APARTMENT HOUSE DEVELOPMENT ON SEATTLE'S QUEEN ANNE HILL
prior to World War II

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Urban Planning

University of Washington
1994

Approved by:

[Signature]
(Chairperson of Supervisory Committee)

Program Authorized to Offer Degree: Department of Urban Design and Planning

Date: August 18, 1994
PART I

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Apartment buildings built before World War II are a strong presence in established Seattle neighborhoods such as Capitol Hill, Queen Anne, the University District and Wallingford. Numerous arterial streets are lined with these three-to-five story brick or stucco structures. They have long been, and remain, important housing resources for various segments of the population. However, they have been largely ignored in studies of the city's architecture, urban fabric and development patterns.

This thesis analyzes pre-war apartment house development in one Seattle neighborhood, a portion of the south slope of Queen Anne Hill. It examines land use in the area from 1900 to the present, looking at the development pattern and changing uses. This information is used to help identify the role of these buildings in the city's overall social and urban fabric. Several examples of various types of apartment houses illustrate the building types, styles and landscaping typically found before World War II. To provide an historical context for the discussion of Seattle apartment houses, the thesis briefly discusses multifamily development and typical building forms in Europe, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The primary question this thesis considers is: What was the role of apartment houses in Seattle's physical and social development prior to World War II? Several closely related questions about Seattle's architectural and social development are: To what extent did Seattle have its own apartment tradition? What was this tradition and how did it differ from those found in cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York? In a city of single family homes, who chose to live in apartment houses, and why? Clues to these answers can be found in questions such as: What building types, decorative features, and landscaping were commonly used? What densities were developed, in terms of building and unit size?

These apartment buildings are also important community features and land use elements. How did they affect land use? How have land uses changed around them? How have the neighborhoods changed, and how have these buildings changed with them?

This work is significant to planning, urban design and preservation because of the dearth of documentation of Seattle's apartment house tradition. The building and development documentation in itself will be useful for those interested in architectural and community history. At a time when city and state governments are encouraging higher densities with respect for neighborhood character, relatively little attention has been paid to what we already have. These buildings are still valued elements in the community, serving people of varied socioeconomic backgrounds and housing needs. By analyzing the success of these buildings, we can better understand how housing problems can be solved today while retaining local character. As development pressure increases in this close-in neighborhood, greater recognition of the significance of these buildings to our city's past and present may increase awareness of this important design and housing resource, and facilitate preservation and continued use of these structures. It may also encourage consideration of their designs and other attributes in the planning of new multifamily housing that fits well into existing communities.
This thesis has four parts, divided into nine chapters. The first section briefly discusses the methodology used to do the study, describing the sources and techniques. The second section contains basic background information and a history of Queen Anne and the study area, including a detailed description of the development pattern on the four streets being studied (Queen Anne Avenue North, West Highland Drive, West Olympic Place and West Roy Street). Part III turns to apartment development specifically, focusing first on the historic context of apartments elsewhere and then on conditions specific to Seattle and Queen Anne, with illustrated examples. Part IV contains findings, conclusions and suggestions for further studies to increase the knowledge of this building type. A list of pre-war apartment buildings in the study area, the bibliography and a literature review follow.
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

This study consisted of a step-by-step series of analyses of land use and architectural and social history. The initial step was the identification of an appropriate study area. Several factors led to the selection of the southwest slope of Queen Anne:

- Its considerable number of pre-war apartment houses, with a wide variety of ages, styles, sizes, and socioeconomic markets;
- Its range of land uses, with a mixture of single family development and multifamily and commercial buildings;
- Its high-quality building stock in generally good condition, with even modest apartment houses being well maintained; and,
- The relatively dynamic community, with multifamily buildings still replacing single family homes.

The primary research and analytical steps were:

- Preparation of a brief history of Seattle's development during the pre-war period, particularly addressing social, economic, planning and commercial activities;
- Compilation of a brief history of Queen Anne's development, to provide a context for the consideration of apartment houses;
- Completion of a survey of historic and current land uses, to identify where apartment house development occurred, the pace at which it occurred, and the extent to which apartment houses replaced other land uses;
- Conducting a field survey to identify key physical features, such as size, age, building type, and ornamental detail, of the pre-war apartment buildings in the target area;
- Confirmation of construction dates and other characteristics through review of King County records;
- Review of primary sources, such as newspaper articles, advertisements, and city directories to identify socioeconomic and other factors, such as the intended markets of apartment buildings;
- Review of literature on apartment development elsewhere to provide context for the local findings;
- Selection of several buildings for further study, encompassing a range of types and building forms;
- Development of a description of Seattle's apartment house tradition, and a comparison with those of other cities; and,
- Discussion of urban design factors and potential applications to today's planning activities.

The research began with several field surveys of the study area, which had two purposes: one was to observe the general atmosphere of the streets and the type of building stock; the second purpose was to collect detailed information on specific buildings that appeared to predate World War II. Each building on the resulting list was then researched at the King County Tax Assessor's Office and the Washington State Archives. Current assessment data was useful in confirming building age, size and
certain structural features and amenities. The historic data and photographs from the 1930s, at the State Archives, further confirmed this information and also showed how the buildings had changed over time. This source was also invaluable in tracing development patterns, since it shows all structures that existed in the mid-1930s, major structural changes (such as conversion to multifamily use) and demolition dates. Much of this information is summarized in the table in the appendix and the map on page 54.

Additional information on development patterns was obtained from a variety of historic maps, including those by Baist, Kroll and the Washington Map and Blueprint Company. These were supplemented with several birds-eye view sketches from the early years of the century. Sanford Fire Insurance maps were also used, but their practice of adding new buildings as they were built makes it difficult to identify patterns clearly over time.

Basic information on the history of Seattle was easily obtainable from several history books, including those by Roger Sale and Richard Berner. However, these do not discuss the study area specifically. The most important source for this was the Queen Anne Historical Society's thorough community history Queen Anne: Community on the Hill, which was published while this study was underway. This work contains considerable information on early developers, platting, demographics and major trends on Queen Anne during the entire pre-war period. The Queen Anne Historical Society also made available the early drafts of the book, which contained more detail, and their other archival information. A particularly useful item was their index to the Queen Anne News, which began publication in 1920.

Newspaper articles and advertisements, particularly the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and the Queen Anne News, were very important sources. They provide important details, such as rental rates and quotations indicating people's viewpoints and priorities, which are unavailable from any other source. They are also useful in clarifying dates and similar details. City directories and photographs indicated when and where businesses were in existence and what streetscapes looked like at particular periods. The directories also were a guide to the oft-changing names of some apartment houses. Magazines such as The Western Architect also gave valuable insights into changes in housing patterns and building forms, such as the development of efficiency apartments. These periodicals and newspapers are very rich sources and much more could be done with them to explore Seattle's architectural and development history.

Census data was used to provide details on housing and population characteristics. This was the best way to answer the question "Who lived here?" and what their characteristics such as age and income were. Comparisons of data from several different census years is always challenging because of variations in the questions and procedures from one year to the next. For example, housing information was difficult to find before 1940, so that census was the primary source. Information specific to Queen Anne was difficult to obtain for some years, since geographical divisions used in early censuses were not consistent. Therefore, much of the earlier (pre-1940) demographic information was taken from the community history book.
Numerous books were consulted to develop a concise history of apartment construction and lifestyles in various cities in both Europe and the United States. Much of this history is well documented, especially that of New York. This information was used to demonstrate similarities and, more frequently, differences, in Seattle's experience.

Several general problems were encountered in locating and compiling relevant information. The first challenge was identifying useful sources, since little has been written on this topic. Once the multitude of primary sources was identified, an extraordinary amount of time was needed to review them. As noted above, the best information is often from newspapers and magazines of the time. Since these are often not indexed, they must be reviewed, often on microfilm, issue by issue, in libraries or archives.

Another challenge was dealing with incomplete or contradictory information. Thorough searches were made for additional sources and background data to minimize misinterpretation, but some inaccuracies probably remain, often due to missing information. The last chapter contains several ideas for further studies to answer some of the questions that arose during this research.
PART II

CHAPTER 3: THE SOUTH SLOPE TODAY

The Study Area

The neighborhood identified for this study is on the southwest slope of Queen Anne, one of Seattle's oldest communities. The study area extends down Queen Anne Avenue North from West Galer Street to West Roy Street, and west along West Highland Drive to Third Avenue West, along West Olympic Place/Olympic Way West to 9th Avenue West and along West Roy Street to 6th Avenue West (map on page 54). This area was selected because of its wide range of multifamily housing, representing most periods, types, styles and sizes found in Seattle. High-style structures designed by architects are found as well as more modest buildings put up rapidly by developers. Although primarily multifamily today, the land use remains mixed, with scattered single family homes and strong commercial areas at the top and bottom of the hill.

The neighborhood is dynamic, with continual growth and change. In 1991-92, small apartment houses replaced single family homes on both West Roy Street and West Highland Drive. Service stations at both the top and the bottom of the hill have recently been demolished, leaving the land open for development. Renovation and development continues on West Olympic Place. A new apartment building was recently added on Queen Anne Avenue, across from a new addition to a large nearby building. This vitality makes an appreciation of the existing urban fabric, and a study such as this one, even more important.

The Setting

The development pattern, built form and socioeconomic of the South Slope have always been heavily influenced by its steep topography. Queen Anne is the second highest point in the city (457 feet) and the steepest, most clearly defined hill. This geographic isolation made development dependent on transportation systems, and led to a strong feeling of community among early residents. The steepest part of Queen Anne Avenue, between Roy and Galer streets, is still called the Counterbalance, after the early cable car mechanism.

Once streetcar lines extended up Queen Anne Hill, development proceeded rapidly. Its location just north of downtown affords convenience paired with spectacular views of the city, Elliott Bay and Mount Rainier. This amenity made it a prime residential area as developers and wealthy residents took advantage of the vistas. Although the hillsides are steep, the top of the hill and many locations along the sides are flat and well suited to development.

Parks have long been an important feature of the South Slope. Besides providing open space and recreation facilities, they preserve important vistas and soften the streetscapes. The largest park, Kinnear Park, encompasses 14 steeply sloping acres between West Olympic Place and West Mercer Place. Formerly planted with formal gardens in the Victorian style, it is now a more naturalistic park, with walking paths, picnic sites, and informal gathering areas.
Perhaps the most spectacular view of the city, and the most photographed, is found at Kerry Park. Although the small viewpoint on West Highland Drive is the most obvious part of the park, the park actually extends down a steep slope to include Franklin Playground on West Prospect Street. West Highland Drive itself has a park-like appearance because of the large houses and extensive private landscaping. It has been incorporated into the Seattle Parks Department’s boulevard system.

**Existing Land Uses**

Land uses in the study area are predominantly multifamily with some single family homes remaining. Commercial uses remain concentrated at the top and bottom of the Counterbalance, primarily in buildings dating from the 1920s. There is no commercial development on the hillside itself.

The edge of the study area, at Queen Anne Avenue North and West Roy Street, borders a burgeoning commercial district extending to Seattle Center and as far as the Denny Regrade. This intersection, however, is slightly removed from the heavy activity on Mercer Street and the businesses are small scale—a convenience store, small shops, a restaurant, and a small office/warehouse building. The ACT Theater, in an historic three-story hall at West Roy Street and First Avenue West, is the immediate neighborhood’s main regional attraction. Across Queen Anne Avenue, just outside the study area, is the Marqueen Apartments, a 66-unit building with shops and a public garage dating from 1920.

At the top of Queen Anne Avenue, at West Galer Street, is the study area's only mixed-use building, the three-story Galer Crest, built in 1930. It has always had a barber shop and had an auto repair shop from 1930 until recently; it now has offices as well. The lot across the street is vacant, the site of a recently-closed service station. The other corners, just outside the study area, have a single story building with lively restaurants and a new three-story building with shops and apartments.

Single family homes are found at several locations, primarily on West Olympic Place, between Third Avenue West and Fifth Avenue West. Most are from the early years of the century and have had extensive remodeling. A number of them are now multifamily dwellings; some substantially retain their single family appearance, while the origins of others are nearly unrecognizable. Several small bungalows remain on West Roy Street near 3rd Avenue West.

**Socioeconomics and Demographics**

Census Tract 70, which includes nearly all the study area, extends several blocks east of Queen Anne Avenue to Nob Hill Avenue North, encompassing additional apartment buildings as well as detached houses. The 1990 census data shows the South Slope of Queen Anne as a neighborhood of well-educated, fairly prosperous renters. As could be expected for an apartment neighborhood, the study area has considerably fewer families, fewer children and more elderly residents than the city as a whole. A fifth of the residents are over 65 years of age, while only five percent are under 18.

Queen Anne has always had a range of economic classes, occupations and backgrounds. Study area residents work primarily in clerical/sales positions (25%), administration/management (13%), and the professions (13%). There are few service workers or laborers. The residents are well educated, with 37
percent having graduated from college; more than three quarters have graduated from high school. The small household size means that median household income is less than the city median, but per capita income is $23,501, greater than the city median of $18,308. Only eight percent are below poverty level.

Queen Anne has traditionally had fewer immigrants, especially non-English-speaking immigrants, than other parts of the city. The 1900 census showed that 20 percent of the hill's population was foreign born, lower than the 23 percent in the state as a whole. Only 14 percent were from non-English-speaking countries. By 1920 immigration had declined; ten percent of Queen Anne's population was foreign born, with only six percent from non-English-speaking countries. Newcomers were primarily English, Canadian and Scandinavian.[1] The situation is similar today. Of the 6,582 persons in this census tract in the 1990 Census, 92 percent are white; reported ancestries were primarily German, English, and Irish. The largest minority group is Asians, with four percent.

Nearly 80 percent of the 4,714 dwelling units are rented. Most--more than 80 percent--are in structures with ten or more units. Although numerous buildings have been built since World War II, 43 percent of the dwelling units are in pre-war buildings. Fifty percent are small, either studios or one bedroom units.

The area's proximity to downtown and its attractive housing stock mean that most of its housing is relatively expensive. Single family houses, due to the spectacular views, have an average value of $378,000, nearly three times the city average. Condominiums offer a more affordable option, ranging from less than $75,000 to more than $500,000.

A range of multifamily rental opportunities is available. The median rent for apartments is $433, slightly above the city-wide median of $425. Rents range from $300 for a studio apartment to $2,000 or more for a large apartment in one of the grander buildings. In all cases, of course, the quality of the view is important in establishing the price.
CHAPTER 4: HISTORY OF QUEEN ANNE AND THE STUDY AREA

This history of settlement and development focuses largely on activity in the study area, broadly defined in today's terms as the area between Mercer Street and West Highland Drive, and from Queen Anne Avenue North to 9th Avenue West.

Pioneer Settlement: 1853-1870

Seattle's first white settlers arrived at Alki Point, far across Elliott Bay from Queen Anne, in 1851. Word of Puget Sound's attractions drew many Oregon Trail pioneers from Portland and the Columbia River, even though the only routes were steamships or primitive wagon trails. However, migration was not significant until the 1870s. The 1853 census showed only 170 people in King County and 3,965 in all of the Washington Territory. By 1860 there were 275 people, with 160 in Seattle. By 1874 there were 1800 Seattle residents, and the population doubled or tripled frequently thereafter.[2]

Queen Anne was several miles from what was then considered Seattle, around Yesler Way. However, two of the most prominent families quickly claimed large areas to the north and became key to Queen Anne's development. In 1853, David and Louisa Boren Denny claimed the area from Lake Union to Elliott Bay and from what is now Denny Way to Mercer Street. This borders the study area on the west. In the same year, Thomas Mercer laid claim to 320 acres directly north of Mercer Street, between Lake Union and Queen Anne Avenue, now the eastern edge of the study area. He called his claim "Eden."

The Mercer home was at the present site of Roy Street and Taylor Avenue North. The Dennys, whose main house was in Seattle near Yesler Way, established a second home in a meadow where the Seattle Opera House now stands. Much of Seattle's produce was grown in the large gardens on the Denny meadow. An indication of the type of landscape they found is the tremendous effort needed to blaze a trail the few blocks between the two houses, through dense vegetation and forest. Most of the hill was heavily forested, with cougar and other game flourishing into the 1860s. In the drought year of 1868, a forest fire destroyed much of the timber on the south side. Another indication of the conditions is that settlement slowed in these outlying claims in 1856, when natives burned many settlers' cabins. After several years, however, settlers returned to the area.[3]

To the west of the study area, Dr. Henry Smith was the main settler in what was long known as Smith Cove but is now better known as Piers 90-91. Numerous individuals claimed land in the Interbay area and around the west and north of Queen Anne Hill. Denny, Mercer and Smith all held important posts in the new city, including judge, school superintendent, territorial legislator and county commissioner.

Denny Hill lay just south of what is now the central part of Queen Anne, making it relatively inaccessible. The first major road, the Military Road (now Dexter Avenue), ran on the east side of Denny Hill and Queen Anne Hill, along Lake Union.
Flourishing Development: 1870 - 1880

Once the road to Seattle and Elliott Bay opened, the South Lake Union area flourished. Small farms and orchards appeared, as well as a coal port, where coal barged from Renton was transferred to rail for transport to ships on Elliott Bay.

As Seattle's population grew from 400 in 1867 to 3,533 in 1880, it began to outgrow the bounds of downtown, and serious development began around Queen Anne. The original homesteaders began platting their land and selling to newcomers. Between 1869 and 1881 nine plats were filed, primarily on the south slope or the top of the hill. David Denny filed the first plat in 1869 (D.T. Denny’s North Seattle Addition), extending from Mercer Street to Denny Way and from Warren Avenue to the bay. This was a large part of their original claim and covered all the area adjacent to the study area on the south. Once begun, platting proceeded rapidly, with John Law platting on the top of the hill and Thomas Mercer on the southeast. During the land boom of the 1870s, Denny subdivided many more acres. Lots sold rapidly, going for $50 to $100; land for farming sold for $50 to $100 an acre. However, sales were not rapid enough, and the increased taxes on his large holdings drove Denny into bankruptcy in the tough economic times of the 1890s.[4]

The Denny property and the development process were described in Pitt's 1879 directory for Seattle:

Adjoining and occupying the westerly shore of Lake Union is the residence of David T. Denny, a handsome two story building, with fine grounds, outhouses and other improvements, displaying taste as well as competency. The addition known as Denny's addition borders the lake and contains some of the best land on the lake. It is divided into small tracts of five acres and more, as well as into lots which sell at fifty dollars and upwards. Mr. Denny has also a fine tract of land three-fourths of a mile directly west and fronting the sound, which is a very desirable residence location known as North Seattle.[5]

North Seattle, later known as Belltown, south of Denny Hill, was the fastest developing part of Seattle in 1876-77. However, the thick forests of Denny Hill were still a barrier to development, especially for the southwest portion of Queen Anne. In March of 1875 a massive windstorm blew down thousands of trees, opening up vistas from Seattle to Eden Hill. This event increased awareness of new neighborhoods and opportunities, and cleared the way for more development.

Increasing Status: 1880 - 1890

Queen Anne was still little settled and therefore little mapped during the 1880s. An 1884 bird's eye view of the city by artist J.J. Stoner shows several groups of five to ten buildings in clearings in the forest north of Denny Way, with another cluster of buildings toward Lake Union. What is now Mercer Street appears as a trail, with woods beyond. An 1888 photographic panorama shows only scattered trees covering the clear-cut western half of the hill. The following year the remainder of the hill was clear cut.

The 1880s kicked off Queen Anne's rapid development. The city's population increased by nearly twelve times, from 3,533 in 1880 to 42,800 in 1890. During this period, a new land use pattern began to develop. In Seattle's early years, nearly everyone lived and worked in a relatively small area near Yesler
Way and along the waterfront. With growth, families moved away from the original downtown areas to close-in areas like First Hill, Capitol Hill and Queen Anne. Land uses became increasingly separated, with industrial land to the south, middle and upper class residences to the east and north. The wealthy moved to hilltops for the views. The middle class filled surrounding neighborhoods, where they could live in comfortable detached homes, convenient to their jobs and downtown shopping. Downtown was increasingly reserved for commerce and boarding houses and modest hotels for transients and laborers. This development pattern was, and still is, reflected in Queen Anne's land uses--largely residential with a scattering of apartments and local institutions along the car lines, and nodes of neighborhood businesses.

By the end of the 1880s most of the hill was subdivided, primarily by developers new to the area rather than by early homesteaders. Seattle's vitality and the coming of the railroad in 1883 attracted people from throughout the country who were looking for investment opportunities. The South Slope was particularly popular because of the convenience of two street car lines from downtown, one along West Olympic Place to Kinnear Park and the other up Queen Anne Avenue. Convenience was further increased by the completion of Mercer Street in 1885, connecting Temperance (Queen Anne) Avenue with Farm Street (now Aurora Avenue).

The southern half of what is now known as Queen Anne was annexed into the city of Seattle in 1883. About this time developers gave various names to the community. Originally it was often called Eden or Eden Hill, the name given by Thomas Mercer. It later came to be called Galer Hill, after the owner of a large home at the crest of the hill, where Galer Street now runs. In 1885, real estate promoters began mentioning "Queen Anne Town", named for the predominant architectural style at the time. After 1900 the area became simply Queen Anne or Queen Anne Hill. Ironically, few of the original Queen Anne-style houses exist any longer.

Development occurred primarily through the sale of vacant lots, with the purchaser then arranging to build a house to his or her own taste. An 1889 flyer describes the Queen Anne Second Addition with 30x120 view lots for $300 each, touting the 16-foot alleys and 74-foot avenues as well as the proximity of electric and cable transit.[6]

During this period the Mercer and Denny families completed the subdivision of their substantial properties. Thomas Mercer filed his last two plats in 1882-83, Mercer's Addition and Mercer's Second Addition. The Dennys continued to acquire and subdivide land, filing 11 more plats until their last plat in 1889; there, in 1892, they built a grand home just south of Mercer Street at 512 Temperance (Queen Anne) Avenue (this home was later converted to apartments).

Most development by the earliest homesteaders, as described above, was adjacent to the study area, not inside it. The prime mover in development of the study area itself was a relative latecomer to Seattle. George Kinnear came to Puget Sound from Illinois in 1874, purchasing property on the south side of Eden Hill. In 1878 he brought his wife, Angie, and their two sons to Seattle permanently. In 1884 they subdivided their land (Kinnear's Addition), which extended along West Olympic Place. Their vigorous promotion soon turned it into a major residential district, taking advantage of the spectacular
views. Their elaborate turreted Queen Anne-style mansion was at the foot of the hill at 809 Queen Anne Avenue North. George's brother John built an even more elaborate mansion nearby at 348 West Olympic Place, and others followed suit.

The Kinnears' most lasting imprint was their donation of 14-acre Kinnear Park on West Olympic Place to the city in 1887. This provided recreation and enjoyment, but also preserved views and enhanced property values throughout their development. At that time the waterfront came to the edge of the park; this was the city's first waterfront park and its second park of any kind. It was quickly adopted by the community, who brought plants from their own gardens. The 1903 Olmsted Brothers plan for Seattle parks saw it as a model: "...pleasing in detail and extremely valuable owing to the fine views which it commands over the Sound, it is a good example of the miles of similar bluff parks which it is hoped the city will eventually have." The Olmsteds, however, criticized the "miscellaneous assortment" of plantings that made the park resemble the surrounding front gardens; they recommended that it be individualized and planted more like a park.[7]

Closer to the Kinnear home was Franklin Playground on West Prospect Street. Kinnear deeded this parcel to the city in 1904 to protect from development the spring which Kinnear used to supply his home and gardens.

**An Improved Neighborhood: 1890 - 1910**

During the following decade, Seattle's population nearly doubled to 80,671 in 1900. The industrial boom was based largely on timber, fishing, shipbuilding and shipping raw materials throughout the country and across the Pacific. The Great Northern Railway reached Seattle in 1893, making a new link with the East Coast. Growth slowed temporarily due to the depression of 1893, which halted building activity in the East. However, the discovery of gold in Alaska in 1897 ushered in a renewed boom and dramatic population growth. The city tripled in population over the next decade, reaching 237,194 in 1910.

In 1890, according to the Queen Anne News, the hill was primarily a forest of large trees, with a trail up what is now Queen Anne Avenue to Mount Pleasant Cemetery at the top of the hill. Several areas, such as Prospect Street, were marshes, because of the underground springs.[8] The plat map of 1907, depicting conditions in 1900[9], shows the street layout of the south slope of Queen Anne as being generally similar to that found today. The area is entirely platted, in lots roughly 50 by 120 feet. The street car lines extend up Queen Anne Avenue and Olympic Way. Kinnear Park already has pathways and facilities laid out. The most notable difference is the street names; most streets have women's names: Anna (5th Avenue), Marion (4th Avenue), and Stacy (8th Avenue). Numbered streets were just beginning to replace these more historic names. Houses are scattered throughout the area, but none are labeled as apartments. St. Paul's Episcopal Church was built just east of the Queen Anne Avenue/Roy Street intersection in 1892.

Queen Anne began to develop as a community of young families, with many children; the first school on top of the hill opened in 1895. One out of three families owned their homes. But single people lived in the area as well. The 1900 census revealed that, even though many families had four or five children,
one of seven Queen Anne households took in boarders. The city's rapid growth had an impact. By 1910, home ownership had fallen to 18 percent city wide. The number taking in boarders had almost doubled, to one quarter, possibly due to an influx of single people and newly married couples.[10]

In the year 1890 alone, 151 new homes were built in Queen Anne, mostly on the lower South Slope. Most cost less than $2,000; one quarter were between $2,000 and $4,000 and a few cost more than $4,000. By 1896 the South Slope had been entirely cleared of trees, leaving a bare landscape. Straight, graded dirt streets, generally ignoring the topography, ran through the vacant land, with houses scattered on small lots. Land prices increased with demand, with large view lots or corner lots going for as much as $6,000. While the older established areas of Capitol Hill and First Hill had comparable prices, this was considerably higher than prices in Ballard or Green Lake.[11]

More pronounced commercial areas developed at this time. Stores to serve community needs clustered along streetcar lines, especially at key intersections such as Queen Anne Avenue and Galer Street, where the large Augustine and Kyer grocery store was located. Numerous small groceries, meat markets and other shops for daily needs were at the bottom of Queen Anne Avenue near Roy and Mercer streets.[12]

From the earliest days of David Denny and Thomas Mercer, Queen Anne had had a tradition of civic activism, both as city officials and as boosters for their own community. Residents pushed city government for what they wanted--and generally got it. Development brought strident demands for city improvements, especially better roads. By 1898 all the north-south streets from Denny Way to West Highland Drive had been graded, and most of the east-west streets as well. Roads were unpaved, however, except for wood planking in some places. Later, clay brick and cobblestones were used. The famed Counterbalance cable car began running straight up Queen Anne Avenue to the top of the hill in 1905; because of the steepness of the hill, the earlier streetcar had turned on West Highland Drive.

In 1891 the community joined together to lobby for improved water and sewer service, fire protection and improvements to Kinnear Park. Not surprisingly, George Kinnear, primary developer of the South Slope, was leader of the effort. During the 1890s, most of the South Slope acquired street lights, water, and electricity and home telephones.

Another community push for city improvements began in 1906, with the effort to develop a scenic boulevard to take advantage of the hilltop views. This was accomplished by designating West Highland Drive as a boulevard, even though it did not meet the 150-foot minimum width called for by the Park Department's Olmsted Brothers Plan.

A major event of this era was the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, held in 1909 on the University of Washington grounds. This had a direct impact on Queen Anne, which became a temporary residence for fair visitors wishing to be away from the bustle of the city. The Chelsea Hotel was built across from Kinnear Park to accommodate visitors. The Kinnears built their own hotel, the Delamar, for their private guests.
The War Years: 1911-1920

The decade from 1910 to 1920 saw rapid changes in the city and on Queen Anne. Seattle's size, location and natural resources made it a major presence on the West Coast and trade across the Pacific boomed. World War I diverted both shipping and shipbuilding from the East Coast, leading to rapidly increasing employment in shipyards, airplane manufacturing, and sawmills. Manufacturing employment ballooned from 12,429 to 40,843 in only five years.[13] Population grew by one third, to 315,000. The population influx affected all neighborhoods, as hotels, boarding houses and other temporary lodgings appeared.

However, a large number of single family homes were built throughout Seattle during this period, and by 1920 home ownership had soared to 50 percent.[14] The number of boarders declined, as developers began to meet the demand through apartments. On Queen Anne, the Carnegie library was constructed on top of the hill in 1914. Another important addition in 1912 was Redding Hall, later Queen Anne Hall, on West Roy Street. This building served a variety of functions, including a ballroom, dance studio, union hall, badminton club and newspaper office, until it became the home of a theater company in 1965.[15]

The Booming Twenties: 1921-1930

Seattle's population growth slowed significantly during the 1920s. After years of rapid growth, it increased by only 16 percent, to 366,000 in 1930; Queen Anne had 30,000 residents. The number of manufacturing companies fell slightly, and the number of manufacturing jobs fell dramatically from the wartime boom years.

In spite of this, the built environment changed rapidly, finally catching up with the population growth of previous decades. Much of what is thought of as the core of downtown Seattle was built in the 1920s. The same is true of the city's older neighborhoods. Increasing construction of all kinds, including public works, hospitals, factories and offices, led to higher wages and a growing demand for housing. Permits for single family houses increased from 1,431 in 1920 to 3,618 in 1925.[16]

It was during this decade that the business district at the bottom of the hill, at Queen Anne Avenue and Roy Street, reached a form similar to that seen today. What is now Seattle Center began to develop on the former Denny Meadow, with construction in 1927 of the Civic Auditorium, the Ice Arena, and Civic Field. One-story brick commercial buildings appeared along Mercer Street, 1st Avenue West, Queen Anne Avenue and West Roy Street. The Kuay Garage opened in 1920 as one of the largest garages in Seattle, serving surrounding apartments and businesses.

Much of the development discussed here had occurred before 1923, when Seattle's first zoning code was enacted. Lot coverage and building size had been determined largely by the market, financing and the developer's and designer's tastes. In some cases, the surrounding community exerted influence as well. For example, neighbors on West Highland Drive joined together to purchase the block between 1st and 2nd avenues to prevent construction of an unidentified project they did not want; this site, with the existing foundation, later became the Victoria Apartments.[17] Across the street, neighbors throughout the area contributed to the purchase of Kerry Park in order to protect the parcel from
development.[18] It was donated to the city in 1927, and is named for the Albert S. Kerry family, who donated $20,000 toward its purchase.

Initial zoning for the southwest Queen Anne area was predominantly R-2, which allowed apartment houses, boarding houses, hotels and clubs as well as single family dwellings. Most of the South Slope had a height limit of 40 feet, with a 65 foot limit on some major streets. This zoning led to a considerable number of two- to four-story apartment buildings scattered among single family homes. Before zoning regulated business locations, a small number of businesses were also found on residential streets, such as Dukelow's Grocery on West Olympic Place.

**The Depression and War: 1931-1945**

The Depression struck Seattle even harder than many parts of the country. The region's reliance on the lumber industry meant that national declines in building activity had severe impacts locally. Some single family development continued, but commercial and multifamily development generally came to a standstill. Fred Anhalt, one of the city's most prolific apartment builders, recounted the Depression's drastic impact on his business:

When the depression started it wasn't really bad at first. You just kind of grew into it. Everybody had a little money saved and they just figured it wouldn't last, that everything would be okay soon. Of course it wasn't and everything just generally went to hell after a while. The banks closed and anybody with money saved there lost it, and nobody could afford to pay a person to do any work. We tried to hold onto the apartment houses as long as we could, but pretty soon we were running them with less than half the units filled, and those didn't pay their rent. We would have been better off if everybody had left. At least we could have turned the heat off then.[19]

His experience was shared by many commercial and apartment investors. After decades of rapid change, Queen Anne's physical environment remained largely unchanged for 15 years. Construction did not begin again until after World War II. However, more subtle physical changes occurred, due to the tremendous economic and social impacts of the Depression and the buildup of local industries during the war. Many large houses sheltered more than one family, either with or without structural modifications; records show numerous homes on Queen Anne Avenue and West Olympic Place housed three to six families at this time. Queen Anne also benefited from federal projects; the Works Progress Administration built numerous stairways and park improvements, including several within the study area.

**Rapid Changes: 1946-1994**

The years after World War II were marked by rapid development in the 1950s-70s, instigated by the post-war economic boom and the 1962 Seattle World's Fair at the old Denny Meadow site. Modern architectural styles and construction technology joined with a new zoning code to change Queen Anne's streetscapes dramatically. Changes were most notable on the desirable view properties on Queen Anne Avenue and West Olympic Place.
The zoning code enacted in 1955 significantly altered development parameters. New regulations allowed high-rise buildings in much of the study area, and required off-street parking. Apartment developers since the 1920s had provided some parking spaces; the new requirements significantly changed the emphasis, making garages, driveways and curbcuts a major element of the streetscape where before they had been present, but hidden. The landscaped courtyards and attractive entries that had graced many streets were rare in newer buildings.

After World War II the International Style came to dominate local apartment architecture. The emphasis on concrete and glass, without ornament, contrasted sharply with the existing ornamented brick structures. Even more noticeably, the large scale of newer buildings, a result of zoning changes, economics and technological advances, dwarfed the surrounding human-scaled structures. Increased development pressure led to a community rebellion against high-rise zoning in the 1960s. The extended battle culminated in the 1970s with court decisions requiring the city to evaluate the environmental consequences of proposed projects. While five-to-six story buildings continue to be built, no new high-rises have been added since that time.
CHAPTER 6: DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

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Queen Anne Avenue North

Queen Anne Avenue North is the spine of the study area and the main route to the residential and commercial areas on top of the hill. It has always been the major traffic artery with cable cars, buses, cars and the resulting noise. The steep slope precluded commercial development, but multifamily development has flourished since the turn of the century because of the easy access to transit.

Early records and photos show the hillside lined by large homes, from simple Box styles to some of Seattle's most elaborate mansions. A 1904 bird's eye view illustration showed heavy development up to Prospect Street, with houses scattered up the steeper part of the slope; past Lee Street, where the hill flattens out, the street was solidly lined with homes.[21] At the bottom of the Counterbalance stood the mansion of Charles Kinnear; at the top was one of the grandest houses, that built by Harry Whitney Treat at Highland Drive, which remains today as apartments. Several others remain near Galer Street, but only one is still a single family residence. As traffic and noise increased, the street became less desirable for single family homes, and apartments became more numerous.

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Several large trees from these gardens remain in front of Bayview Manor, the 10-story retirement home that replaced the Kinnear residence in 1959. Other remnants of the gardens have recently been replaced by a new addition to the facility.

Queen Anne Avenue was the first street in the area to see significant multifamily development. Before World War I it was the center of growth for the study area; six multifamily buildings were built between 1906 and 1913. Five more were added during the 1920s. The street's dense single family development and its steep topography affected the size and shape of buildings. Most were close to the street, with very little landscaping. Courtyards were typically small or non-existent.

At the time of World War II the street was a mixture of moderate-sized apartment buildings (9 to 37 units) and large single family structures, many of which were converted to multifamily use over the years. The post-war building boom led to significant changes. The first structures, such as those at Highland Drive, resembled the older ones in scale, and they often used Roman brick. However, zoning changes in 1955 increased development. High-rise and mid-rise buildings in modern styles proliferated, rapidly replacing homes and even a bungalow court built by Fred Anhalt. Garages and parking lots
became more conspicuous, and landscaping decreased, changing the appearance of the street significantly.

**West Highland Drive**

West Highland Drive has been one of Seattle's premier streets since its initial development. A 1904 view shows only three houses in the first two blocks, with most houses clustered toward the west end, away from the arterial street, Queen Anne Avenue. The street was initially lined with substantial wood-frame houses in the Queen Anne, Colonial or Box styles. Especially on the south side, the larger lots were soon filled with more substantial mansions of stone and brick, most of which remain.

Multifamily development is concentrated in the first three blocks west of Queen Anne Avenue. The first apartment house on the street was the Victoria, built in 1921. This was followed several years later by the Narada and the Parkview, across from Kerry Park, which is one of the city's most prominent viewpoints. All three of these buildings are elegant brick structures whose units still bring premium prices.

Two mansions at the east end of West Highland Drive are now apartments. The Harry Whitney Treat house, at the corner of Queen Anne Avenue, was built in 1901, and was first used as apartments in 1922. The Greek Revival-style Ballard mansion (1906) across the street was converted to apartments during World War II. It narrowly escaped being replaced by a high-rise building in the 1970s.

In the 1960s-70s several large homes across from the Victoria were replaced by a new house and a 9-story condominium, very much out of scale with the neighborhood. Attempts to duplicate this structure behind the Victoria were defeated in court. This 1960s house was replaced in turn by a 6-story condominium in 1992; this small-scale building, faced with brick, is designed to be more compatible with neighboring structures.

**West Olympic Place/Olympic Way West**

West Olympic Place is the most atypical street in the study area. It curves west from the base of the Counterbalance, around the Kinnear mansion site and along the side of the hill past Kinnear Park. At that point it curves sharply northward, with the name changing to Olympic Way West.

As George Kinnear had planned, the spectacular views and the presence of Kinnear Park and one of Seattle's first street car lines meant that the area developed quickly. By 1904 the vicinity of the park was filled with substantial homes and gardens. An example was the E.R. Butterworth house at 521 West Olympic Place, described as "a country gentleman's home" with extensive walks and driveways bordered with flowers.[23] More modest homes were interspersed throughout the area.

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The 1930s brought a more subtle change in the streetscape, as large detached houses were converted into multifamily uses. Many of these remain, such as the large Classical Revival structure sitting high above the street at 662 West Olympic Place. Built in 1906, this was converted to three three-room apartments and one six-room unit in the 1930s. These adaptations have allowed the street to retain some of its small scale buildings and gardens, while increasing density and making the properties more economically viable.

The 1955 re-zoning brought buildings as large as eight stories, and other dramatic changes. Driveways and garages have had as great an impact as heights. Skyline House, an award-winning 8-story concrete structure meets the street with massive concrete columns and a wide driveway. At the east end of the street, the 8-story Queensborough towered over the Kinnear Mansion and the Delamar. In 1959 the 10-story Bayview Manor replaced the Kinnear Mansion at the foot of the Counterbalance. In 1971 the Seattle Housing Authority built a 9-story elderly housing project nearby. More recently, smaller buildings have been built, scattered among the converted single-family structures.

**West Roy Street**

West Roy Street was the last part of the study area to develop significantly. It was not directly on a car line, and, since it is near the bottom of the hill, its views are less spectacular and more easily obstructed. The north side of the street has a steep slope, making construction of large buildings difficult.

George Kinnear's mansion was in the middle of the wilderness when it was built in the early 1880s. For years the house stood by itself while he planned the development of the surrounding area. He filled in the surrounding swamp, naming the street after his son Roy, who was born in 1881. However, he put most of his efforts into the high-value view properties on West Olympic Place. An 1891 pictorial map shows West Roy Street dotted with single family homes, interspersed with large garden plots.[24] By 1904, a few more houses were scattered along the street, especially on the north side, but several blocks had only one house.

An early apartment building, the Ames, was built at the west end of the street in 1909. It was a modest building with twelve two-room units, surrounded by detached houses. It was demolished in the 1970s for a large condominium complex.

From the 1890s, or even earlier, the stretch of Queen Anne Avenue between Roy Street, and Mercer Street was a commercial center, with numerous grocers and other small businesses serving Queen Anne residents. More intensive development occurred just before World War I. The auditorium building which now houses ACT Theatre, at West Roy Street and 1st Avenue West, was built in 1912. The Del Roy, a large apartment building with small units, was constructed near Queen Anne Avenue in 1914. The same year, numerous small bungalows were built in the 200 and 300 blocks of West Roy Street, some of which still exist.

Shortly after the war, a large mixed-use building and an adjacent garage, diagonally across Roy Street, was built. The garage, called the Kuay Garage, was the largest in the city at the time, holding 200 cars. The building contained the Seattle Engineering School, which opened in 1920 to train auto mechanics. A
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Much of this was replaced in the rush of development during the 1950s-80s. The north side of the street is now lined with modern buildings of four to six stories, replacing the Ames and numerous single family homes. A two-block long 5-story condominium occupies the north side between 4th Avenue West and the end of the street. Queen Anne Square, a full-block development with office uses on the Mercer Street side, lies between 1st and 2nd avenues. As on neighboring streets, curbcuts and garages have significantly changed the street's appearance. However, several buildings have attractive landscaping and street trees.
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CHAPTER 8: APARTMENT HOUSE DEVELOPMENT: SEATTLE AND THE STUDY AREA

Conditions in Seattle were considerably different from the East Coast, San Francisco and Los Angeles. It is not surprising that its apartment tradition differs. Seattle did not have the high population density of New York or even of San Francisco. Although its population grew very rapidly, tripling from 1900 to 1910, and growing to 315,000 in 1920, density remained low. Most early Seattle families lived in detached wood frame houses, appropriate to their wealth. Those without families often lived in the boarding houses and residential hotels commonly found in the downtown area.

Seattle has always been spoken of as a single family city. Pitt’s 1879 directory noted that many residents, even the poor, invested their earnings in homes:

Lots in Fair View Addition cleared for building are sold on the installment plan, which has become very popular as it gives to every man, be he ever so poor, an opportunity of saving rent and investing his earnings in the purchase of a home. The population of Seattle is largely composed of mechanics and workingmen who have taken advantage of such opportunities and occupied themselves when out of employment in constructing neat cottages and adorning them.[52]

In the mid-1920s a Seattle Garden Club booklet called it a city where "... the man of modest means can own a home commanding a view such as the millionaire in the East would give a fortune to possess." At that time, the city was first in the United States in the percentage of citizens who owned their homes.[53]

In the 1940s, the Federal Writers Project guide to Washington said:

*Scattered throughout the city are many pleasant districts inhabited by families of middle income. Free from congestion, five- to seven-room dwellings cover an unusual proportion of the city's space, and, owing to the moist and mild climate, their tenants have been able to surround themselves with flowers, shrubs and grassy lawns.... Moderately-priced apartment houses and hotels loom here and there among the low roofs of the cottages.*[54]

They noted that the better homes had shifted away from the center of the city, but that closer-in neighborhoods such as Queen Anne had not been entirely forsaken by the well-to-do.

But that was by no means the entire picture. Census data shows that home ownership was still only a dream for the majority. At the time of the 1900 census, two out of three people on Queen Anne rented rather than owned their homes. Six percent of local residents were boarders; one of seven Queen Anne households took in boarders, people who rented rooms and ate meals with the family.[55]

By 1910 rapid population growth had outpaced development, and home ownership had gone down, with 82 percent renting. More than one quarter of Queen Anne households took in boarders. This may have been due to an influx of unestablished single people and newly married couples. Apartment houses appeared during this decade; they provided the convenience of temporary quarters without the sacrifice of privacy of boarding in a private home.
By 1920, with increased home construction, the situation had reversed. Home ownership soared to 46 percent, falling to 42 percent in 1940, after the Depression. The large number of rentals did not mean an acceptance of apartment living, however; most renters were in detached houses.[56]

From Seattle's earliest days boarding houses had been a significant type of lodging, as is common in pioneer communities where quick, inexpensive lodgings are needed for people without families. City directories and newspaper classified advertisements show large numbers of entries under "Boarding Houses" and "Lodging Houses," as well as "Furnished Rooms" or "Rooms for Rent." At the time of the opening of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909, for example, newspapers had three columns under "Boarders Wanted" and "Rooms for Rent." Some rooms were in hotels, but many were in private homes in all neighborhoods, including Queen Anne. These renters were not limited to the poor; many ads specified that they were looking for "young ladies," "gentlemen," or "refined" boarders.[57]

**Apartment Hotels**

"Family" or "apartment" hotels were also found in Seattle, although they were not as popular or as well-equipped as those in New York and other larger cities. According to Henry Broderick, an early 20th century real estate entrepreneur, Seattle had "family" or "apartment" hotels at least as early as the 1870s. The Lincoln Hotel at 4th and Madison streets catered to the middle class seeking gentility, and prospered until it burned in the 1920s. The Sorrento Hotel, on the other hand, aimed for a higher class crowd, with an elegant building on First Hill with a view dining room. It was a financial failure, as was its neighbor, the Perry. This lavishly-outfitted building was purchased by Mother Frances Cabrini and became a hospital.[58]

An advertisement in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer of September 2, 1929 promoting those apartment hotels that advertised in the paper gave a clear statement of this market segment: "The whole purpose is to provide convenience. People whose business and social duties are too many to permit time for household maintenance--newcomers who desire homelike quarters immediately upon arrival." An impressive array of such hotels was cited, many of them still in existence in some form: the Benjamin Franklin, the Frye, the Wintonia, the Calhoun, the Moore, the Camlin, the Olive Tower, the Wilsonian.[59]

Judging from listings in city directories, Queen Anne had no transient hotels or large boarding houses. However, at the edge of the community, at what is now Queen Anne Avenue and Denny Way, was the Sarah B. Yesler Women's Hotel. This was founded in 1892 to "meet the needs of women and girls coming to the city on business or pleasure." It offered pleasant rooms, meals, a sewing room and large parlors with pianos for $4.00 to $5.00 per week.[60]
The Chelsea Apartments on West Olympic Place were built in 1907 to house visiting families. The Chelsea's charms were widely advertised. One ad, running under the "Room and Board" classification a few years after the Exposition said:

*Seattle's Scenic Hotel Facing Kinnear Park. 10 minutes from business center. High-grade family home; large rooms, magnificent view, excellent neighborhood, roof garden, large lobby, private telephone in all rooms. Single rooms and suites with private bath...Take Kinnear car.*[61]

The rates started at $1.00 a day, or $2.00 and up with meals. The convenient and pleasant location, and the amenities such as the view, the lobby, the roof garden and telephones reflected the qualities mentioned in advertisements for nearby apartments. The owner, Charles R. Collins, lived at the Chelsea with his wife and three children. It was designed by Harlan Thomas, who designed the Sorrento Hotel, a family hotel on First Hill, and the Amalfi Apartments on Queen Anne Avenue. It is an eclectic mix of English, Renaissance and Italianate styles, with an unusual narrow courtyard with stairs leading to the second floor. It now has 58 apartment units, averaging 529 square feet.
The Delamar was built at the east end of West Olympic Place, as a private hotel for the Kinnears' guests. It opened in 1909, in time for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. The style is neo-Classical, based on a Florentine villa that Kinnear saw on his travels. Its formal courtyard features a pond and a marble statue. The facade has three-story terra cotta pilasters topped by fluted capitals. A highly ornamented frieze and cornice edge the building, topped by a terra cotta balustrade. Windows are highly detailed. There are 39 units, averaging over 1,000 square feet each.

**Efficiency Apartments**

Another apartment type, popularized in California, deserves discussion because of its significant use in Seattle, including lower Queen Anne. The "efficiency apartment" was basically a unit in which one room served more than one function; in one of its most common forms, the living room became the bedroom at night. This often occurred with the use of the Murphy bed, which folded into the wall during the day. The beds could also fit into a "dressing room," a space larger than a closet but smaller than a full bedroom.

A 1927 article in The Western Architect, published in Chicago, described the origins:
High ground values and mounting building costs, coupled with the necessity of providing rentable space in desirable localities at costs not prohibitive, have brought into apartment house planning a new factor-the "efficiency apartment." It developed on the Pacific Coast. There the annual influx of pilgrims and the rapid increase of permanent residents created for the community a condition not unlike the unexpected arrival of groups of relatives was wont to create in the household of former days. Ingenious planners worked out for the community thus "stricken" a modus operandi not dissimilar to that which, in many an older household, made sleeping and living quarters of the front parlors, for unexpected guests.[62]

The author focuses on the advantages of providing a larger number of rentable units in a given space, thereby increasing the return on investment. Although there were costs in providing furnishings such as Murphy beds, the increase in rentable space by one third and the additional rent for the furnishings allowed high-cost buildings to be built in high-value locations at modest rents. Queen Anne is a good example of this trend.

The typical configuration described sounds much like the units on lower Queen Anne: a living room, a large "dressing room" with doors, a full bathroom, a large closet, and a kitchen and dining room, divided by china cabinets. Sometimes the dressing rooms featured built-in dressers and cabinets. Kitchens were typically fully equipped with refrigeration, range, cabinets and a built-in ironing board. The goal was easy, efficient housekeeping. The author notes that the positive response of tenants to these units has changed the mind of lenders due to "...the obvious fact that the efficiency apartment is a solution of a definite requirement of present day living and not a temporary and unsatisfactory substitute for detached dwellings to the older type of apartment."[63] However, there is no further discussion of who the tenants were, except a mention of a woman's apartment hotel option, with two rooms sharing a common bath (but each having its own built-in ironing board).

John Hancock discusses the popularity of efficiency apartments in Seattle, saying they were typically studio or small one-bedroom units.[64] A study of the Denny Regrade for example, found that more than 80 percent of the dwelling units in the sample were studios, generally averaging 275 to 450 square feet. They had a living room, a kitchen and bath, and a large closet, often with a slide-out bed. The large living rooms actually provide more flexibility of use than the smaller rooms found in the one-bedroom units.[65]

By early 1927 real estate studies reported "an ample supply of 2-room suites," with a trend to more three and four room units. At the same time, buildings were also getting smaller, averaging 16 units as compared to the 30 or 40 unit buildings found in earlier years.[66] This trend was not clearly identifiable on Queen Anne, however. Although many large units were built toward the end of the decade, so were large buildings like the Seaview, with efficiency apartments.

**Apartment Development Pattern on Queen Anne**

As noted above, apartment houses in Seattle began appearing in the 1890s, generally along street car lines and near neighborhood commercial areas, such as Queen Anne, Wallingford, Capitol Hill and the University District. The development of apartment houses on Queen Anne between 1900 and 1930 is an
example of this pattern. This review focuses on the date of construction and the location of the buildings, with some discussion of the styles and amenities that developed over these years. Specific buildings are described and illustrated at the end of the chapter. The development pattern is shown on the map below; the buildings and their key characteristics are listed in the appendix.

1900-1910

Between 1900 and 1910, apartment construction occurred primarily on the main transit street, Queen Anne Avenue. Four apartment houses appeared: 1413 Queen Anne (1906), the Willis (1908), the Park Ridge (1909) and the Castle Court (1910). The other early apartment house in the study area was the Kinnear (1907), located on another car line, not far from the Chelsea Hotel.

1911-1919

This trend continued during the next decade, with new additions on Queen Anne Avenue including the Amalfi (1912), the Montanita (1913) and the Del Roy (1914), the largest local apartment building up to this time, with 49 units. Although no other apartment structures were built elsewhere in the study area, the Delamar and the Chelsea on West Olympic Place were converted to apartments.
1920-1929

Toward the end of the decade, World War I trade and industrial activity brought workers and jobs to Seattle, straining the available housing supply. However, the post-war economy precluded immediate construction to meet this need. In 1920 the Queen Anne News reported the great demand for rentals in the community, despite the fact that property was selling for relatively low prices. They made their feelings clear: "It is a good thing there are few homes for rent as the renter class is not as desirable as the homeowning class. If people are forced to buy they will feel an interest in the property and the community and the Hill will benefit."[67]

However, apartment construction proceeded. The Victoria on West Highland Drive was the first post-war apartment building in the study area, in 1921. Its construction kicked off the 1920s building boom--to some degree. Its architect, John Graham, Sr., designer of many of the city's most important commercial buildings, announced the Victoria's start with great fanfare in May 1921, saying that construction of the "mammoth community apartment house" indicated a "fast reviving building situation in Seattle...the first important answer to the campaign waged by the Chamber of Commerce to get the public to build now." Graham went on to predict "there will be a great influx of people to Seattle seeking homes this fall. We are following what we have been teaching: build now. It is especially needed."[68] With all this, however, it was 1925-26 before other apartments appeared in the area.

Apartment living became widely accepted in Seattle during the 1920s. Technology and the efforts of designers and developers in other cities had resulted in more comfortable and safe buildings, with light and air, fireproof construction, attractive courtyards, and convenient floorplans. Local developers showed great interest in this new market. The Journal of Commerce reported record construction levels in 1925, including "thousands of houses and scores of apartment houses."[69] Apartment construction continued to increase through the decade; for example, the first four months of 1927 saw twice as many permits for apartment buildings as the same period a year earlier.[70] In the study area, 19 apartment buildings went up. Many of area's vacant lots were filled in, and single family homes were replaced with apartments, most of which still exist today.

Relatively little of the 1920s development occurred on Queen Anne Avenue, where most earlier activity had been. Only four buildings were added. Two of these were by Fred Anhalt: 1320 Queen Anne (1927) and a bungalow court across the street (now demolished). The others were the Greenwich (1928) and 900 Queen Anne Avenue.

However, other streets in the study area saw considerable activity. Chandler Hall on West Roy Street near Queen Anne Avenue was the largest building, in terms of number of units, until the 1950s. It had 75 small units, serving primarily single people. At the opposite extreme were the three elegant view buildings on West Highland Drive.

The greatest change occurred on West Olympic Place and adjacent streets, where eleven buildings were added. The Ireland (1927), the Glen Eden (1929) and three projects with two buildings each, the Olympic Arms/Grayson (1925), the Los Altos/Saxonia (1927) and the West Coast Arms (1928) were typical rectangular block buildings with studio and one bedroom units. Villa Costella (1929) and Seville
Court (1927) were in the Mediterranean style with larger townhouse units, balconies, courtyards, and elaborate landscaping.

Another source of housing units during the 1920s-30s was the conversion of single family structures to multifamily use. Numerous large houses, of varying degrees of elegance and amenities, had been constructed on view streets between 1890 and 1910. However, in the 1920s servants became increasingly difficult to find and newer, more fashionable neighborhoods attracted the upper middle class. The Treat Mansion on West Highland Drive was converted into apartments in 1922. This trend intensified with the economic and population pressures of the Depression and war and continued in the 1950s-60s when zoning increased the value of many properties. Many of these houses have now been replaced by larger apartment structures, but many still exist on West Olympic Place.

1930-1935

Both construction and population growth came to a standstill in the 1930s. Residential construction dropped precipitously, from 2,583 units in 1930 to 361 in 1932. Between 1933 and 1937 only four permits for apartment houses were issued.[71] Several buildings in the study area were under construction at this time and completed after the stock market crash in 1930-31. Most of these were near West Roy Street and were simple, block-form buildings with studio apartments, such as the Westroy, the Iris, the Marianne, the Leonard, the Viking, and La Charme. Others followed the more elegant trend with attractive courtyards, including the Seaview, Olympus Manor and Anhalt's building at 1108-9th Avenue West. The Galer Crest, a mixed-use building, was completed at the top of Queen Anne Avenue in 1930.

Physical Characteristics

The pre-war Seattle apartment house on Queen Anne is typically a three- to four-story rectangular or U-shaped structure, of wood frame construction with brick or stucco facing. A small number used steel-frame construction. A wide variety of ornamentation is found. Variations on the Tudor, Mediterranean or Classical themes were most common. Others were more fanciful, using Norman, Gothic, or Italianate motifs, as well as various Art Deco variations.

The structures were generally of moderate size, ranging from approximately ten to 75 units. The individual units varied greatly in size; many buildings had primarily studios or one bedroom units, while some more elegant buildings had units as large as 1500 square feet. Some of the more elaborate courtyard buildings featured townhouse, or two-story units, often with amenities such as fireplaces or balconies. These complexes often had individual entrances for each unit, providing more privacy and direct access to the outdoors.

Courtyards reached new heights during the 1920s, although courtyard apartments were never as dominant in Seattle as in Los Angeles. With Seattle's climate, outdoor living is not as important and year-round gardening is more difficult. In addition, Seattle was a smaller market with a relatively lackluster economy, so there were fewer developers able to build larger buildings or experiment with more exotic ideas. The courts varied from narrow paved areas with a few plants and perhaps a fountain.
to block-wide lawns and gardens. These provided an attractive, calming transition between the street and the building. They also allowed more units to have light and pleasant outlooks, increasing the developer’s profit.

One of the most popular amenities, beginning about 1925, was the garage. Mass production of automobiles had allowed many middle-class and working class people to acquire automobiles, increasing the storage problem. Ease of construction, convenience and the scarcity of land in denser urban areas encouraged attached garages.[72] Others These were often located underground, but some were at street level with units or a courtyard above them. More spacious developments kept the garages in a separate structure in back, much as a large house would. Most garages, however, were tucked inconspicuously under the building with small entranceways and drives. The use of concrete made fireproof garages possible—a point in many classified ads.

The popularity of garages is particularly interesting because most of these buildings were efficiency apartments, intended for low to moderate income working people. All were located close to transit lines, some only a few feet away. Yet garages were prominent in the advertisements and were obviously considered important amenities.

Marketing/promotion

Newspaper classified advertising is a very basic form of communication, presenting simple, straightforward descriptions of products for sale or lease. For this reason, they are a good means to assess values, or what owners think is worth featuring in order to sell a product. Classified ads for apartments are an expression of how the owners view their buildings and the audience the buildings are designed to appeal to. They reflect, to some extent, the building's place in the housing and social spectrum.

To gain insight into Seattle's apartments during the highest point of their development, classified ads from four months (February, May, September and December) in 1929 were reviewed. The year 1929 was selected because of the large number of new apartment buildings opening. Earlier structures also remained on the market, of course. Sixteen of the study area buildings were described in the classified ads of this period.

Along with the advertisements, the weekly real estate pages were reviewed. These had minimal discussion of apartments, except for an occasional building sale. Single family homes were clearly the goal of most people, searching for "...a home of your own, a view ... and fresh air," as North Park was described.[73]

Based on these ads, it appears that apartments were not promoted as substitutes for single family homes. For example, the word "homelike" was mentioned only twice, relating to the Kinnear and the Victoria (which has truly homelike apartments). Not surprisingly, the most common amenity mentioned was the view, for ten of the sixteen buildings. Children or proximity to schools were rarely mentioned, although they were mentioned in apartment ads for other areas such as Wallingford. Only Seville Court,
which had large units and a landscaped courtyard, actually invited children, mentioning its play area and nearby schools.[74] The Vance, which also had two-bedroom units, said "no objection to children."[75]

Modern features were almost as important as views, particularly refrigerators and laundry appliances. The Glen Eden boasted "The kitchens are perfect with many labor-saving conveniences found exclusively in Gwinn buildings."[76] Radios were also mentioned frequently.

One can glean some hints of the intended tenants from the ads. For example, two or three mentioned a mangle as a feature of the laundry room. This appliance would most likely appeal more to a woman, perhaps a working woman such as a store clerk, rather than a man, who would possibly be more likely to send clothes out to a laundry.

Decor and charm were often mentioned. Since many units were rented furnished, the furniture was important, the preferred fashion being "overstuffed." Some went into considerable descriptive detail, such as the Vance (Marqueen) at 600 West Queen Avenue: "...just newly decorated kitchens in a soft beautiful green and cream enamel, living rooms to harmonize in soft tones and baths tiled and finished in delicate flesh pink and white enamel."[77]

Some courtyard apartments featured their landscaping, but not as much as might be expected. The Greenwich advertised its "...spacious roof garden, tiled entrance court, with flowers and marble pool."[78] However, many buildings with extensive landscaping never mentioned it in their ads.

Garages were more than twice as likely to be mentioned as the proximity to transit. Even though all of these buildings were on bus lines, only three noted the fact. Six promoted their attached garages: "garage in connection" and "concrete fireproof garage" were frequent phrases.

Location in general, other than the view, was not often mentioned. It is clear that Queen Anne was a prestigious address--three ads mentioned the "desirable" neighborhood. "Quiet" or sometimes even "soundproof" appeared fairly often, indicating that noise was a concern then as it is today. Convenience to shops and schools, however, was seldom mentioned, although it was commonly found in descriptions of apartments in other areas. It appears that the view and building features were considered more promising selling points on Queen Anne.

Examples of Apartment Houses

Several notable examples of the multifamily housing stock found in the study area are described here and illustrated. They were selected both to represent various periods of apartment development in the area, and to reflect the types of buildings, both in terms of physical form and amenities and the intended class of tenants. They are listed in chronological order.

Gable House (shown below), one of Seattle's largest and grandest mansions, at the key location of Queen Anne Avenue and West Highland Drive, was built in 1901 by Harry Whitney Treat, a real estate developer. Located conveniently on the street car line (which Treat owned)[sic], it had a tremendous view and luxurious appointments. Designed by the prominent local firm of Bebb and Mendel in the English Arts and Crafts style, it is of brick and stucco with extensive stained glass. With nearly 20,000
square feet, it was one of the city's largest homes. On Mr. Treat's death in 1922, the it was too large to be maintained and was soon converted to apartments. It was returned to single family use for some time before being restored and converted into apartments again in 1975, to prevent demolition for a high-rise building. It now has fifteen units, averaging 1,072 square feet.

The Ballard Mansion, or 22 West Highland Drive (shown below), was built by Martin D. Ballard, founder of the Seattle Hardware Company, across the street from Treat's house. Completed in 1906, it was designed by deNeuf and Heide. Its bright white paint, Georgian Revival style, and colossal Ionic portico, along with its prominent site, make it one of the most striking structures on Queen Anne. It was converted into apartments in 1943, and remodeled in 1985 to form six units averaging more than 1,200 square feet.
The first structure in the study area intended to be an apartment house was built at the top of the hill at Galer Street in 1906. Originally called the Wilhelmina, its name was changed to the Winona during World War I, and it is now known simply as 1413 Queen Anne Avenue. Its 14 units are quite small, averaging 581 square feet; this came to be typical of many of the area’s apartments. The Willis, across from the Kinnear home, followed in 1908, with ten units of about the same size (604 square feet). It is an unusual stucco building with Classical pilasters and detailing. The Castle Court Apartments, built in 1910, had slightly larger units and a small entry courtyard. The Amalfi, a Spanish-style stucco building was built in 1912 on a narrow lot along the hillside. Its facade was recently extensively redesigned.

The Parkridge, at 916 Queen Anne Avenue, is a plain brick structure built in 1909. It originally had only ten units, but now has twelve, of more than 1,100 square feet each.

The nearby Montanita was constructed in 1913, with a deep, narrow entry courtyard. This building was first called the Heidelberg, but the name was quickly changed during World War I. It was one of the area's larger buildings, with 23 units of 759 square feet.
The Kinnear, shown below, was one of the most elegant of the early buildings. Located where Olympic Way West turns north, near Kinnear Park and the Chelsea Hotel, it is sited to take advantage of the view. It was designed in 1907 by a well-known Seattle architect, W.P. White, in stucco and brick with a rounded bay at the corner. Its units average over 900 square feet, with four or five rooms each.
After World War I, Queen Anne's apartment buildings became more ornate, as exemplified by those on West Highland Drive and their use of terra cotta ornament. Terra cotta is a molded, fired clay block with extraordinary plasticity and a durable, shiny finish, usually in a cream color. Its plasticity meant that elaborate ornamentation could be applied to dress up a plain building without costly handcarving. Architectural magazines throughout the 1920s were filled with examples and advertisements for entranceways in Gothic or Mediterranean styles. In Seattle, it was commonly used on large commercial buildings to decorate or completely clad the facade, and on brick apartment buildings, to enhance entryways and cornices and emphasize windows. Many Seattle buildings are simple, stark brick blocks, but the terra cotta ornament provides individuality and softens the structures. However, the use of terra cotta died out after World War II; terra cotta was seen as too costly, and Modernism rejected ornament.

The architect of the Victoria Apartments, John Graham, Sr., was noted for his "appropriate and sensitive use of historic and modern architectural styles and his eye for proportion and nuance of ornament."[79] The building cost $600,000 when it was built in 1921 in a Tudor Revival style, in red brick with terra cotta ornament. It occupies an entire block at the crest of the hill with panoramic views of the city and Elliott Bay. The U-shaped building surrounds a vast terraced lawn (recently re-designed), which allows residents to not only enjoy the water view but to have garden views from virtually every window and a
greater sense of privacy from the street. It also provides an important amenity to the neighborhood, providing open space, light and attractive plantings.

The Victoria's aim was to have home-like units with large comfortable rooms and amenities seldom found in Seattle apartments. The building's original configuration had 48 apartments of two to six rooms each, three elevators, six laundries, a community assembly room, a children's playroom, 20 maid's rooms with sitting room and bath; and 48 garages. Many larger units had service entrances, foyers, libraries, and fireplaces; each unit had a service door, where trash was picked up daily. The building now has 55 one- and two-bedroom units, some formed from the servants' rooms.

Several years later two other apartment buildings were built on West Highland Drive, the Narada (1926) and the Parkview (1927), across from Kerry Park. While much smaller structures than the Victoria, they shared its emphasis on unusually large, comfortable units and spectacular views. The Parkview is quite similar to the Victoria, with a courtyard, but on a much smaller scale.

The Narada, shown below, is distinguished by its extensive and ornate terra cotta ornamentation. Being just at the edge of the hill, it is easily visible from below. Its units are large, averaging more than 1,000
square feet. In the 1920s, a five-room view suite rented for $150 a month, at a time when other large apartments in the area were $60.00 to $75.00. [ed.note: see also Department of Neighborhoods]

West Olympic Place saw extensive changes in the late 1920s, with eight new buildings. Development began in 1925 with the Grayson and the Olympic Arms at the east end, with several more added in the immediate area during 1927-28. All are the familiar 1920s type, with brick veneer construction in a block form. They are primarily efficiency and one-bedroom units, averaging from 640 to 1,000 square feet. The end of the decade brought more elegant buildings. Olympus Manor graced the east end with a large landscaped courtyard; its 34 units average 700 square feet.

However, the most spectacular structure is the Spanish Revival-style Villa Costella was built on the view site formerly occupied by John Ritchie Kinnear’s mansion. The long, white building with tropical landscaping and red tile roofs is distinctively different from surrounding structures. The 20 apartments, averaging 1,000 square feet, have tile floors, electric fireplaces, beamed ceilings and French doors to view decks. Villa Costella was built by John Beardsley, a local developer who specialized in Mediterranean styles. Fred Anhalt may have participated in the project as well. [ed. note: see also Department of Neighborhoods research]
A more subdued example of the Mediterranean style is the Alexander Hamilton (shown below), on Olympic Way West past the Kinnear apartments. The building is basically linear, squeezed onto a narrow view site. Each entrance is distinguished by a red tile roof, twisted columns, decorative tiles and an elaborate leaded glass door. The Alexander Hamilton was built in 1929; it has 22 units, averaging 780 square feet.
The Mediterranean styles also influenced Fred Anhalt, Seattle's best known apartment builder. Of his four buildings in the study area, two are Mediterranean (Seville Court and 1130-9th Avenue West); one, at 1320 Queen Anne Avenue, is his more typical Tudor style. The fourth building was a bungalow court at 1212 Queen Anne Avenue, which was demolished in 1970.

Anhalt aimed to be different from other developers by creating large individualized units that people could consider permanent homes. He particularly wanted to avoid the long hallways that he said reminded him of tenements. His "apartment homes" were refuges distinguished by their size, quality detailing, landscaping and charm, built for people who did not want to own property, but could afford the best.[80] His most typical styles were Tudor and Norman French courtyard apartments, which became very popular. They featured such details as leaded or stained glass, turrets, fireplaces, beamed ceilings, and elaborate brickwork.[81] Anhalt considered a nice view important, home, so he developed attractive courtyards as a practical way to achieve this pleasant outlook: "I could make things look the way I wanted them to, that way, which is hard to do when you're dealing with a view of Mount Rainier or Puget Sound."[82] The typical approach was through a landscaped courtyard, with entrances leading to two or three units. The plantings and privacy make going home a pleasant transition from the outside world.

1320 Queen Anne Avenue is in an English Tudor style of brick and stucco, with steeply pitched roofs, and half timbering. Built in 1927, it has only nine units, with more than 1,10 square feet each; they feature fireplaces and leaded glass windows. The building fits into a long narrow site beneath a steep ridge, so the entry courtyards are very small.
1108-9th Avenue West, previously known as Franca Villa, has 13 townhouses arranged around a large courtyard. Garages are located at the side and under the courtyard. It is one of the few Anhalt buildings oriented toward a view; it faces Elliott Bay.

Seville Court on First Avenue West is similar, but its courtyard is overgrown with large trees, providing a refuge-like feeling. Its 16 units average nearly 700 square feet. [ed. note: see also Seattle Department of Neighborhoods research]
The last major development, in 1929-31, was the group of Art Deco buildings on and near West Roy Street. Five lie within the study area, and several more are on Mercer Street, just outside the boundaries. They are generally a block shape, with a central stairway and a small lobby, often decorated with simple stained or leaded glass. They are primarily of wood frame construction with brick veneer and a restrained appearance.

Their interiors are quite similar. The apartment units are typically small (536 to 650 square feet), usually consisting of an entryway, living room, dining area, small kitchen and a small bedroom or large sleeping alcove/dressing room. While the units were small, they had touches of elegance. They generally have extensive woodwork, floors of oak or fir, and often leaded glass doors in the living room or dining room. Although these buildings were probably planned for the working person of moderate means, they all had garages.

The distinguishing feature of these buildings is their ornamented friezes and entryways, which range from stylized ferns and flowers to geometric chevrons and zigzags in the Moderne style. The Art Deco style was an outgrowth of the naturalistic Art Nouveau design, but was more stylized to achieve a new, more modern look. The style referenced many cultures, integrating art with architecture in a manner which was seldom found after World War II, when Modernism became the guiding theme. These Queen Anne buildings reflect both the era's fascination with technology, in the streamlined zigzags and
chevrons, and the appeal of naturalistic forms such as ferns and flowers. More exotic examples reflected modern art movements such as Cubism and exotic cultures such as Egyptian, Mayan, and Celtic themes.[83]

The Sea View, at the west end of Roy Street where it deadends into lower Kinnear Park, is the largest and best of the group of Art Deco buildings. Built as the Depression began, in 1930, it has extensive Zigzag Moderne ornament both inside and outside. The frieze and entryway feature naturalistic fern-like designs. The 65 units are arranged in three stories around a formal landscaped courtyard with a pond. The interior was unusual in that it had a large lobby with a panoramic view, an elevator, and a ballroom in the basement. There is a large underground garage. [ed. note: see also Seattle Department of Neighborhoods research]

The apartment interiors were designed for tenants who were satisfied with little space but wanted elegant surroundings. They are distinguished by leaded glass French doors, built-in bookcases, extensive woodwork, and tiled kitchens and baths. The units average about 600 square feet; nearly all are efficiencies, with a large "dressing room" rather than a bedroom. Many residents have views of Elliott Bay. The Sea View is one of the few apartment buildings in the study area that has become a condominium.
CHAPTER 9: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This analysis shows the extent to which Seattle developed its own apartment tradition in the years before World War II. Building types were adapted to meet local needs and preferences, so that the buildings succeeded both as housing resources and as neighborhood urban design features. Larger, more elegant apartments served the needs of the upper-middle class, both short-term residents and those who did not want to maintain households. Since Seattle was a small, largely middle-class city, this was a limited market, and relatively few of these apartments were built. The larger market was for efficiency, one-bedroom and small two-bedroom units, of which a great many were built. The study area is rich in these buildings, along with several examples of the more luxurious alternatives.

The examples illustrated above demonstrate that it is possible to have moderately high-density housing of appropriate scale, mass and appearance that fits well in neighborhoods. Their facades and landscaping make pleasant streetscapes and single family homes continue to exist nearby. Further study is warranted to determine more specifically the factors which contribute to their success in terms of both housing and urban design.

Role of Apartment Houses in Seattle

Physical Role

The role of apartment houses in the area's physical development is multifaceted.

Apartment houses were initially concentrated along streetcar lines, especially near commercial nodes. The busy commercial intersection at Queen Anne Avenue and Galer Street saw the earliest apartments (1902, 1906), followed by others at the bottom of the hill at Roy Street (1908). The other early buildings (1907, 1909) were on West Olympic Place, on the Kinnear car line, and were sited to take advantage of convenient transportation as well as views and Kinnear Park. The west end of Roy Street, with the least convenient transit access and fewer views, was the last to develop, in the late 1920s.

Housing shortages and economic conditions often led to the conversion of single family homes into multifamily units. The area's major examples are Gable House (converted in 1922) and the Ballard Mansion (1943), but there are numerous examples on Queen Anne Avenue North and West Olympic Place as well.

Some apartment buildings were the first structures on their sites, such as the Victoria. However, many replaced single family homes. Not much is known about the homes replaced during the 1920s; most were probably fairly modest. However, Villa Costella was built on the site of John Ritchie Kinnear's large home.

Apartment houses have proven to be fairly permanent structures. Those built since 1945 have primarily replaced single family homes, not earlier apartments. Only two buildings built as apartments have been identified as having been replaced by larger apartment buildings: a low-density Anhalt bungalow court on Queen Anne Avenue and the Ames Apartments on West Roy Street were both demolished in the 1970s.
Zoning, not surprisingly, is a key determinant of apartment location and form. Before zoning came into existence, apartment buildings were scattered among single family homes, primarily on Queen Anne Avenue. After 1926, they multiplied rapidly, often being built in clusters. Some blocks became entirely multifamily. When height limits were increased in 1955, property values rose, and single family homes were rapidly replaced.

Social Role

Information about these apartment buildings gives some insight into their role in Seattle's social structure, although many questions remain unanswered.

John Hancock, in his article on the American apartment house in Buildings and Society, describes five basic types of apartment houses found in American cities: palatial apartments for the rich, luxury apartments for the affluent, owner-occupied apartments, efficiency apartments for the middle class, and subsidized apartments for the low income and poor. [84]

Based on unit size, advertisements, rental prices and amenities, only two types were present in the study area during the pre-war period. There were no cooperatives or other owner-occupied units, and no subsidized units, although both of these are common in the area today. None would be defined as "palatial," but several buildings would be considered luxury apartments, serving people who could afford houses but did not wish to do so. The majority were efficiency units, serving middle class people, primarily working in office or sales positions.

Luxury Apartments

The more luxurious buildings provided very comfortable large units with amenities, excellent locations and the freedom of apartment living. The Victoria, the Narada, Villa Costella and the Anhalt buildings are examples of this type. Many units had four or five rooms, and more than 1,000 square feet, with rents from $50.00 to as much as $150.00 per month. They had such amenities as water views, fireplaces, elevators, balconies, elaborate landscaping (most had courtyards), and even servants' quarters. Clearly people who were able to pay for these units were able to afford a house. In 1929, a monthly rent of $75.00, common in these buildings, would have been barely within reach of a professional such as a lawyer. [85]

The reasons these people chose not to purchase houses are not documented, but possible reasons are: to avoid the trouble of household maintenance; to have more luxurious quarters and a view they could not necessarily afford in a detached house; or to be more convenient to work and urban attractions. Others may have been in circumstances that meant they did not want a long-term commitment, such as holding a short-term job or being newcomers who were looking for a house to purchase.

Efficiency Apartments

A review of available information on efficiency apartments in the study area indicates that they were not necessarily as grim as those described by Carl Condit and Lewis Mumford, as quoted by John Hancock. Condit saw Chicago's apartments as cramped, undecorative, minimal in service and
spaciousness and surrounded by noise and air pollution. Mumford said the typical small apartment building "raised bad housing into an art.... The result of building apartments in New York and elsewhere was not cheaper rents for small units; it was smaller quarters without the cheaper rents."[86]

Much, of course, depends on a tenant's expectations, and the value one places on space versus other factors such as convenience, location and view. Small apartments on Queen Anne often had leaded glass, attractive woodwork, attached garages, and modern appliances and furnishings. The Sea View on West Roy Street, perhaps the best of the efficiency buildings, had a park-like setting, a luxurious lobby, an elevator, an attractive courtyard, and a ballroom--and small units.

These apartments offered a convenient location and transportation for people working downtown. Perhaps most importantly, they promised, at modest cost, privacy and independence, compared to living with one's parents (or grown children) or in a boarding house. Monthly rents of $30.00 to $40.00 were within reach of white collar workers such as office and retail clerks or bank tellers.

For the first time, single women were living on their own in large numbers, and many of the apartment features, such as laundries and built-in ironing boards, were likely to appeal to them. They were unlikely to have children, however; almost none of the advertisements mentions children or proximity to schools, features found in ads for other neighborhoods. The census data confirms these observations.

Most of the tenants in these efficiency buildings were probably in a transitional stage in their lives. As described by Constance Perin, most people in apartments today are waiting for the day when they can afford to buy a house.[87] This was probably true then as well. The census data indicates that most of the tenants were women, many living alone. It is probable that when they got married they moved into a house, even if it were rented.

For many years, a significant number of Seattleites have considered these efficiency apartments to be worth the rent. Many still prefer these older buildings to newer units, which seem sterile in comparison. As household sizes continue to decrease, they continue to provide privacy and convenience at reasonable cost. However, since housing prices have risen, it is unclear to what extent apartments are now transitional housing, or long-term residences.

**Seattle's Apartment Tradition**

Based on this study area, Seattle has a definite apartment tradition. Whether it is unique to Seattle or not would take further study. It clearly differs from New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco, but Seattle's development history and density are so different from those cities that the comparison is not meaningful. San Francisco's high density and land constraint and Los Angeles' rapid growth and mild climate resulted in particular building forms that are only partially represented here. However, similarities could possibly be found with smaller western cities such as Portland and Denver. Such a comparison would further illuminate the role of apartments in American life and in Seattle.

Some aspects that appear to be part of Seattle's apartment tradition, as shown on Queen Anne, are:
A variety of types of tenants, with varying income levels and lifestyles, and units built to suit their needs;

**High quality, long-lasting buildings;**

Buildings of moderate size and scale, generally friendly to surrounding structures;

Three basic building forms: the block, the courtyard (including both entry courts and large courtyards); and linear forms (usually to conform to a difficult lot);

Clustered development, with groups of fairly similar buildings close together;

Stratification of building types by the major amenity--the view. (Generally speaking, although not always, the most luxurious buildings are those with the best views. This appears to be more important than structural characteristics, although unit size is also important.);

A variety of building types and tenants in general proximity to each other (Although buildings are clustered together, the hill's topography and development history mean that a luxurious building may be next door to a modest one.);

**Additional Studies on Queen Anne Buildings**

Now that this basic data has been compiled for the Queen Anne area, there are numerous opportunities for additional studies to answer some of the remaining questions.

One area for future work is to discover more information about the people who actually lived in the buildings studied. Census data provides a statistical portrait, but no insight into individuals. Anecdotal accounts, such as those found in the Queen Anne community history and Constance Horn's recollections of the Victoria, focus on the most memorable residents--the wealthy or famous, or those who lived there for decades. But we know little of the average tenant, who was probably there for only a short time. Some possible questions to consider are: What was the average length of tenancy? What percentage became long-term tenants, and why did they do so? Did people often move from one apartment to another, or did they move into houses? Did they live in these apartments until they married, or until they had children? Were they satisfied with their apartments? Did they socialize and form communities within the buildings, or did their friends live elsewhere? How did they actually use their space and the indoor and outdoor common spaces? This information is obviously difficult to obtain so many years later. It is possible that some buildings have rental records or other documentation that would be rich sources; it is also possible that some tenants or neighbors remember conditions sixty years ago, and oral histories would be worthwhile.

A second area of missing information is about the developers. The work of Fred Anhalt and the development of the Victoria are well documented. However, more research is needed to identify who built the other local structures and if there are any particular stories behind this development. How many developers were involved in the area? Were they active elsewhere in the city? Were they large firms, groups of local individuals or families? Why are so many of the buildings so much alike? How
were they financed? How were decisions made about the type of building to construct and the potential market to target? Were the buildings financially successful? The best source for initial identification of builders and developers is the original building permits. Once the companies are identified, further information can possibly be gained from careful review of corporation records and of the local building press, such as the Journal of Commerce and its predecessors.

A third gap is the lack of information on the numerous smaller buildings, primarily converted single family homes, that were discovered. More detail on the reasons for the conversions, when they occurred and the physical modifications that were made would be important to a better understanding of the neighborhood. Matching this data with oral histories from neighbors about their perceptions of the changing community character would be particularly interesting.

One of the most important and unexplored resources, which would be useful in any of these efforts, is local and regional newspapers and periodicals. The greatest insight into local apartment development was gained through these, but much remains to be done. For example, Pacific Builder and Engineer, Pacific Coast Architect, Western Architect and Washington State Architect all discuss West Coast trends and can be helpful in determining what influenced Seattle designers. Besides the Seattle Times and Seattle Post-Intelligencer, the Journal of Commerce and its predecessors and smaller papers such as the Seattle Mail and Herald and community papers provide day-to-day accounts of development activities. Special Collections at the University of Washington library and the Pacific Northwest Collection at the Seattle Library also have notebooks, photographs and scrapbooks. All of these sources are laborious to review, since they are generally not indexed, but they can be very rewarding.

Additional Research and Implications for today

This work focuses on only one small part of Seattle, but the questions raised about the role of apartments in the city can only be answered by similar studies of other parts of the city. Queen Anne, like all neighborhoods, is unique. For example, it has spectacular views not enjoyed by all areas. It is accessible to the city by streets and transit, but is not simply an extension of downtown, since it is separated by the Denny Regrade. The manner in which these characteristics have affected its development would be better determined by comparison with apartments in other neighborhoods. This would provide a better picture of "Seattle's apartment tradition," rather than just Queen Anne's tradition.

Concentrations of apartment houses occurred during the pre-war era in the University District, Wallingford, First Hill and other neighborhoods. Capitol Hill is particularly rich in apartment buildings, with a wider range of types and styles and greater density than found on Queen Anne. Because of its size and large number of apartments, a preliminary survey would be needed to divide it into areas for further study. A study such as this one, compiling basic information on buildings and land use, would provide a strong basis for better understanding Seattle's apartments.

However, the more important research opportunities are in looking beyond the basic descriptive information to analyze specific facets of the pre-war multifamily sector to determine their significance for today's planning challenges. One example is West Olympic Place, the most varied of the streets in
the study area. This street presents an excellent example of increasing density while maintaining neighborhood character, and of integrating large and small multifamily buildings with single family homes. It also has numerous less successful examples of larger scale structures that focus on views and automobiles rather than on neighborhood context. A detailed look at changes and contrasts on this street, and the impacts of regulations over time, would undoubtedly provide guidance for design guidelines for such conversions.

Studies could also look at a variety of factors in pre-war buildings in relation to their popularity with today's tenants. How important to a prospective renter are factors such as charm and character, location, cost, maintenance, building size, unit size, landscaping or relationship to the neighborhood? An extreme example is Anhalt's buildings, which are renowned for their continued appeal. However, much plainer buildings are also popular, if they are well maintained. While a developer could not duplicate these buildings today, a better understanding of their appeal could mean more attractive new buildings in our neighborhoods.

The growing cost of housing and decreasing family size means that there is a need for additional multifamily housing. The desire to prevent urban sprawl by increasing density means that this housing must be attractive and appealing enough to fit into a variety of neighborhoods and to meet the needs of a range of income levels and lifestyles. For many people, modern apartments are not attractive choices, often lacking individuality, character and solid construction. Large apartment complexes often are completely separated from the neighboring buildings, isolating the residents. In many cases, integrating smaller buildings into mixed use areas can better accommodate people's housing needs.

The study area contains many examples of moderately high density multifamily structures that fit well into the neighborhood, without overwhelming nearby single family homes. One of the most attractive options is ground-related housing, such as Seville Court, Villa Costella and 1108 9th Avenue West. Each unit, or small group of units, has its own entrance, providing a direct relationship with detached dwellings. Their scale, mass, landscaping, and overall appearance are appropriate for many single family or transitional neighborhoods. Considerable variation in design is possible, making this a good prototype for new housing.

A second type of multifamily structure seen in the study area is that which is built around a well-proportioned courtyard. Examples such as the Victoria, the Parkview, the Seaview and Olympus Manor are modest in scale, three to four stories. Most importantly, their courtyards are large enough in relation to the building to be a significant amenity to both residents and neighbors. The Victoria is notable in this regard; although the building is large, the large open space makes it seem less overwhelming and more appealing. The other examples have smaller courtyards, but their proportions and landscaping make them neighborhood assets.

The third type of building in the community is the plain block-shape form that is most common, especially on Queen Anne Avenue and West Roy Street. These structures are typically modest in scale, usually of two to four stories and occupying about one-sixth, or less, of a block. Each one individually is pleasing in appearance and detailing, although styles and ornamentation vary. Their most important
characteristic is their respect for their context, for each other and the surrounding single family homes. They meld into a whole, forming a generally pleasant streetscape. These attributes should be considered as important aspects of new apartment buildings.

Conclusion

The southwest slope of Queen Anne is a well-established neighborhood of relatively high density; it has successfully housed a significant number of people in high-quality buildings for many years. While many changes have occurred in the streetscape since 1930, the pre-war buildings are a crucial element of the area, both in terms of the housing they provide and their aesthetic contribution. They are important assets to the community and to the city as a whole: “The personality of any city is not just dependent on its great buildings and great places but is created by the total complex of large and small, important and minor, the individual and the mass.”[88]

The buildings studied here provide a large number of units of all types, from studio apartments to six room townhouses. They continue to serve a variety of income groups and ages. They should not only be maintained, but should be looked to as examples for modern multifamily living. They have established a scale and overall neighborhood ambience that should be valued; this does not preclude new buildings or large buildings, but encourages new buildings to take into consideration their surroundings.


[18] . Information from Virginia Klockzien and Agnes Hamel, 7/1/76, Queen Anne Historical Society archives.


[34] Norton and Patterson, p. 11.

[35] Lynes, p. 106.


[37] Lynes, p. 5.

[38] Norton and Patterson, p. 15.


[56]. QA Historical Society, p. 88.


[60] Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 9/20/1892, quoted in QA Historical Society, p. 74.

[61] Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 6/26/14, p. 5.


[70] Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 5/1/27, p. 23.


[80] Lambert, p. 59.


[82] Lambert, p. 47.


[84] Hancock, p. 160.

[85] Hancock, p. 167.

[86] Quoted in Hancock, p. 172.

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APPENDIX B: LITERATURE REVIEW

Little appears to have been written specifically about the development of apartment houses in Seattle. The available literature reflects primarily apartment development in other cities, the sociology of apartment house living, and Seattle's architectural, social or economic history. Information is available on specific buildings, especially in the King County archives. Several buildings in the study area are works of well-known architects or have been nominated for the National Register, and additional documentation is available for them.

Seattle Social and Architectural History

The history of Queen Anne published in September 1993 by the Queen Anne Historical Society contains a thorough history of the hill's physical and social development, including an entire chapter on apartment houses. This work contains an invaluable compilation of details, especially regarding early land claims and the activities of key figures in the community's early development. The information on apartment houses relies primarily on the sources mentioned elsewhere in this thesis.

Several books have been written on Seattle's economic and social development between 1900 and 1940. Among these are Roger Sale's Seattle Past to Present and Richard Berner's Seattle 1921-1940: From Boom to Bust. Sale's work is more thought provoking and useful for analysis because it discusses possible reasons why things occurred as they did. Berner, on the other hand, primarily recounts events, especially political and economic events, rather than attempting to explain them. However, his book is a useful compilation of economic and demographic statistics placed in context.

Two members of pioneer families, Henry Broderick and Sophie Frye Bass, compiled informal anecdotal accounts of the city's early history. These works give notably short shrift to Queen Anne. This may reflect the fact that Queen Anne developed later than First Hill, which remained the home of Seattle's early elite for some time. While Queen Anne came to be edged with mansions on the view streets, it was largely a middle- and working-class neighborhood.

A key book is Larry Kreisman's Apartments by Anhalt, which reviews the career and works of Fred Anhalt, one of the best known Seattle apartment developers. The study area has two of his buildings, and another one previously stood on Queen Anne Avenue. Although the book deals with only a small number of unique buildings, the introductory essay discusses overall residential and apartment development trends in the 1920s and the role of apartment buildings in the city's social and urban fabric. Steve Lambert's interview with Fred Anhalt, Built by Anhalt, provides insight into the builder's motives and the development and construction process he used.

Another Kreisman book, Deco Seattle, specifically mentions a group of apartment houses in the study area, between West Roy and West Mercer streets. It cites the Sea View as the city's outstanding example of this type.

Seattle's Visual Inventory of Buildings and Urban Design Resources compiled by Victor Steinbrueck and Folke Nyberg focused first on Queen Anne, and provides useful context for the area's architecture and
other urban design features. Even this important reference, however, largely ignored apartment houses.

Historic photographs and maps provide clues to the scale and density of development during various periods. Paul Dorpat's three compilations, Seattle Then and Now, have several photos of the study area. He is particularly interested in locales that have changed significantly, such as Seattle Center and lower Queen Anne.

**Apartment Development Elsewhere**

American apartment living is directly influenced by French and English traditions. James Goode's Best Addresses: A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment Houses is primarily concerned with Washington D.C., but it also has an excellent essay on apartment house development in London, Paris and other European cities, which provides connections and context for development of the building type in America. Donald Olsen's The City as a Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna includes extensive discussion of the roles of single family homes and apartments in the social geography in each city.

Numerous books discuss apartment development in East Coast cities, often going into considerable detail about architecture, ornamentation, unit size, room arrangement and tenants. This information is useful in order to place Seattle's apartment house activity in a national context. Andrew Alpern's Apartments for the Affluent: A Historical Survey of Buildings in New York contains descriptions, photographs and floor plans for numerous New York apartment houses, and an introductory essay on the history of apartment development. Elizabeth Cromly's Alone Together: A History of New York's Early Apartments and New York, New York: How the Apartment House Transformed the Life of the City (1869-1930) by Elizabeth Hawes both focus on social and physical aspects, especially the gradual middle class acceptance of apartment living.

R.W. Sexton's American Apartment Houses, Hotels and Apartment Hotels of Today focuses specifically on modern designs of the 1920s, the period when Seattle saw its most intensive development. This allows a good comparison of the state of the art architecturally in Seattle compared to other cities such as New York, Chicago and Wichita.

John Hancock's chapter on "The Apartment House in Urban America," in Buildings and Society, considers apartment house development throughout the country. It is very valuable in establishing a national context for the small buildings that were typical of Seattle; it contains some information specific to Seattle, as well as data on apartment tenants.

Paul Groth's dissertation on single-room occupancy housing discusses the development and role of apartment hotels and single-room occupancy hotels in American cities. Although his focus differs from the apartment houses discussed in this thesis, the discussion of apartment history, the contrast with apartment hotels, and the differing roles of the two types of structures, is important to the context and social development of apartment houses in general.
The West Coast apartment tradition clearly differs from that of the East Coast. Courtyard Housing in Los Angeles: A Typological Analysis, by Stefanos Polyzoides, et al, is an insightful look at a particular building type and how and why it developed. Much of this development also occurred in the 1920s. While Seattle does not have many of the grand courtyard apartments found in Los Angeles, the study area does contain several good examples of this building type. This book is particularly useful for its discussion of how these buildings fit into the urban form and social structure of a community and how they could be used to solve today's problems.

David Gebhard’s Architecture in Los Angeles and LA in the Thirties provide a broader perspective on the historical development of Southern California apartment houses and the role they played in terms of housing and architecture. Thomas Hines in Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture discusses the works of one of the few architects who made a name for himself through trend-setting apartment structures.

**History of Housing**

A significant amount of literature analyzes the social history of housing in America. Although discussions generally focus on single family housing, many also discuss multifamily housing as alternatives to address specific problems. They compare what people seek from housing and how it can be obtained, or not obtained, through types other than single family homes, and societal attitudes toward those who choose to or have to live in apartments. Examples are found in Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America by Gwendolyn Wright, Dolores Hayden’s Redesigning the American Dream, and The American Home: Architecture and Society, 1815-1915, by David Handlin.

**Newspaper Accounts**

Newspaper real estate pages and business journals generally track a city’s major developments—the construction of significant buildings, the works of prominent architects or developers, and new structures at key locations. A review of Seattle newspapers for several periods during the 1920s reveals only sporadic discussions of apartment buildings. One was a statement by John Graham, the city’s best-known architect, hailing the Victoria Apartments, in the study area, as the forerunner of extensive new development. Articles on apartment buildings are surprisingly scarce, considering the number being built. Only occasional descriptions of new buildings were found. The proliferation of downtown office buildings and the rapid expansion of single family areas to the north and south warranted greater news coverage.

One of the most fruitful sources of information on how apartment buildings were seen at the time is found in the classified advertisements. These proved to have a wealth of information on the key features found in the units. This is particularly valuable for the insight it gives not only into what existed in the buildings, but what was considered important enough to advertise. For example, modern features such as refrigerators, built-in radios and connected garages were often considered as important as the views.