student wife, a cook, and at least three other schoolteachers, one with a student daughter. These tenants were joined later by other teachers and several retirees. In 1961 through 1970, Mrs. Florence Gould, a UW instructor and associate professor was a tenant, and in 1961-1975 a UW events manger, Guy Tucker, lived in the building. Other tenants in the 1970s included an instructor and events manager at the UW, a post carrier, an analyst at the UW Hospital and his wife, and a medical technician at Swedish Hospital.

Throughout the 1970s nearly all the tenants were individual students, or student roommates. This tenancy data suggests a shift that occurred during this period. Beginning in 1979 and up through 1990 there were up to six and seven individuals listed as tenants each year according to *Polk Directory* and Seattle Telephone Directory listings, presumably living individually and in shared apartments. In the 1980s, nearly all were identified as students. Kathleen Fowells, an assistant media buyer with The Media Place was the only non-student tenant in 1989 and 1990.

The building had been built as middle-class housing, and it had long been the residence of many long-term working, middle and professional class couples and individual residents. But by the 1980s it had transitioned to largely serve as university students housing. This pattern reflects the demographic and social changes in the University District as it transitioned in the late 20th century from a middle-class neighborhood to a more transient one with younger student residents, during a period of increased university enrollment and general cultural unrest. This change had

significant impact on the neighborhood's commercial core as well, which some community members characterize as a general decline:

[The change] has many roots: increasing rents for business owners, the opening of malls and shopping centers like University Village in 1970 (and its subsequent lure of major stores that once used to be on the Ave., or would have located there), migration of families from the University District, the closure of the local elementary school, and the flood of street kids and homeless people to the area. And the caliber of stores that left the Ave. in the '60s, '70s' and '80s--such as Miller Pollard--never came back, instead of being replaced by those catering to the street crowd. "The change in the Ave.," explains Scott Soules, '71, a third-generation Ave. property owner and commercial real estate agent, "also has to do with economic and social forces much greater than this street."

More recent changes in the neighborhood have enhanced its viability. These include the University's recent redevelopment of dormitories to the south of the subject property and in the blocks south of NE 40th Street, the opening of the University District Farmer's Market in 1993 and the conversion of the vacant University Heights School into a community center in 2001.

Original Designer, Architect Earl A. Roberts

While no drawings have been discovered in SDCI microfilm records, the permit ledger cites Earl A. Roberts as the designer for the original owner, William S. Coles. (The contractor's name is partially illegible in the permit, but it appears to be Walter & Brady, a company that built at least one other apartment building designed by Roberts.)

Earl A. Roberts was born in Portland Oregon in 1886, and studied architecture in New York City. He returned to Portland where he worked in a design partnership with two of his siblings, brothers William A. and Bruce W. Roberts in 1909-1911, and in the Roberts Construction Company for two of those years. Roberts moved to Seattle in 1916 after having a sole practice in Portland in ca. 1912-1916. He worked up through the 1930s in offices he maintained in the downtown Empire, Burke Building, and Lloyd Building.

Roberts' early work includes the 1916-1918 Lake View School, at 8635 SE 68th Street on Mercer Island (Sunnybeam Nursery School), a small wood frame building with a classical portico, which was listed on the National Register in 1988; and the 1921 Classical style Fifth Church of Christ, Scientist in Seattle's Columbia City Historic District, at 3515 Alaska Way S (Rainier Valleys Cultural Center). He subsequently several designed larger commercial buildings, such as the George Siebert Garage in 1924 (later known as the Lenora Building, and currently Cornish College of the Arts), Cosmopolitan Motors Company, 2030 8th Avenue (demolished) the E. B. Holmes Lumber Company (1928), and the Benjamin Franklin Hotel (1929, demolished 1980) with architect Thomas Hooper of Vancouver, B.C. In the mid-1920s Roberts designed the following apartment buildings in the University District.

- Smart Apartment / Stanford Apartments, 1304 NE 42nd Street (1924), designed for Mrs. J. E. Smart, and built by general contractor Walter & Brady. This three-story, 22,54 square

foot, 32-unit brick building is situated at a corner site less than one block from the Villa Camini.

- Washington Manor / University Manor Apartments (1924-1925), designed for the University District Development Corporation, an eight-story 63,800 square foot building with 80 units. The terra cotta details features grotesque style corbels below the second floor on the primary façades.
- Malloy Apartments, 4337 15TH Avenue NE (1928), designed for Agnus P. Malloy and the local Malloy family. This prominent eight story, brick clad building, embodies the Collegiate Gothic style with cast stone decorative details. Its 93,500 square feet contain 123 apartment units on eight floors.
- Cavalier Apartments (1925-1926, demolished) at 1303 NE Campus Parkway NE was designed for Herbert Smith. The five-story reinforced brick building contained 48 units in 52,750 square feet and included a large adjacent garage structure.
- Commodore and Duchess Apartments (1926 and 1928), at 4005-4009 15th Avenue NE, were also designed for Herbert Smith. These seven and eight-story brick masonry buildings with terra cotta details and entry surrounds are joined, and together they total 125,000 square feet.

As with the Villa Camini, these buildings represent the development of the growing the University District neighborhood, in response to the city's increased density and housing needs. These projects were followed by the Arthur Wright & Son Mortuary, which he designed in 1930. Earl A. Roberts dies in Seattle in late May 1939, at the age of 54.

Roberts' work on the Villa Camini, designed in 1924, appears somewhat unusual in that it is a much smaller building than his other buildings in the mid-1920s, and stylistically divergent from the taller brick masonry apartment buildings, which were typically brick and cast stone or terra cotta edifices were embellished with Gothic Revival decorative details.

The Building's Eclectic Style

Residential development from the early 20th century University District spans a range of building types, sizes and styles. Among these are many apartment buildings dating from the 1920s, which were characterized in a recent historic survey report as “decorative boxes.” They typically have flat roof, rectangular massing, brick construction with cast stone and stone trim, and often feature ornamentation and Collegiate Gothic elements borrowed from the style of architecture on the nearby university campus. At three to seven stories they represent dense development that resulted in its estimated 100 apartment buildings, “The height and scale of (which) is unmatched in Seattle except in areas close to downtown, such as First Hill.”

In contrast to these apartment buildings, the Villa Camini appears very “house-like”, and its scale and materials differ. Relatively small, the two-story hipped roof stucco-clad structure originally featured only a single main entry door on its primary facade. The building's design is eclectic, borrowing characteristics from the Mediterranean or Spanish Revival style in its

cladding, sculptural chimney forms, hipped roof, tile insets, and roofing. Eclectic style Spanish-Mediterranean Revival designs are also seen in some Seattle mixed-use structures, single family residences and apartments from the mid- to late-1920s, although there are some earlier examples, such as the Valencia, at 1710 NE 45th Street in Wallingford (1909). Other examples include the Leonard Apartments, 715 1st Avenue W (1930); the Lorraine/William Tell Hotel, 2327 2nd Avenue (1929); and Morris Apartments, 2197 5th Avenue N (1926).

In its eclecticism, the Villa Camini differs from nearby older single-family houses that clearly embody a distinctive residential style, such as Dutch and Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, Bungalow types or Four Square / Classic Box styles. Its relatively simple mass contrasts with low-rise courtyard and garden court buildings, such as the nearby Canterbury Court at 4225 Brooklyn Avenue NE (1929) and the El Monterey at 4200 11th Avenue (1928).

Lastly, as with many older buildings, the Villa Camini contrasts with post-World War II low-rise residential buildings. These include mid-century Modern style low-rise apartments with flat or low sloping gable and shed roofs, and stucco, stained wood and stone veneer cladding, and exterior motel-like balcony entries. Including larger recent buildings to the south, such as the UW dormitory, Elm Hall between NE Campus Parkway and NE 41st Street, and two newer seven story apartment buildings, the Nora and Cedar East at 4106 and 4123 12th Avenue NE.

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved include: *the site, and the exterior of the building.*

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Sarah Sodt
City Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: Margy Johnson and Shauna Aylward; Twelve O Five, LLC
Nick Afsah, Greystar GP II, LLC
Jessica Clawson, McCullough Hill Leary PS
Susan Boyle, BOLA Architecture + Planning
Jordan Kiel, Chair, LPB
Nathan Torgelson, SDCI
Katrina Nygaard, SDCI
Ken Mar, SDCI