

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0 building
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(n/a)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register. 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

DOMESTIC/ Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

WORK IN PROGRESS/residential

7. Description

Architectural Classification

LATE VICTORIAN/
Renaissance Revival

see continuation sheet [].

Materials

foundation LIMESTONE
 walls BRICK
LIMESTONE
TERRA COTTA
 roof ASPHALT
 other _____

see continuation sheet [].

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet [x]

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1907

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ridington, A. Blair/
Melrose Building & Investment Co.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: _____

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Melrose Apartments
St. Louis (Independent City), MO

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
<u>15</u>	<u>739 360</u>	<u>4280 280</u>			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Allen/Susan Sheppard/Doug Johnson, Researchers
organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date October 27, 2006
street & number 917 Locust Street, 7th floor telephone (314) 421-6474
city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63101

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Rothschild Development Ltd.
street & number 393 North Euclid telephone 314-361-7117
city or town St. Louis state Missouri zip code 63108

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary

The Melrose Apartments at 4065 West Pine Boulevard in St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri, is a three-story L-shaped brick residential building with frontages of approximately 213' along Sarah Avenue, and 91' along West Pine. The building was constructed in 1907 in the Renaissance Revival style. The building has a flat roof with simple white glazed terra cotta coping along the primary elevations facing Sarah and West Pine, and red terra cotta coping along the secondary elevations. The west elevation facing Sarah is repetitive in design, with six projecting trapezoidal window bays. The building has a partially above ground basement, with a rough-cut limestone foundation. The primary elevations have a smooth limestone water table, with basement access at alternating bays. These include modern replacement doors. Some basement windows have been filled in with brick, but original door and window openings have not been altered. The building retains its integrity, though its original cornice is no longer extant.

Exterior

The west elevation has two main entrance bays, both with a pair of wooden double doors with a large transom, to the left of a single one-over-one window with limestone sill (see photograph #1). The elaborate entrances are surrounded by limestone panels with the word "MELROSE" incised above the door and window (see photograph #2). The surround is capped by a drip label mold with multiple decorative rosettes. Above the first floor entrance, at both the second and third floor, is a central window with sidelights. The second floor window has a limestone sill and a decorative Bedford limestone lintel with a central medallion. The third floor window at the entrance bay also has a limestone sill, but has a simpler lintel, with a brick flat arch opening and terra cotta keystone, outlined by bull-nosed bricks.

The first floor of the west façade carries single one-over-one windows, alternating with a three-sided projecting bay window, also with single one-over-one windows. An extended bay on the right end of the west façade includes a central window with sidelights, with another single one-over-one window to the right. First floor windows share a continuous limestone sill and a continuous limestone lintel, broken up only by the two main entrances. Two limestone stringcourses, between the sill and lintel, further unify the front façade.

A similar pattern of single one-over-one windows exists at the second floor, although of a simpler design, with each window having an individual limestone sill and no lintel. This

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

pattern is broken up by the more decorative lintels at the two entrance bays. A complementary pattern exists at the third floor, although windows share a continuous drip mold lintel of bull-nosed bricks, and windows on the flat façade have a simple terra cotta keystone. Above the third floor the original terra cotta cornice has been partially removed and replaced with stucco, although the dentils are still in place. (A reproduction cornice could be replicated and reapplied to the building.)

The south elevation facing West Pine is three bays wide and includes two three-story brick projecting trapezoidal window bays (see photograph #1). The articulation is similar to the west elevation. Between the two projecting bays is a formal entrance like the others. At the second floor most windows have been boarded up, but original window openings have not been altered, and original windows may exist behind the boards. Third floor windows appear to still be in use. Each is a single one-over-one window with a limestone sill and a brick lintel with a drip molding, outlined by bull-nosed brick which continues to each third floor window on the west and south façade. Third floor windows which are not part of the projecting bays have terra cotta keystones.

The rear, or east façade, reveals the L-shaped plan of the building (see photograph #3). This façade includes two three-story iron fire escapes. Windows at the rear of the building are single one-over-one windows, with stone sills and brick segmental arched lintels with three rows of brick headers. Several of the first floor windows have been filled in with brick, although original openings remain intact. There is a simple three-story projecting trapezoidal brick window bay on the right side of the rear façade. A galvanized cornice remains intact. The east elevation of the short end of the "L" is three bays wide and has few openings, except at a central bay, which includes a projecting window bay at the second and third floor that is sheathed in slate shingles (see photograph #4). A third floor window in the bay has been boarded up, although the window is likely still intact behind the board. Below the bay, at the first floor, is a single one-over-one window with stone sill. The white glazed terra cotta coping ends at this central bay, allowing for a step in the roofline and red terra cotta coping.

Interior

The wooden, single-pane double doors of each entrance open into a foyer. The floor is covered in original white honeycomb-style ceramic tile with a blue key border. Wainscoting consisting of marble panels runs along each wall. Three marble steps rise to a second set of double doors that lead to the stairwell and corridors. The corridors on each floor run laterally, and are double-loaded with apartments on each side as well as

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

on each end. The halls feature wooden panel wainscoting and much original millwork. Two-part baseboards, single-part door casements and doors all seem original. At the sides of each stairwell on the first floor, door openings leading to the corridors bear a wooden entablature featuring a shell and garland pattern. The stairs feature original balustrades and rails (see photograph #5).

There are several different floor plans of apartments; few apartments have had their plans altered. Most units consist of two rooms, a living and bedroom and a kitchen, with two closets and a bathroom. The units feature original baseboards and window and door casements that are less ornate than those found in the corridors. Some units have brick fireplaces with wooden mantels (see photograph #6). Generally, original multi-panel doors remain. Common panel configurations include a four-panel door with two smaller panels under two taller panels; a three-panel door with one horizontal panel over two tall vertical panels; and a five-panel door with one horizontal panel over two outer vertical panels flanking a small panel over a large panel. The last door type does not appear to be original to the building, though. These doors generally have historic door hardware. Some apartments have timbered ceilings in the living and bedrooms. Some of the larger apartments retain original tile floors in their bathrooms. Overall, the historic character of the interior is consistent throughout the building.

Integrity

The Melrose conveys strong historic appearance, despite the alteration of the original cornice on the primary elevations. Later frame additions to the building including a canopy along the south elevation and a restaurant lobby on the basement level at the southwest corner are being demolished by the current owner; the canopy has been completely removed. The building retains most of its original wooden windows and ornament, and retains its original floor plan with its interior substantially intact. Overall, the building retains integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, workmanship and association and reflects its historic appearance.

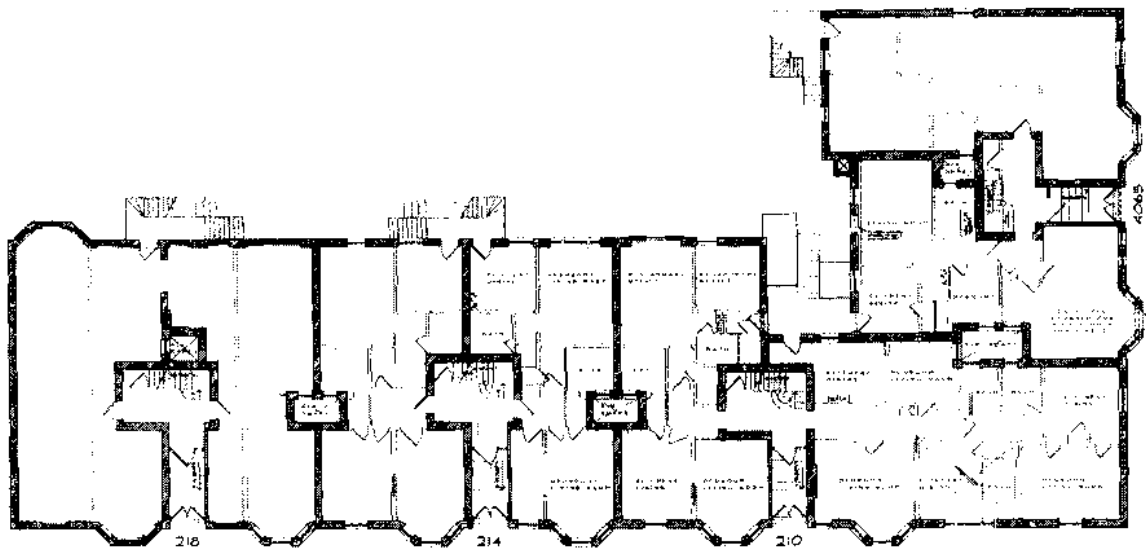
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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Illustration 1: Floor plan for the Melrose Apartments.
Plan courtesy Luer & Associates, 2006.



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Section 8 Page 5

Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary

The Melrose Apartments at 4065 West Pine Boulevard in St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri, is locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture. Construction of the twenty-four-unit apartment building was implemented in 1907 by the Melrose Building & Investment Co., incorporated that same year to finance the apartment project. One of the three investment company principals, A. Blair Ridington, was also the architect. This was a unique arrangement and one of only two known instances in the city of an architect lending venture capital to a building of his design. Ridington's artful adaptation of the Renaissance Revival style for the Melrose referenced the Late 19th & Early 20th Century Revival houses found elsewhere in the Central West End, a fashionable residential area west of Midtown and the Central Business District. Inclusion of the first Melrose residents in the prestigious 1908 Blue Book is firm evidence that socially prominent St. Louisans had indeed accepted this new type of residence, the multi-family apartment building. Ridington's design of the upper-middle-class Melrose Apartments thus successfully responded to both the high cost of the few luxury apartment buildings already completed and the lingering criticism of multiple-family building design. The period of significance is 1907, the year of construction.

Background

St. Louis had a reputation at the end of the nineteenth century as a city of fine houses. Admired by locals and visitors alike, many of the most noteworthy examples of domestic architecture were concentrated in the Central West End. As the city limits reached westward beyond recently opened Forest Park in 1876, Lindell Boulevard (christened in honor of Peter Lindell, whose Second Addition in 1856 platted much of the surrounding area for future development) became a focus of prominent citizens who financed street improvements on the former dirt wagon road with private funds. When enhancements were complete, the street was considered one of the "finest carriage drives ornamented with costly residences that can be found in the Western country."¹ Lindell Boulevard emerged as the primary thoroughfare through the fashionable Central West End and was lined with the mansions of St. Louis' elite families by the turn of the century.

The construction of apartment buildings was resisted in spite of residential demand. The objections to this building type seem to be based upon design problems inherent in 19th century multiple-family buildings, as opposed to questions about density. "Everyone knows that the flat is not a thing of beauty," one writer opined in the *St. Louis Builder* in

¹ *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 21 1890.

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

1904.² Popular conceptions of the "apartment" building condemned the type as stifling, awkward and cheap. Apartment design was lamented as cookie-cutter and without inspiration.

Though the term "apartment" was used in the city as early as the 1880s, buildings described as such were often residential hotels or second-story adjoined flats over first-story storefronts. Multi-family tenements or flats were commonplace in St. Louis, but these buildings differed from the apartment house in articulation and form. Tenements typically featured separate exterior entryways to individual units. Complaints leveled against the tenements and flats that were precursors to the modern apartment, however, were inappropriate for prestigious multi-family buildings that emerged in the early 20th century.

Elaboration

The Melrose Building & Investment Co. was incorporated on April 25, 1907 with \$50,000 in capital.³ Its three shareholders were A. Blair Ridington, George Sauerbrunn and Fred A. Banister. As expressed in the articles of incorporation, the Melrose Building & Investment Co. was formed as a real estate enterprise with purchases, leases, improvements of any "store, apartment or office buildings" expressly indicated. The financial investment of an architect like Ridington in such a corporation was rare in St. Louis at this time. Only Preston J. Bradshaw is known to have contributed in a similar manner to projects he also designed.

The firm purchased from Samuel Bowman & Co. a lot at the northeast corner of West Pine Boulevard and North Sarah Street in early May of 1907.⁴ This 213 x 91 foot parcel was originally part of Peter Lindell's Second Addition of 1856, held in the prior decade by the family of Gustavo Hellendall. Prior to that \$20,000 purchase (and, indeed, prior to its incorporation), the company had taken a building permit for the construction of apartments at 4065 West Pine and 210-18 North Sarah. The cost for the new construction was reported as \$90,000 with A. Blair Ridington listed as architect.

Ridington's design for the Melrose Apartments created a gracious, red brick building in the fashionable Renaissance Revival style. Three stories tall with a raised basement, the L-shaped corner building fronted west on Sarah and north on West Pine with a generous courtyard in the back. The tall basement allowed for sufficient light for

² *St. Louis Builder*, December 1904.

³ Articles of Incorporation, Melrose Building and Investment Company. 1907.

⁴ *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 5, 1907.

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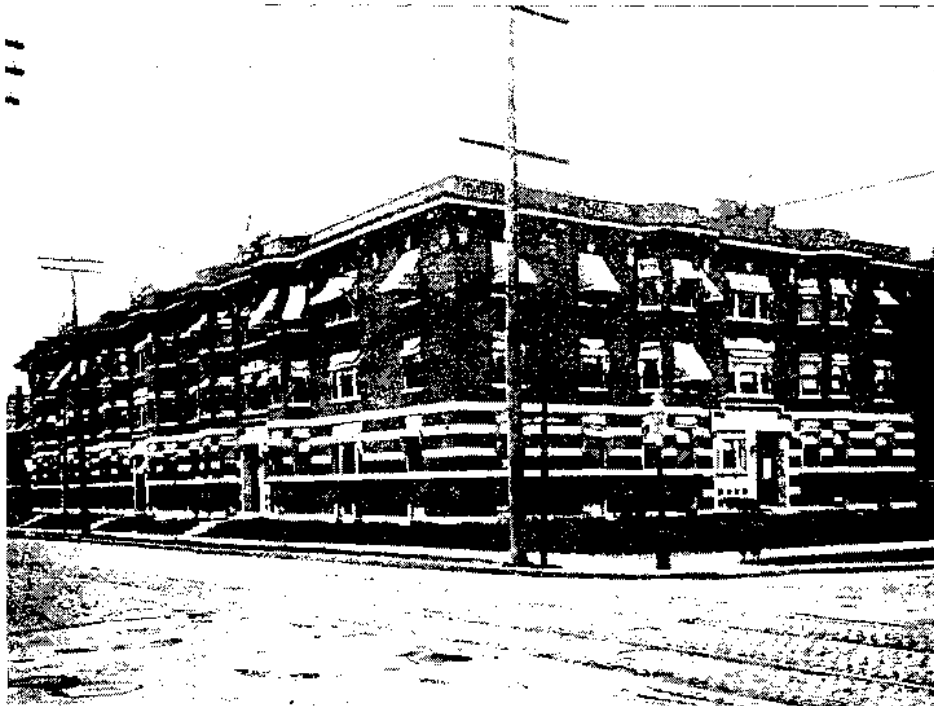
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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

professional or commercial use of the space. Older tenement-style buildings provided only cellars or storage areas in dim, low-ceiling basements, and commercial uses in first-floor storefronts. The Melrose Apartments demonstrated that modern apartment buildings in St. Louis could efficiently utilize all interior space, even the basement.

Stylistically, the new apartment building employed the Renaissance Revival style then used widely on many single-family residences, including some designed by Ridington (Image 1). The base was decorated with Bedford limestone, including stringcourses creating a striking striped effect, as well as elaborate carved entrances. The building made use of projecting bays, an overhanging bracketed cornice and shaped parapets with terra cotta medallions that are all typical effects used in the style. Ridington also employed two types of brick bonds: the standard stretcher bond at the first floor and an English bond above. This use of contrasting brick bonds is an early example of a decorative touch common in Renaissance Revival buildings in St. Louis.

Image 1: The Melrose Apartments, 1910. View from southwest.
From *The St. Louis Builder*, July 1910.



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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Architect Arthur Blair Ridington was well versed in creating residences for the elite class in the Central West End. Born in England in 1871, he moved with his parents to St. Louis as a child after a few years in Pennsylvania. Ridington developed an early interest in the fine arts and he later studied at the old St. Louis Art School.⁵ This passion for art evolved into noted interests in Egyptology and archeology. Eventually, however, young Ridington settled into an architecture career and worked in association with several St. Louis architects including Edward F. Nolte. These associations were brief, however, as the architect entered his own practice soon thereafter.

Single-family dwellings designed by A. Blair Ridington are found throughout St. Louis. The architect's portfolio included multi-family dwellings on a smaller scale, such as two-family houses constructed in 1903 in Fox Park. The largest concentrations of Ridington's residences can be found in the western corridor of the city. Many of these houses skewed toward the dramatic, such as several manses he contributed to Westminster Place in the Central West End. His grand residences were not limited to that private subdivision, however, and could be also found on the primary east-west streets of the Central West End—Maryland, Laclede, West Pine and Forest Park Boulevard.

Of particular note is the impressive Renaissance Revival style mansion at 4542 West Pine Boulevard, constructed in 1905 as living quarters for Fred Arthur Banister and family (West Pine-Laclede Historic District, NR 05/09/2002). Banister not only retained Ridington as architect for his house; the men also had a standing business relationship. Born in St. Louis County in 1861, Banister rose from secretary to president of several industrial firms prior to a career change to real estate investment. He was briefly associated with the E. S. Guignon & Bros. real estate company before becoming an independent agent with offices in the Syndicate Trust Building downtown. Fred A. Banister had already engaged Ridington as architect for several residential properties he developed, including a series of two-story flats constructed in 1905 at 4352-54, 4356-58 and 4488-86 Laclede Avenue in the Central West End (each is a contributing property in the West Pine-Laclede Historic District, NR 05/09/2002). Two years later, the two embarked with an additional partner upon the development of a different Central West End multi-family dwelling aimed at enlightened middle-class residents: the Melrose Apartments.

George Sauerbrunn joined Ridington and Banister as a co-investor of the Melrose Building and Investment Company. He was born in Germany in 1857 but came with his family to America at the age of four. Sauerbrunn was educated in St. Louis public

⁵ Landmarks Association Architects Files.

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

schools and entered the field of construction post-graduation. By 1884, the young man began an independent brick construction company. He eventually developed his operations into that of a general contractor and incorporated the Sauerbrunn Construction Company in 1897.⁶

The Melrose Apartments differed from the few immediate predecessors in the Central West End in scale and use. The Eames & Young-designed Washington Hotel (located at Washington Boulevard and Kingshighway and underway in 1902 in advance of the World's Fair) represented a new idea in multi-family housing not previously seen in St. Louis. As its name indicates, however, it retained services of a fashionable hotel even though its individual living quarters were similar to a modern conception of an apartment. A true, modern apartment building—the luxurious Colchester (NR 07/12/2006)—was constructed in 1906. Located a few blocks south on Kingshighway, the Colchester was one of the first modern apartment buildings in St. Louis.⁷ The apartment reinterpreted as an aesthetically advanced, convenient dwelling for the upper classes helped eliminate hesitations regarding the building type from only a few years prior.

The residences of the neighborhood's Colchester Apartments were unquestionably for upper-class inhabitants, as were those of the Melrose. The 1908 Blue Book included the first three tenants (Mr. and Mrs. Isaac W. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. B. J. Rowe and Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Sanderson) in its listing of St. Louis' elite. The Renaissance Revival style used by Ridington likely assuaged the fears of this building type, as did the relative spaciousness of its individual units. All of its original twenty-four units featured bay windows and cross ventilation; some apartments contained fireplaces. Modern conveniences and ample living quarters were strikingly different from the maligned flats disapproved by many Central West End residents. The Melrose Apartments offered a desirable, upper-middle-class alternative to preceding multi-family buildings in a style and execution particularly important for a genteel neighborhood.

Neighborhood services were also addressed in the design of the Melrose Apartments. In an adaptation of the typical St. Louis street-level storefront residence, the developers allowed office and commercial space in the basement units of the building. In its first decade, the building housed several physicians including an optometrist.

⁶ *The Book of St. Louisans. The Republic*, St. Louis. 1912.

⁷ The Colchester Apartments was designed by Boston architect William H. Andrews in a Classical Revival style with multiple units accessible beyond single entryways. This form of multi-family housing was burgeoning in newer, wealthy enclaves along the East Coast but was new to St. Louis. Many local architects spent time in the East and some brought back with them current, artistic designs for multi-family residences that were more than joined flats.

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

The Melrose Building & Investment Co. sold the building to Adam Flickinger in 1918. (The sale of the property only eleven years after its construction underscored the purpose of the firm as a profit-driven venture.) Starting in the 1920s, a series of restaurants began operating in the basement space at the corner of West Pine Boulevard and North Sarah. In the 1940s, Amedeo Flore opened the Melrose Pizzeria, considered to be the first eatery to serve pizza in the Midwest.⁸ In 1952, Louis Parente opened what would become Rossino's a few years later.

Rossino's, a venerable St. Louis institution, operated in the Melrose Apartments until early 2006 when the building's ownership changed. Meanwhile, numerous minor but inappropriate alterations to the exterior had been accompanied over time by a dramatic shift in the tenant base. Recently, the new owner removed the exterior alterations in advance of a much-needed renovation of the once elegant but still intact property.

⁸ *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 26, 2006.

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Boundary Description

The Melrose Apartments are located in City Block 3921 in St. Louis, Missouri. The nominated property is legally known by the Assessor's Office as parcel number 39210005206. The boundary of the nominated property is indicated by a dashed line on the accompanying map entitled "Melrose Apartments Boundary Map."

Boundary Justification

The nominated parcel includes all extant property historically associated with the Melrose Apartments.

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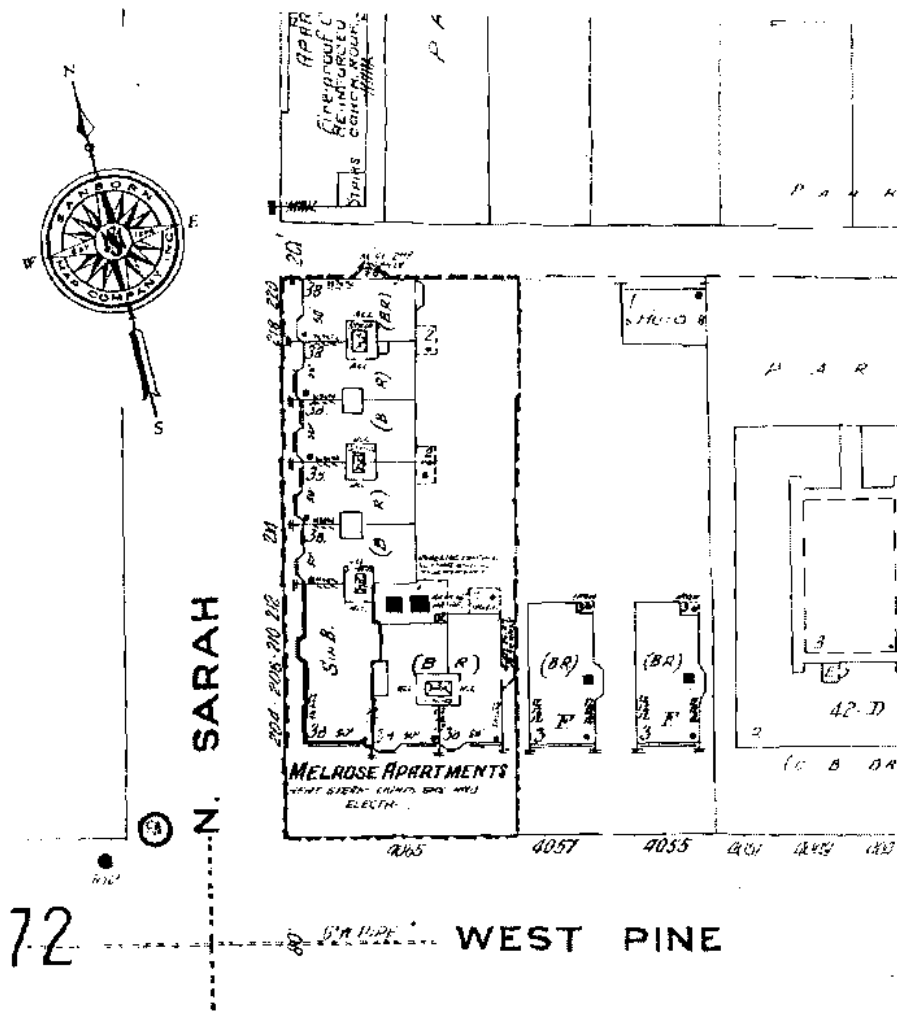
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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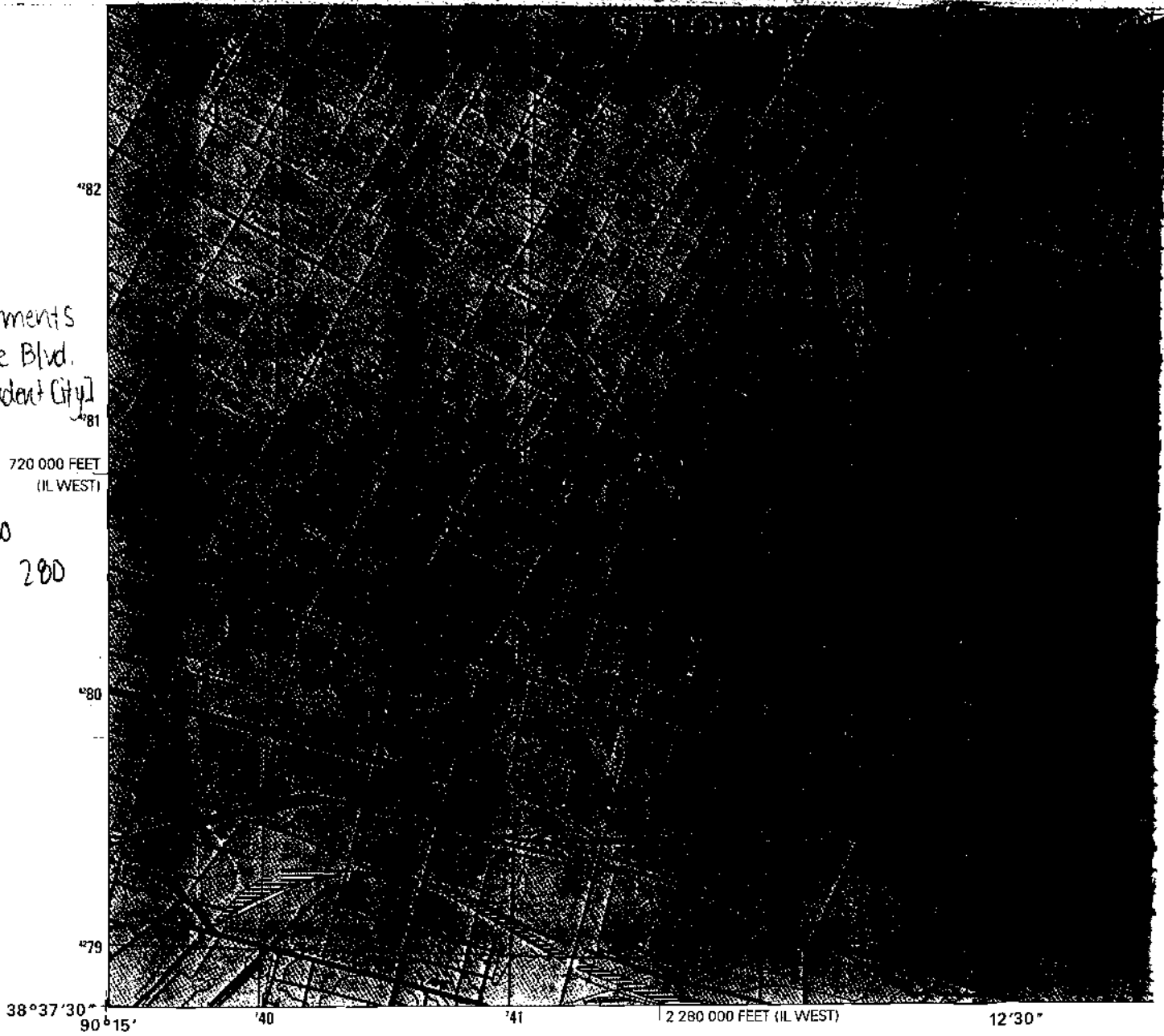
Melrose Apartments
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Melrose Apartments Boundary Map

Source: Sanborn Map Company. Vol. 5, plate 73, 1967.



se Apartments
 West Pine Blvd.
 [Independent City]
 10
 15
 720 000 FEET
 (IL WEST)
 739 360
 49 4280 280



Produced by the United States Geological Survey

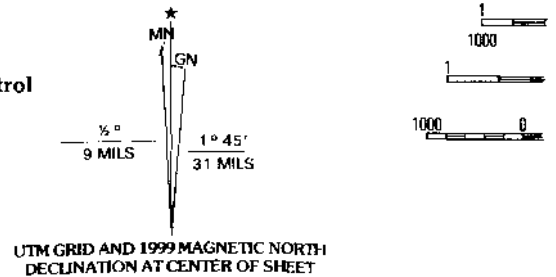
Topography compiled 1952. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1993 and other sources. Photoinspected using imagery dated 1998; no major culture or drainage changes observed. PLSS and survey control current as of 1954. Boundaries, other than corporate, verified 1999

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15
 10 000-foot ticks: Illinois (west zone) and Missouri (east zone)
 Coordinate Systems of 1983

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

Contours that conflict with revised planimetry are dashed

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



UTM GRID AND 1999 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

FOR









