



ROCK ISLAND PRESERVATION COMMISSION
NOMINATION FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

CASE # 90-6

DATE Nov. 5, 1990

TIME 10:20 a.m

Common Street Address of Property: Long View Apartments -- 20th Street and 18th Ave

Name and Address of Property Owner:

Presently condominiums. Linda Rowe, 788-8858, Condo Association President

Please attach a simple statement setting forth the reasons for requesting designation. Please refer to the criteria listed on the reverse side. (These are excerpted from the Rock Island Preservation Ordinance.)

Name(s) and Address(es) of Applicant(s):

Jaan Sturgis
Signature

Jaan Sturgis, Landmarks Committee Chair
Rock Island Preservation Society
Name

128 West 14th Street, Davenport, IA 52803
Address

326-7804 (days) 324-6628 (eves)
Telephone

Please attach the following:

1. Legal description of property (available from abstract or County Recorder of Deeds office).
2. Map indicating location of property proposed for designation (assistance available from Planning and Redevelopment Division).
3. Recent photograph (copies of old photographs or drawings may also be included).
4. Indicate whether or not the owner is aware of the proposed designation.

Condo association is aware of this nomination and strongly favors landmarking of the Long View.

LONGVIEW
PARK

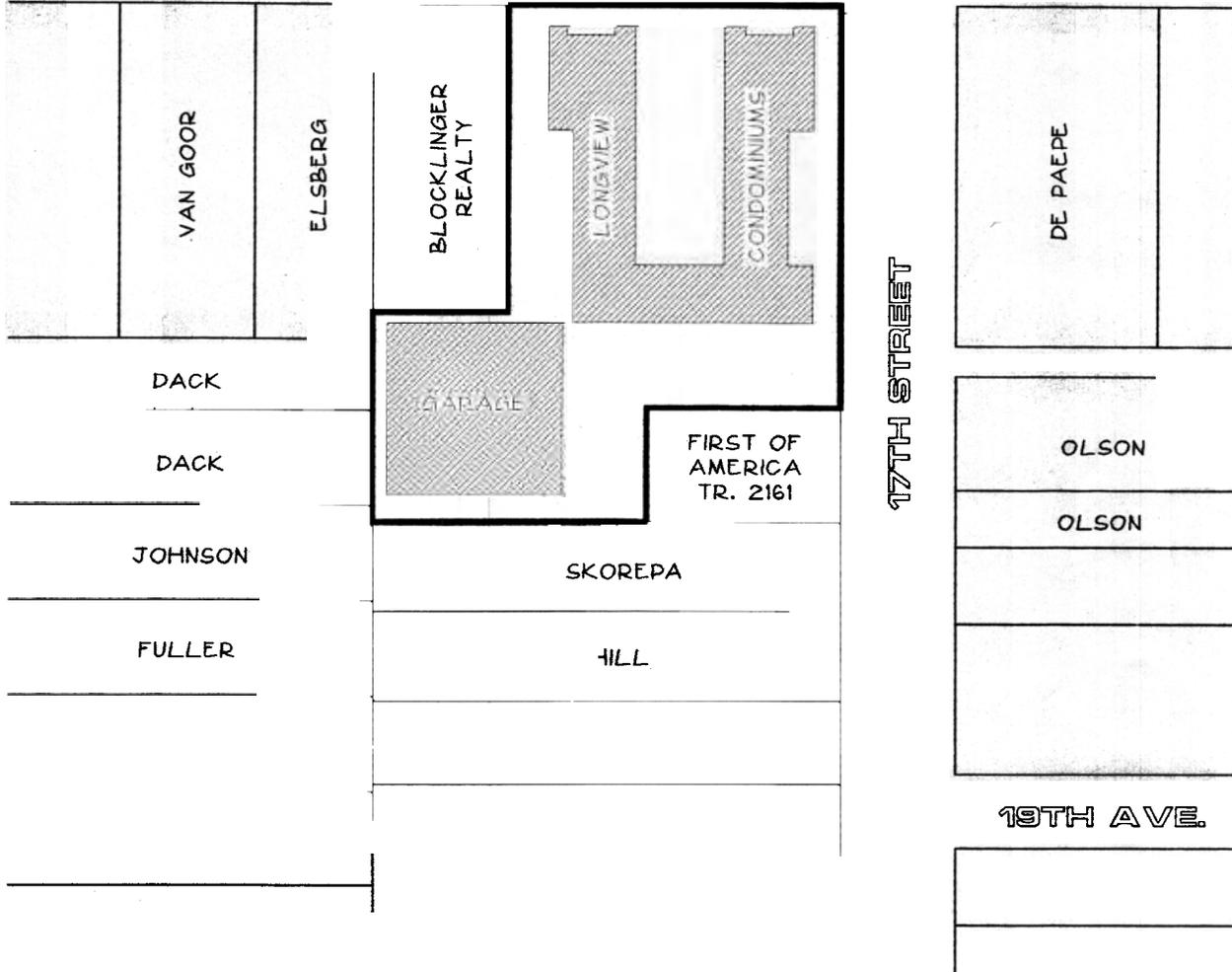
17TH ST.

FIRST
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

20TH ST.

CARLIN

18TH AVENUE



0 50 100 200 300
SCALE



CITY OF
ROCK ISLAND
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING AND REDEVELOPMENT DIVISION

LANDMARK DESIGNATION

LEGEND

— SUBJECT PROPERTY
LONGVIEW CONDOS

11/7/80

DR. BY: L.R.O.
APP. BY: *JD*

The Rock Island Preservation Society proudly nominates the Long View Apartments as its December 1990 building worthy of landmark designation. Criteria applied are numbers, three, four, and five of the Rock Island Preservation Commission's guidelines for landmarking historically significant structures. Specifically, we will attempt to support in this paper the statement that the structure is significant as an apartment building -- related to the Colonial/Classical Revival styles of vernacular architecture in a free standing building with a U-shaped configuration; that the builder, a German immigrant, Mr. Sam Weisman, should be recognized for his architectural and entrepreneurial genius; and Long View represents a strongly recognizable visual feature in our community and as such is part of the emphasis that the National Trust for Historic Preservation has emphasized in the term "sense of place". Truly, this structure makes one feel that he/she has arrived at an important crossroads in this city.

At the time the Long View Apartments were built, Rock Island -- and the rest of the country-- was experiencing an economically healthy period. The apartments were built to house people of at least upper middle class means with the attempt that they would have all the advantages of both a house and an apartment. Originally, apartments were not favored housing arrangements in Europe. However, with an edict proclaimed by Louis XIV (on the French throne from 1643 until 1715) that the nobility stay at his Versailles compound, apartment living became fashionable. However, in the United States it was not until after the Civil War that it became commonplace and then only in large metropolitan centers -- particularly New York City. The 1920s locally was a time of a construction boom and 20% of residential housing built fell under the apartment category divided among 12 apartment structures.

As stated in the opening paragraph, the Long View Apartments is worthy of landmark designation because it is one of the most outstanding examples of a free standing U-shaped apartment building in this area. Apartment buildings can be of three particular types: free standing, nonfree standing, and an apartment(s) over a commercial structure. Obviously, the Long View is a free standing building. Further, it would fall into the major subtype of a U-shaped building. Although American apartment houses are not classified according to vernacular architectural styles, if this were the case, the building would probably be classified as a Colonial Revival because of its basic symmetrical form, the repetition of the Greek urns at the top of the building, the use of composite (both Ionic and Corinthian) columns in the pagoda-type structure in the walkway areas inside the "U", and the repetition of a rosette-type terra cotta piece in the door surrounds at a major entrance to this building. Too, at the roofline one sees Palladian window-shaped terra cotta work, certainly a hint at classicism.

The brick on the street sides of the structure is from the Streeter brick yard and is of a wire cut variety. At the back and rear of the structure a cheaper red brick was used.

By the time the late '20s had arrived, the automobile was a well entrenched invention in American society. Henry Ford's assembly line had been running for about a quarter of a century and the more affluent demanded cars. Therefore, a garage building was constructed to house these vehicles. The garage structure is faced in the wire cut Streeter yellow brick, like the street side of the building. The sides of the garage, however, are of a very inexpensive red block clay material. The roof of the garage offers a half-moon or semi-circular shape. Originally, there was but one garage; however within a year or two of construction a second structure was affixed to the first because of the outcry by residents that there was no house for their car.

The list of prominent -- meaning affluent in this case -- Rock Islanders who lived in the Long View Apartments is abundantly long. However, here three of these people will be briefly discussed. Frank Weindruch was co-founder of Eagle Kash and Karry in 1921. He sold the "Eagle" grocery store in the early 1940s and during the period he was deciding upon his relocation -- according to the sales contract it must be at least 100 miles away -- he resided in the only three bedroom unit at the Long View, using the third bedroom for his maid. Horace J. Olmstead, a noted Rock Islander who worked for Modern Woodman as head of the Audit department, was noted as well for his numerous religious, fraternal, civic, and general welfare activities. Active in the First Methodist Church, he served as chairman of the Board of Trustees. In addition, his obituary cites extensive involvement in various lodges. Although Mr. Olmstead never resided at the Long View, his widow, Jessie, lived there between 1937 and 1941. Finally, a noted car dealer, Kenneth Popplewell, secretary treasurer for Schwind Popplewell Inc. resided at the Long View during 1930 and 1931. Obviously, this list could be expanded; however, people of some financial means resided at the Long View during its early years.

The Long View was designed by Chicago architect Erich J. Patelski. Analyzing the streetscapes in the Chicago neighborhoods developed during this period yields a similar "feel" to that emanating from the Long View.

The builder of the Long View Apartments is an immigrant from Berlin, Germany named Sam Weisman. Mr. Weisman arrived in Rock Island in 1912 or 1913 nearly penniless with but his carpentry skills and became one of the most respected contractors in the city. To his credit, Mr. Weisman was the contractor involved in a \$30,000 remodeling of a structure on Sixth and Iowa Streets in Davenport; the remodeling of Kalina, a Rock Island furrier; and the infilling and upbuilding of several additions including the Weisman and Brady additions and the completion of six residences in the area of 21st Avenue and 24th Street. His stellar accomplishment in the city of Rock Island is the Long View apartments which his firm constructed in 1927 and then added parking garages and additional apartments in 1929. The Long View -- a building Weisman not only supervised the construction of but personally

owned -- was constructed at a cost of \$250,000 and some of Rock Island's most affluent citizens have lived in this structure, particularly in its early years.

In addition to Long View's architectural significance and the importance of its builder, it stands as a testament to the past prosperity of the city of Rock Island and offers a true sense of place. It strongly emulates luxury apartment houses -- or apartment hotels as they were originally called in New York in the late nineteenth century -- in Chicago, New York, and Paris. On a major street, the Long View overlooks one of the city's most beautiful parks. Certainly, anyone who has driven into the residential neighborhoods of Rock Island -- be he/she a visitor or a resident -- has not missed the stunning handsomeness of the Long View apartments. Therefore, it is certainly worthy of landmark designation because of its prominent location in the community.

In conclusion, because of Long View Apartment's representative example as a free standing U-shaped apartment building with classical overtones in the luxury mode for the 1920s, its immigrant turned entrepreneur builder, and its highly visible location in the City of Rock Island, the Rock Island Preservation Society requests official landmark designation for this outstanding structure.

Man Who Built Prosperous Business on \$6 'Fortune' Contractor for New Block

His "fortune" was \$6, 15 years ago, but now Sam Weisman, 2413 Twenty-first avenue, Rock Island, is the contractor for big building projects, and a successful contractor and builder in this city. Still, he hasn't forgotten the fact that he had to "camp out" in Spencer square the first two nights he was in Rock Island, and still tells the story to his friends. Mr. Weisman was the general contractor for the unusual remodeling job just completed in creating the Liberty building, at the southeast corner of Eighteenth street and Second avenue.

Mr. Weisman's father and mother operated a retail store in Berlin, Germany, when he was born and during his childhood. While he was still a youth his father died, his mother moved to Russia, at Bres-Litovsk, she was slain in a pogrom—an anti-Semitic demonstration by fanatical Russians.

Is Carpenter Trade.

As a boy of 14, Mr. Weisman began work as a railroad carpenter in Russia. When he was 22 he came to this country. That was 23 years ago.

Landing at New York, Mr. Weisman's trade enabled him to obtain work before long in Newark, N. J., remaining there six months, until he had learned something of the English language. Then he went into building as a contractor. He built a number of structures in New Jersey, particularly in East Orange, until the panic of 1915 came along. In its wake he found himself without funds—broke—he had lost all he had obtained by hard work and saving.

Hearing that conditions were somewhat better in the west, he spent part of his small sum, he had saved from the wreck, for a ticket to Chicago. There he also worked as a carpenter, for six months, but did not care much for it there. Accordingly, when he saw an advertisement by Horst & Co., Rock Island, for carpenters, he came to this city, and on his arrival had but \$6 in his pocket.

Stamps in Pocket.

It was told to Horst that the

need for carpenters on their job no longer existed. So here was Weisman, without a job, money to live on or money on which to return to Chicago. He went on for two or three days, sleeping at night in Spencer square, since he had scarcely enough even for meals for any length of time.

The Robinson building was then being remodeled, and Mr. Weisman succeeded in obtaining, through Charles J. Larkin, president of the Rock Island Sand & Gravel company, employment there. He worked for four months, and then started out in business for himself. He attributes his chance for success to Mr. Larkin and to the Central Trust & Savings bank, both of whom, he says, befriended him in various ways during his early years in the business here.

His first piece of work was the remodeling of a building at Twenty-fourth street and Fifth-and-a-half avenue, where a fire had occurred. He made about two hundred dollars on this piece of work, and this definitely gave him a beginning.

Some of the jobs he has handled since then are the remodeling of a building at Sixth and Iowa streets, Davenport, a \$20,000 job; the erection of two apartment buildings in Davenport; remodeling of the Teasbaum department store and W. T. Grant store, Davenport, remodeling for Kalina, the furrier, of Rock Island; the unbuilding of several additions and blocks in Rock Island, including the Weis-

Builder



SAM WEISMAN.

man & Brady addition, and the completion of six handsome residences on Twenty-first avenue in the vicinity of Twenty-fourth street. His latest project is a \$250,000 apartment building at Eighteenth avenue and Seventeenth street, on which excavation work has been started.

Married in 1904.

Mr. Weisman was married in Newark in 1904 to Annie Gimpleson. They have two daughters, Miss Ruth, who is a linguistic student in France, and Miss Evelyn, a student at the Villa de Chantal, Rock Island.

ROCK ISLAND AND APOSTROPHE—OCTOBER 4, 1917

THE ROCK ISLAND JOURNAL, AUGUST 31, 1929

Long View Apartments to Be Enlarged by Construction of Additional Unit and Garage

Plans for the construction of an annex to the Long View apartments, Eighteenth avenue and Seventeenth street, Rock Island, and for the erection of additional garage facilities for tenants of the building, to cost approximately \$100,000, were announced today by Sam Weisman, Rock Island contractor and owner of the property.

A piece of property, 60 feet wide and 240 feet deep, facing Seventeenth street and immediately south of the apartment building site, has been purchased by Mr. Weisman from W. N. Ralston, it was stated.

Construction of the new garage building, which will supplement a 35-car garage which was erected when the apartment was built, will be started immediately, Mr. Weisman said. Work probably will not be started on the annex until next spring, he said.

The new garage will be 51 feet wide and 100 feet long and will be located at the rear of the property just acquired. The building will be heated from the central heating plant of the apartment building. It will cost approximately \$15,000, it was stated.

The annex to the apartment building will cost about \$85,000, Mr.

Weisman said, and will contain 16 apartments. The main building contains 34 apartments, all of which are occupied. It cost approximately \$250,000.

Six of the new apartments will be of five rooms, six of four rooms, three of three rooms and one of about five rooms, will be located in the basement. The annex also will be heated from the central plant.

Mr. Weisman said construction of the new garage was necessary to the accommodation of tenants of the present apartment building. Although the present garage has a capacity of 35 cars, many of the 34 families in the building operate two machines, he said. The new garage building also will accommodate about thirty-five cars.

Highlights in Rock Island's Building Program of 1927

Building projects	\$1,500,000
Homes construction	1,500,000
Public improvements	500,000

Total cost of construction \$3,500,000

The principal building projects and approximate cost of each were as follows:

Royal Neighbors supreme office	\$ 500,000
Long View apartments	250,000
Augustana dormitory	200,000
Edison school	200,000
Welco apartments	85,000
Rich apartments	48,000
Liberty building	30,000

Other features of construction:

Number of new homes	147
Miles of street paving	3 1/2
Miles of alley paving	2 1/2
Miles of storm drains and sewers	7

