

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Sixth Floor
808 W. Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

1. Name of Property

Historic Name **HILL-HILSCHER HOUSE**

2. Location

Street & Number 1636 S. Cedar Street
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99204
Parcel Number 25251.1607

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agricultural | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | | <input type="checkbox"/> educational | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes, unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> other |

4. Owner of Property

Name Kathleen L. Meyer
Street & Number 1636 S. Cedar Street
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Telephone Number/E-mail kmeyer@armackay.net and 455-4482

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds Spokane County Courthouse
Street Number 1116 West Broadway
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99260
County Spokane

6. Representation of Existing Surveys

Title City of Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey
Date Federal____ State____ County____ Local 1979
Location of Survey Records Spokane Historic Preservation Office

Final nomination reviewed by SHLC on January 16, 2008

7. Description

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Architectural Classification (see nomination, section 8) | Condition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent <input type="checkbox"/> good <input type="checkbox"/> fair <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> ruins <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | Check One <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered Check One <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site <input type="checkbox"/> moved & date _____ |
|--|--|---|

8. Spokane Register Categories and Statement of Significance

Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places Categories: Mark "x" on one or more for the categories that qualify the property for the Spokane Register listing:

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

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Acreage of Property | Less than one acre. |
| Verbal Boundary Description | Cannon Hill Addition, Lots 7 & 8, Block 16 |
| Verbal Boundary Justification | Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description. |

11. Form Prepared By

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Name and Title | Linda Yeomans, Consultant |
| Organization | Historic Preservation Planning |
| Street, City, State, Zip Code | 501 West 27 th Avenue, Spokane, WA 99203 |
| Telephone Number | 509-456-3828 |
| Email Address | lindayeomans@comcast.net |
| Date Final Nomination Heard | January 16, 2008 |

12. Additional Documentation

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Map | City/County of Spokane current plat map. |
| Photographs | CD of digital prints, black & white prints |

13. Signature of Owner(s)

Name Kathleen L. Meyer

Name _____

14. For Official Use Only

Date Received _____ Attest _____

Date Heard _____ City Clerk _____

Commission Decision _____ Approved as to Form
Assistant City Attorney Michael P. Pucub

Council/Board Action _____

Date _____

We hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

DEPUTY MAYOR, City of Spokane
or

CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioners

CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

Chris Ben

OFFICER, Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Officer
Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office
Third Floor, City Hall, W. 808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY***Summary Statement***

The Hill-Hilscher House was built in 1909 and is a prominent example of the American Foursquare house form embellished in the Colonial Revival style. Located at the corner of West Seventeenth Avenue and South Cedar Street in the Cannon Hill Addition in Spokane, Washington, the Hill-Hilscher House is a large home with more than 4,000 square feet of interior space. American Foursquare house form features include the home's box-like footprint and form, formal massing, low pitched hip roof, and widely overhanging boxed eaves. Colonial Revival style-elements are manifested as embellishments to the form and are reflected in a formal appearance, symmetrically balanced fenestration patterns, a wide covered front porch, an accentuated center front entrance with a wide front door and flanking sidelights, narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding, prominent cornice and frieze courses, prominent water table courses, and a prominent front-facing Palladian window dormer at the center of the east façade. The first-floor interior reveals four large symmetrically placed rooms which are indicative of the American Foursquare plan. Colonial Revival-style features are prominently featured in a formal five-foot-wide grand staircase in a center reception hall, boxed ceiling beams, multi-paned French doors, hardwood floors, Classic white-painted woodwork, and nine-and-a-half-foot-tall ceilings. A single-story garage with a low-pitched hip roof is located behind the house and is accessed by a paved driveway from Seventeenth Street. Although it has had modifications over the last century of use, the property is well-preserved and is in excellent condition. Well conveying its original Colonial Revival-style embellishment and American Foursquare house form, the Hill-Hilscher House retains good exterior architectural integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association as an early 20th-century single-family home built in the Cannon Hill Addition on Spokane's South Hill.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION***Site***

The Hill-Hilscher House is located in the Cannon Hill Addition on Lots 7 and 8, Block 16, at the northwest corner of South Cedar Street and West Seventeenth Avenue on Spokane's South Hill. Together, the two lots measure 80 feet wide and 135 feet deep. The house is built in the center of both lots and faces east along South Cedar Street. It is framed by a manicured lawn, evergreen shrubs and bushes, and mature deciduous and evergreen trees. A concrete sidewalk runs parallel to Cedar Street and Seventeenth Avenue in front of the home around the southeast corner of the property. A graveled alley abuts the property at the rear west border. A single-family house is located next north close to the north elevation of the Hill House. The home is surrounded by a prominent tree-lined historic single-family residential neighborhood which was platted along a grid work of paved streets and roadways, and was developed with houses built from the early 1900s to 1950.

Garage (1925)

Built in 1925 and facing south, a single-story double-car garage measures 20 feet wide and 20 feet deep and is located behind the house in the northwest corner of the property.¹ The garage has a low-pitched hip roof and is clad with narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding that matches the siding on the house. The original clapboard siding is exposed on the north elevation but is covered with asbestos shingles at the east, south, and west elevations (applied in 1961). Windows include an aluminum-sash sliding unit (1970s) and an original 1/1 double-hung wood-sash unit. A carport with a low-pitched hip roof was built onto the south façade of the garage in the 1980s and is supported by square wood pillars. The garage is in good condition and is included in the nomination report but is *not* being nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places at this time.

House Exterior

The Hill-Hilscher House is a large square two-and-one-half-story rectangular box with a low-pitched hip roof. The house measures 43 feet wide and 25 feet deep with a full-width front porch² that measures 12 feet deep and 43 feet wide. The roof is covered with composition shingles and has four-foot-deep overhanging eaves. The eaves are boxed. Soffits are clad with tongue-in-groove wood paneling. Low-pitched hip roof dormers project from the north, south, and west roof slopes, and a prominent Palladian window dormer projects from the front-facing roof slope at the east facade. Mimicking the house, the dormers have widely overhanging boxed eaves with tongue-in-groove wood paneled soffits. Both the dormers and the house have prominent cornice and frieze courses with Classic molding. The home is clad with narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding. A prominent nine-inch-deep wood water table course separates the clapboard siding from the foundation. The foundation is made of black basalt which has been cut into rectangular ashlar blocks. Round “bead” mortar joints articulate and separate the ashlar blocks. The house faces east and has symmetrical fenestration patterns, a covered front porch at the first floor, and a full-width deck at the second floor above the front porch. The porch is supported by thick square piers which are anchored to the deck. An enclosed porch wall protects the first-floor porch deck. Like the house, the porch piers and porch wall are clad with horizontal narrow-width wood clapboard siding. The porch deck is made of painted fir planks. A ten-foot-wide concrete staircase descends from the porch deck to a concrete walkway at the front yard in front of the house. Fenestration includes a combination of original and duplicate-design/measurement replacement windows which include 1/1 and multi-paned double-hung designs and a large tripartite design with a center fixed pane. Original exterior doors include paneled wood units with upper-leaf divided lights and beveled plate-glass lights.

¹ Spokane County Tax Assessor Records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

² The north end of the porch was enclosed in 1981.

East Façade

The front of the house faces east along South Cedar Street and is distinctive in a formal way with Colonial Revival styling, a symmetrical design, a covered front porch at the first floor, a full-width deck above the front porch at the second floor, prominent cornice and frieze courses, and a prominent front-facing center Palladian window dormer. The Palladian window dormer is shaded with deeply overhanging eaves that curve up and around the top of a window pair. The window pair features two matching 1/1 wood-sash double-hung units. A triangular-shaped molded wood keystone articulates the center top of the window pair. Classic in proportion, a deeply molded wood cornice accentuates a 15-inch-deep frieze. The cornice and frieze courses are prominent at the Palladian window dormer, the eaves of the house, and the eaves of the front porch. The front porch extends across the east façade of the house and is covered with a very low-pitched hip roof, composition shingles, and widely overhanging boxed eaves. A 15-inch-high rectangular-shaped wood platform deck is attached to the porch roof. The platform deck abuts the planar wall surface of the east façade at the second floor and covers about 75% of the porch roof. The wood platform deck appears to be a unique original design feature as it matches the design of two other platform decks which are located on the house: one platform deck covers part of the roof of a first-floor beveled bay at the south elevation; the other platform deck covers part of the roof of a first-floor boxed bay on the north elevation. A 1959 Spokane County Tax Assessor photograph pictures the platform deck at the front porch at the east façade and the beveled bay at the south elevation.

The front porch is supported by thick square piers, and an enclosed porch wall surrounds the deck. The north end of the porch was enclosed in 1981 and has three pairs of 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows. Except for the foundation, the home is completely clad with narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding. The siding also covers the Palladian window dormer, front porch piers, and first-floor front porch wall at the east façade. The porch deck is made of painted wood planks. The porch foundation is exposed and is made of black basalt rock cut in ashlar blocks. Concrete steps which are flanked by a stepped basalt rock stairway wall climb to the front porch from a concrete walkway in front of the house. The stepped stairway walls are protected with molded cast concrete coping. Forming a formal contrast in coloration, the trim on the house is painted in two tones of crisp Classic white, the clapboard siding is painted deep blue, and the basalt foundation features natural black basalt which has been preserved with linseed oil. Fenestration is symmetrical: a center Palladian dormer holds a center 1/1 double-hung wood-sash window pair, the second floor is three-ranked with three 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows, and the first floor has three 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows.

South Elevation

The south elevation of the house faces south along West Seventeenth Avenue and is considered a secondary facade. Located along a public right-of-way (Seventeenth Avenue), the south elevation of the house is somewhat hidden from view and is only

partially visible over the tops of evergreen shrubs and through the foliage of mature deciduous trees. The south elevation features symmetrical fenestration patterns with a center 1/1 double-hung wood-sash window pair in a center hip roof dormer, two large 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows at the second floor, and three 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows at the first floor. An original three-sided beveled bay at the first floor holds a center plate-glass picture window and two flanking one-over-one double-hung wood-sash windows. The projecting beveled bay is embellished with a prominent frieze and cornice and a prominent wood platform deck which matches the wood platform deck on top of the front porch.

North Elevation

The north elevation of the home is located a few yards from the south elevation of a single-family home which is located next door north, and is difficult to see through a fence, dense foliage, and hedgerow from the public right-of-way at South Cedar Street. The north elevation of the house has symmetrical fenestration patterns, a center hip roof dormer, and a small back porch at the northwest corner of the first floor. The porch is original and projects out six feet from the north elevation. It is covered with a flat roof of built-up tar, has an enclosed porch wall, and is supported by thick square wood porch piers. The piers and porch wall are clad in narrow-width clapboard siding that matches the house. Wood stairs with a plain wood balustrade descend from the porch to grade. At the first floor, an original 1/1 double-hung wood-sash window is located next east of the porch, and a larger original tripartite window is located next east of the 1/1 window. The tripartite window is located in a shallow boxed bay at the first floor. The box bay has a flat roof which has a wood platform deck on top of the roof (this design feature matches the platform decks over the south elevation bay and the front porch), and has widely overhanging boxed eaves, a prominent cornice and frieze, and narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding. The tripartite window features a fixed-pane flanked by two narrow casement windows, all wood sash, all original. Each window pane is capped by a fixed transom light. The foundation at the north elevation features a continuation of black basalt ashlar blocks and a prominent water table course which separates the foundation from the first floor.

West Elevation

The west elevation of the house is located at the rear of the property and faces the backyard and garage. Due to an alley, a garage, a carport, a fence, and dense foliage from trees and bushes, the rear of the house is only partially visible from the public right-of-way at Seventeenth Avenue. The west elevation of the house features a center hip-roof dormer, asymmetrical fenestration patterns, narrow-width clapboard siding, back porch decks at the first and second floors, and a tapered stepped brick chimney which rises and projects through the roof eave at the southwest corner of the house. The porch is made of wood with a plain wood balustrade (1980s-1990s). It is supported by wood posts which are anchored to the ground at grade. A wood staircase descends to grade. Grade is at its lowest point at the rear of the house as the property slopes downhill west

and north from the southeast corner of the lot. Due to the lower grade, the basalt rock foundation wall at the back of the house is exposed under the porch at the basement, and features two basement doors and a combination of 1/1 and multi-paned wood-sash windows. The basalt rock is mixed with granite in an informal rocky rubblemix instead of the formal-looking cut ashlar blocks that are exposed at the foundation on the north, south, and east elevations.

Interior of House

The interior of the Hill-Hilscher House is extensive with over 4,000 square feet of finished interior space. An original solid fir center front door with a beveled plate-glass light opens from the east façade of the house into a small vestibule. The vestibule has a marble floor, original lathe-and-plaster construction, and an original beveled plate-glass door that opens to a formal center reception hall. Both the front door and the vestibule door are flanked by original symmetrical sidelights with wood sash and frame.

The formal reception hall has an original solid oak floor, original white-painted woodwork, and is dominated by a formal grand staircase that rises without a landing break to the second floor. The staircase is especially wide at five feet and is articulated with a closed stringer, high-gloss ebony-finish oak treads, ebony-finish handrail, and a white-painted balustrade. The balustrade features an unusual design with plain square wood balusters which are embellished with paneled Maltese cross designs. The grand staircase flares outward in a graceful curved arc at the bottom southeast corner of the stairs at the lowest two steps. A hexagonal Newell post is anchored to the second step from the bottom.

The reception hall leads north to a formal dining room, south to a formal sitting room, and west through a hallway to the rear of the house which contains a living/family room, kitchen, and powder room. The dining room is located in the northeast corner of the house along the north wall. It is embellished with boxed ceiling beams, a tripartite window in a boxed window bay with a 12-inch-deep interior window sill, multi-paned French doors, and a solid oak floor. The white-painted woodwork is original and features deep crown molding, floor molding, and window and door surrounds. The doors and windows are capped with Classic molded ornamental door and window hoods which are supported by decorative brackets. Multi-paned French doors on the east wall of the dining room open east into a sun room. The sunroom is located in the north end of the front porch which was enclosed in 1981.³ The sunroom has a ceramic tile floor, sheetrock walls and ceiling, and is illuminated by three pairs of 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows. Multi-paned French doors on the south wall of the dining room open into a center reception hall.

A matching pair of five-panel painted wood original pocket doors open south from the reception hall into a formal sitting room in the southeast corner of the first floor of the

³ Spokane City Building Permit. Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.

house. The sitting room has original lathe-and-plaster construction, a 24-inch-deep frieze, white-painted woodwork, oak floor (which is covered with wall-to-wall carpet), and a second pair of original five-panel painted pocket doors that open west into a living/family room.

The living/family room is located in the southeast corner of the first floor of the house and is dominated by two features: a beveled bay window on the south wall and a prominent fireplace with flanking bookcases on the west wall. The fireplace has a marble surround and hearth which were installed in the 1990s. A plain wood mantel extends past both ends of the fireplace and covers the tops of flanking built-in bookcases. The mantel and bookcases are painted white; the bookcases have glass doors.

A door on the north wall of the living room opens north to a hallway which leads to a kitchen in the northwest corner of the house at the first floor. The kitchen was remodeled several times since the home was built in 1909, and currently features a 1995 remodel with an oak floor, built-in maple cupboards and cabinets, and free-standing and built-in appliances. A back door (original wood paneled with upper-leaf divided lights) opens to a back porch from the kitchen on the north wall. A powder room is located on the west wall. A door next to the powder room opens to a flight of stairs which were designed for use by domestic help, and lead up to the second floor. Another door opens to stairs which descend to the basement.

The most prominent feature on the second floor is a spacious center hall which is publically accessed by the formal grand staircase which rises from a center reception hall at the first floor (the second floor is also accessed by a narrow enclosed stairway at the west wall which was designed for use by domestic help). The grand staircase has an open stairwell at the second floor and is protected by a wood balustrade which encircles the open stairwell. Newell posts are square, and the balustrade employs a Maltese cross design in panels above plain wood balusters. The floor is solid oak, and the woodwork is painted white and includes floor molding, door and window surrounds, and picture rail molding. The central hallway opens to four bedrooms, two full bathrooms, and a narrow enclosed staircase at the west wall. Designed for use by domestic help, the narrow staircase rises to the attic from the second floor and descends to the first floor. Interior doors which open from the hall into bedrooms feature five wood panels, are painted white, retain original brass hardware, and have original working transom windows. The transom windows open to allow for maximum interior ventilation and air circulation.

The attic was finished in 1978 as an apartment with a living area, kitchenette, bathroom, and two bedrooms. Finish materials include sheetrock walls and ceilings, combination carpet and vinyl flooring, and 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows in the east, south, west, and north-facing dormers.

The basement is finished with a mechanical/furnace/storage/shop room, a laundry room, recreation room, a bathroom, a cedar sauna, and an apartment with a kitchenette, one bedroom, bathroom, and living/dining area. Walls and ceilings are finished in a combination of knotty pine and painted sheetrock, and the floor is finished in a combination of poured concrete, wall-to-wall carpet, and vinyl. Heat is forced air gas.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

The original 1909 appearance of the Hill-Hilscher House was very close to what is visible today as evidenced by original intact materials and workmanship, and as pictured in a 1959 Spokane County Tax Assessor photograph.

Original intact, well-preserved 1909 prominent stylistic design features of the Hill-Hilscher House include:

- the home's rectangular box-like footprint
- a low-pitched hip roof and four hip roof dormers
- a prominent front-facing Palladian window dormer at the east facade
- covered front porch at the first floor
- second-floor porch wood platform deck feature above front porch
- a back porch (north elevation)
- beveled bay window (south elevation) with wood platform deck feature on roof
- square box bay window (north elevation) with wood platform deck feature on roof
- wide overhanging boxed eaves
- tongue-in-groove soffit paneling
- prominent cornice and frieze detailing
- prominent water table course
- narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding
- black basalt ashlar foundation
- original fenestration patterns
- original windows and matching duplicate replacement windows (1/1 double-hung wood-sash units)
- interior floor plan
- nine-and-one-half-foot tall (first floor) and eight-foot tall (second floor) ceilings
- prominent grand reception hall staircase
- interior woodwork and doors
- oak floors
- lathe-and-plaster construction
- window and door hardware and doorknobs
- built-in bookcases
- interior transom windows over second-floor bedroom doors

Modifications to the home include:

1955: Kitchen remodeled (Spokane building permit #B 29725).

1957: Recreation room in basement finished (Spokane building permit #B 38778).

1961: Asbestos shingles installed over original clapboard at exterior of house and garage (Spokane building permit #B 51638).

1978: Porch deck and steps built on rear west elevation of house at first and second floors (Spokane building permit B 21653). Decorative cutout wood balustrade built around second-floor deck above front porch. Two sets of French doors replaced two 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows at second floor east elevation at second-floor porch deck. A one-bedroom apartment finished in basement and a two-bedroom apartment finished in the attic. Aluminum-sash sliding windows installed in apartments (replaced original 1/1 wood-sash windows in attic).

1981: Original 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows replaced in first-floor sitting and living rooms and second-floor bedrooms with wood-sash sliding windows. North end of front porch enclosed for use as sunroom and enclosed with sliding aluminum sash windows (Spokane building permit # 0056 A).

1982: Carport built onto south façade of garage. House and garage re-roofed with composition shingles (Spokane building permit #000 A).

1984: Second kitchen remodel (Spokane building permit 000557).

1991-2002: Interior repairs, refinish, and remodels completed in third kitchen remodel, powder room, bathrooms, bedroom, living room, sitting room, basement recreation room, and dining room which included electrical wiring, plumbing, plumbing fixtures, light fixtures, painted walls and ceilings, refinished floors, floor coverings, etc. Exterior porch decks and stairs at rear (west elevation) of house rebuilt/repared. Original side/back porch at north elevation repaired/repainted. House repainted inside.

2001: Composition roof installed over existing composition roof.

2005-2007: Circa 1978 cutout wood balustrade on second-floor deck above front porch replaced with plain wood balustrade. Original horizontal wood clapboard siding and tongue-in-groove soffit repaired and restored. Exterior of garage and house completely repaired and repainted. Basalt rock foundation repaired and treated with linseed oil preservative. Circa 1978 Palladian dormer windows replaced with 1/1 double-hung wood-sash window pair, and circa 1981 aluminum-sash sunroom windows replaced

with 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows that match original 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows in house.

Nov-Dec 2007: First and second-floor windows restored. Front porch roof deck restored: Circa 1981 architecturally incompatible contemporary windows on first and second floors replaced with new 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows which match design and measurements of original 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows as pictured in a 1959 Spokane County Tax Assessor photograph (first floor: a total of 9 contemporary windows replaced; second floor: a total of 8 contemporary windows replaced; dormers: a total of 8 contemporary windows replaced—all replacement windows are 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows which are duplicate matches of original 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows as shown in 1959 tax assessor photograph). Circa 1978-2002 wood balustrade at second-floor porch deck above front porch removed and porch roof shingles repaired/replaced.

Although several interior and exterior modifications have occurred over the last 98 years to the Hill-Hilscher House, the property continues to convey historic and architectural significance through good integrity which is well demonstrated in the home's original location, original design, original materials, original workmanship, and original association as an American Foursquare plan/Colonial Revival-style single-family home built in 1909 in Spokane, Washington.

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Areas of Significance | Architecture, Commerce |
| Period of Significance | 1909-1948 |
| Significant Date | 1909 |
| Architect | Unknown |
| Builder | Unknown |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE***Summary Statement***

Built in 1909, the Hill-Hilscher House is a fine rendition of the American Foursquare single-family house type embellished in the Colonial Revival style, and was one of the first and finest homes built in the Cannon Hill Addition in the southwest section of Spokane's residential South Hill area. With over 4,000 square feet of finished interior space, the Hill-Hilscher House is expansive and well-reflects its Colonial Revival styling in original details, including a formal symmetrical façade, symmetrical fenestration patterns, narrow-width horizontal wood clapboard siding, prominent cornice and frieze courses, a prominent front-facing Palladian window dormer, and interior features such as a five-foot-wide grand interior staircase, five-paneled wood doors, and pedimented window and door hoods. The property was built for socially prominent Spokane residents, Lulu Cornelia & Charles W. Hill, pioneer founder and "Spokane printer and president of the C. W. Hill Printing Company," which was organized by Hill in 1908.⁴ In 1937 after her husband's death, Lulu Hill gifted the property in "love and affection"⁵ to daughter, Edna Hill Hilscher, and her husband, E. Durand Hilscher, successor to Charles W. Hill as president/general manager of the C. W. Hill Printing Company. In traditions practiced by many socially prominent Eastern and Southern United States families, the Hill-Hilscher House was, beginning in 1909, home to Charles & Lulu Hill who later shared the property with their daughter and son-in-law, who were residents of the house from 1920 to 1948. During E. D. Hilscher's tenure in the house, the printing company gained state and regional prominence as "one of the best-equipped lithographing and printing departments in the Pacific Northwest,"⁶ and was later recognized as the first printing company in Spokane to install a 10-ton "two-color offset press."⁷ One of the longest-running printers in Spokane, the C. W. Hill Company was praised and applauded as a "leader in modern equipment"⁸ and was responsible for printing hundreds of thousands of books, pamphlets, and other publications for nearly 80 years. The Hill-Hilscher House achieved significance during its period of significance from 1909 to 1948 in the context of "commerce" for its association with Spokane printing leaders C. W. Hill and E. D. Hilscher, and in the context of "architecture" as a fine example of the Colonial Revival style and the American Foursquare house form. Architecturally and historically

⁴ "Charles W. Hill, Death's Victim." *Spokesman-Review*, 13 Jan 1937, p. 7.

⁵ Spokane County warranty deed #302700A, dated 8 Aug 1937. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

⁶ "Hill Printing Plant Among Best Equipped." *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 6 June 1940.

⁷ "New Offset Press Here." *Spokesman-Review*, 4 January 1961.

⁸ "Pioneer Spokane Printing Firm Leader in Modern Equipment." First National Bank advertisement, *Spokesman-Review*, 31 July 1963.

significant, the Hill-Hilscher House is nominated under Categories A and B for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Cannon Hill Addition

According to Spokane County Tax Assessor records, the Cannon Hill Addition was platted in 1903. The addition is located in the southwest section of Spokane's South Hill between West Fourteenth and Twenty-First Avenues, and between South Cedar and Chestnut Streets. The Addition follows South Cedar Street as it runs uphill from downtown Spokane, and includes some rather extreme topography. A high basalt bluff just west of Maple and Ash Streets bisects the addition along a north-south axis from Fourteenth to about Nineteenth Avenues. Besides the platted lots east of the bluff at the top of the plateau, the Cannon Hill Addition includes the bluff's steep west-facing hillside and the bluff's base which is located 500 feet below the bluff's edge in the Hangman Creek valley, just east of the Inland Empire Highway. Of the 200-plus homes built at the top of the bluff east to Cedar Street between Fourteenth and Twenty-First Avenues, the Hill-Hilscher House stands out as one of the finest, largest, and earliest homes erected in the Cannon Hill Addition. The first and largest homes in the neighborhood were built between 1906 and 1912, a time period which included the construction of the Hill-Hilscher House in 1909.⁹

The Hill-Hilscher House

In August 1908, Spokane real estate investor Alice Sullivan sold Lots 7 and 8 in Block 16 in the Cannon Hill Addition to Charles W. Hill. The cost of the property was \$2,000. The Hills commissioned a home built on the lots, and in 1909, the Hill-Hilscher House was completed. After a thorough search of building permits, public records, builder's liens, newspaper articles, and historical records, the architect and builder of the house unfortunately remain unknown today. The design for the Hill-Hilscher House, however, is very similar to house plan #182 pictured in the 1910 Ballard Plannary Company plan book, *The Modern Bungalow*, which reported their house plan would cost about \$7,500 to build at that time.¹⁰ Both the Hill-Hilscher House and the Ballard Plannary house are large American Foursquare forms with hip roof dormers, covered front porches, second-floor porch decks, and similar interior floor plans. Perhaps the Hill-Hilscher House is an undocumented Ballard Plannary design.

Charles & Lulu Hill lived in the Hill-Hilscher House for 28 years until C. W. Hill's death in 1937. They shared the property with their daughter, Edna Hill Hilscher, and her husband, E. D. Hilscher, who resided in the Hill-Hilscher House from 1920 to 1948. Recorded in Spokane County warranty deeds, Lulu Hill gifted the property "in love and

⁹ Spokane County Tax Assessor records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

¹⁰ Ballard Plannary Company. *The Modern Bungalow*. Spokane: Shaw & Borden Publishers, 1910, p. 12.

affection”¹¹ to her daughter, Edna Hill Hilscher, and Edna’s husband, E. Durand Hilscher, just after C. W. Hill’s death in 1937. The Hilschers sold the property in 1948.

Subsequent Owners

From 1948 to 1991, the Hill-Hilscher House changed ownership several times. In 1948, the Hilschers sold the property to Ireta & Edward Pattison, an owner/manager of the Crescent Department Store in downtown Spokane. The Pattisons then sold the property in 1953 to Evelyn & Gordon Bowden, director of Metro Mortgage & Securities. Margaret & John Roble, general manager of New York Life Insurance Company in Spokane, purchased the property in 1955, and sold the house in 1958 to Leo & Marion Driscoll for \$17,900. Leo Driscoll worked as an attorney for the Keith Winston & Repsold law firm in Spokane. After his wife’s death, Leo Driscoll sold the house to Donald & Sandra Turnbough in 1971. In 1977, Virgil & Katharina Worden bought the property for \$54,950. Employed as a pressman for the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper in Spokane, Virgil and his wife, Katharina, were also employed by the German-American Society, 25 W. Third Avenue. The Wordens finished the basement and attic of the Hill-Hilscher House with two apartment suites which were offered for use to visiting members of the German-American Society. In 1989, Thomas & Eva Avildsen bought the Hill-Hilscher House for \$87,500. A few years later, they sold the property for \$164,500 to Dr. Kathleen Meyer, a Spokane neurosurgeon. To her credit, Dr. Meyer has successfully and sensitively restored and rehabilitated the property.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Category B

Spokane Register of Historic Places evaluation categories recognize different types of values embodied in buildings. These values include “associative values” which define properties that are significant for their association or linkage to events (Category A) or persons (Category B) important in the past within a certain context. To be considered for historic register listing under Category B, a property must be associated with an important individual, such as “the home of an important merchant or labor leader,” and be “associated with the person’s productive life, reflecting the time period in which he or she achieved significance.”¹² The Hill-Hilscher House is historically significant for its association with prominent Spokane printing business leaders, C. W. Hill, the founder of the C. W. Hill Printing Company, and E. D. Hilscher, son-in-law of C. W. Hill and succeeding president/general manager of the company after Hill’s death.

C. W. Hill and Lulu Cornelia Hill

Charles Wesley Hill was born in 1860 in New York.¹³ At 16, he moved to St. Paul, Minnesota and began setting type for newspapers. He eventually joined a publishing firm

¹¹ Spokane County warranty deed #302700A, dated 8 August 1937. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

¹² National Register Bulletin 15, p. 14.

¹³ “Charles W. Hill, Death’s Victim.” *Spokesman-Review*, 13 Jan 1937, p. 7.

as a printer and moved to California in 1906. He published a newspaper for two years and moved to Spokane where he founded the C. W. Hill Printing Company at 210 S. Howard Street. The company later relocated to 920 W. Riverside Avenue in the center of downtown Spokane, and specialized in “general printing, catalogue [printing], thermograph printing, direct mail advertising, and bookbinding” as advertised in city directories. C. W. Hill married Lulu Cornelia Hill and they had two children, Leslie C. B. Hill and Edna Hill. As adults, Leslie Hill was ordained a minister of Christianity and Edna Hill married E. Durand Hilscher, an employee of her father’s printing company. Regarded as members of Spokane society, Charles & Lulu Hill were included the year the Hill House was built in the 1909 edition of the *Spokane Blue Book*, a social directory for Spokane.¹⁴ Charles W. Hill died in 1937, and his widow, Lulu C. Hill, a named vice president of the printing company,¹⁵ deeded the Hill House to their daughter, Edna Hill Hilscher, and her husband, E. Durand Hilscher, who succeeded his father-in-law as president/general manager of the printing company. During his 29-year property ownership and residency at the Hill-Hilscher House, Charles W. Hill demonstrated the most productive period of his professional life when he purchased lots on which he built the Hill-Hilscher House, founded the C. W. Hill Printing Company, built a \$5,000 printing plant on South Howard Street, hired his future son-in-law, E. Duran Hilscher, grew and expanded the business to new headquarters on West Riverside Avenue in downtown Spokane, built and furnished the new headquarters at a cost of \$50,000,¹⁶ and created a printing company which would become noted as one of the largest and best-equipped lithographic printing shops in the Pacific Northwest.¹⁷ The company and its contribution as one of Spokane’s most prominent Spokane print shops was featured in numerous Spokane newspaper articles, including one in which Charles W. Hill was applauded for his long-time printing career:

“Yesterday at the regular weekly luncheon of the Spokane printers, Mr. Hill was presented with a bound manuscript, bearing the congratulations and signatures of practically every printer and printers’ supply house in the city.”¹⁸

E. Durand Hilscher and Edna Hill Hilscher

E. Durand Hilscher was born in St. Louis, raised in Spokane, and began working for the C. W. Hill Printing Company in 1916 after graduation from Lewis & Clark High School. After his father-in-law and employer, Charles W. Hill, died in 1937, E. D. Hilscher was named president of the C. W. Hill Printing Company, and worked for the company in that capacity until his retirement in 1969. While he lived in the Hill-Hilscher House from 1920 to 1948, Hilscher spent the first half of his most productive life as a bookkeeper

¹⁴ Polk, R. L. *The Spokane Blue Book, 1909*. Spokane: R. L. Polk & Company, publishers, 1909, p. 168.

¹⁵ Polk, R. L. City directories.

¹⁶ “Spends 50 Years in Printing Trade.” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 8 Dec 1925.

¹⁷ “Hill Printing Plant Among Best Equipped.” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 6 June 1940.

¹⁸ “Spends 50 Years in Printing Trade.” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 8 Dec 1925.

then president of the C. W. Hill Printing Company in which he helped prosper the business from a shop of three to over 30 employees—a prominent print shop which boasted state-of-the-art printing technology and which was noted in Spokane newspapers as “one of the best-equipped lithographing and printing departments in the Pacific Northwest.”¹⁹ E. Durand Hilscher continued to grow and expand the C. W. Hill Printing Company after his tenure at the Hill-Hilscher House for another 20 years until 1969, when he retired and sold the company to Lawton Printing Incorporated of Spokane. At that time, Lawton Printing Inc. was noted as the largest commercial printing firm in the region with C. W. Hill Printing Company regarded as “No. 2 in the field in Spokane.”²⁰ Although it was owned by Lawton Printing, the C. W. Hill Printing Company continued to operate for the next two decades until 1984 under its original Hill name, a tribute to its longstanding and widespread reputation as a well-respected leader in the printing business.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Category C

To be eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C, a property must meet at least *one* of the following requirements: 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, 2) represent the work of a master, or 3) possess high artistic value. Architecturally significant, the Hill-Hilscher House meets the first aforementioned requirement as a fine example and embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style applied to an American Foursquare house form.²¹

American Foursquare House Form

The term American Foursquare refers to a specific house form. *The Dictionary of Architecture & Construction* defines the American Foursquare home in two ways: 1) a “one- or two-story house having a square floor plan consisting of four rooms (one in each corner), a hipped roof, and an off-center entry door; most popular from about 1905 to 1915, and 2) a Prairie Box, primarily in the years between about 1900 to 1920, having a low-pitched hipped roof and a symmetrical façade.”²² Architectural historians, Robert Schweitzer and Michael W. R. Davis (*America’s Favorite Homes*), explain that American Foursquare homes were called by a variety of names, including Edwardian, American Foursquare, Square, American Basic, Prairie, Prairie Box, and Box House. The house form was popular in America from about 1900 to 1920, and was considered by many to “be one of the best arranged and most practical plans...a square type of construction which permits the utilizing of every available inch of space.”²³ They further state that

¹⁹ “Hill Printing Plant Among Best Equipped.” *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 6 June 1940.

²⁰ “C. W. Hill Purchased by Lawton.” *Spokesman-Review*, 1 Nov 1977.

²¹ National Park Service Bulletin 15, pp. 17-19.

²² Harris, Cyril M. *The Dictionary of Architecture & Construction, Third Edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishers, 2000, p. 29.

²³ Schweitzer, Robert and Michael W. R. Davis. *America’s Favorite Homes*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990, p. 161.

“the Box House offered a plan for families desiring a four-bedroom home rather than the smaller two- or three-bedroom bungalow...and took the place of the four-bedroom Georgian-style colonial” house.²⁴

Defining features of the American Foursquare house form include a rectangular or square box-like form with one, two, or three stories; a hipped roof; dormers (hip, shed, or gable); widely overhanging eaves; eaves, cornices, and façade detailing which emphasizes horizontal lines; covered front porches at the first floor; conspicuous front entrances (center or off-center); usually 1/1 double-hung wood-sash windows; and sometimes massive square porch supports.²⁵

Built in 1909 during the defined time period for the foursquare house type (1900-1920), the Hill-Hilscher House is a well-preserved, excellent example of the American Foursquare tradition and reflects many of the above-mentioned identifying features. *Specifically expressed at the Hill House*, these features include a nearly square box-like form with two-and-one-half stories; a hipped roof; widely overhanging eaves; hipped roof dormers; a covered front porch at the first floor; thick square porch supports; horizontal emphasis achieved in wide eaves, prominent cornice and frieze courses, water table course, narrow-width horizontal clapboard siding; a conspicuous front entrance with a wide door and flanking sidelights; and four large rooms on the first floor (one room in each of the four corners of the house).

Colonial Revival Style

Popular in America from about 1880 to 1955, the Colonial Revival style is a revival or rebirth of stylistic prototypes found in English and Dutch houses built along the Atlantic Seaboard in the original Thirteen Colonies in early America during the 17th and 18th centuries. “Details from two or more of these precedents are freely combined in many examples so that pure copies of colonial houses are far less common than are eclectic mixtures.”²⁶ Even with eclectic expressions, the Colonial Revival style was the “dominant style for domestic building throughout the country” during the first half of the 20th century.²⁷

Identifying features of the Colonial Revival style include an accentuated front entrance and/or front door (pediments, pilasters, fanlights, sidelights); columns and plain or turned-post balustrades; symmetrical fenestration patterns; double-hung sash windows; windows arranged in adjacent pairs; Palladian windows; prominent cornice and frieze courses; and brick or horizontal clapboard siding.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 161.

²⁵ Ibid, pp. 161-168; and McAlester, Virginia & Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf Publishers, 1989, p. 439.

²⁶ McAlester, p. 324.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 324.

Built as an American Foursquare house form, the Hill-Hilscher House was embellished with Colonial Revival styling. *Colonial Revival-style details on the Hill House* include a formal appearance with symmetrical fenestration patterns; accentuated center front entrance with sidelights; prominent cornice and frieze courses; prominent front-facing Palladian window dormer; Classic molding; horizontal clapboard siding; finely finished cut basalt ashlar foundation blocks with beaded joints; and crisp Classic white-colored trim. Interior Colonial Revival style details include the home's formal center front entrance vestibule and reception hall, grand five-foot-wide staircase in the reception hall, five-paneled wood doors (including sliding pocket doors), brass door and window hardware, multi-paned French doors, prominent frieze course in formal sitting room, boxed ceiling beams, and elaborate Classic molded pediments and hoods over doors and windows (dining room).

The Hill-Hilscher House can be compared to other homes in the Cannon Hill Addition. One of more than 200 single-family homes in the addition, the Hill-Hilscher House is distinctive as one of the first, finest, and largest homes erected in the area. The fine craftsmanship, stylistic details, "modern" architecture (for that time), and large expansive size illustrate the trend associated with custom-designed domestic architecture that permeated prominent residential neighborhoods across the South Hill in Spokane during the early 1900s. In the Cannon Hill Addition where it is located, the Hill-Hilscher House is significant for its early built date, high style, and large size. Both small and large homes were built in the addition around the time the Hill-Hilscher House was erected in 1909, but the vast majority of homes constructed in the neighborhood were built between 1920 and 1950. They were constructed as smaller Craftsman-style bungalows, Tudor, Spanish, and Colonial Revival cottages, and plain vernacular dwellings. The largest homes in the neighborhood were built between 1906 and 1912, and are examples of revivals and the Arts & Crafts tradition. High-style landmark examples include a Dutch Colonial Revival-style house at 1418 S. Maple (built in 1906), a Craftsman-style example at 1526 S. Ash (built in 1910), and a Pasadena-type Craftsman-style bungalow at 1708 S. Maple Boulevard (Levesque-Majer House, built in 1912). In contrast to the aforementioned older homes in the neighborhood, the Hill-Hilscher House is the only American Foursquare Colonial Revival-style residence in the Cannon Hill Addition.

Historic Integrity

National Park Service Bulletin 15 says that "*integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several...of the aspects*" of integrity.²⁸ For listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places, these aspects include original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

The Hill-Hilscher House retains all five aspects of integrity in varying degrees. It retains *excellent integrity* in two of the five aspects of integrity which include its original

²⁸ National Park Service Bulletin 15, pp. 44-47.

location and its original association as a single-family house built in the early 1900s in the Cannon Hill Addition on Spokane's South Hill. The Hill House is "sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer."²⁹

The Hill-Hilscher House retains *good integrity* in the remaining three aspects of integrity: design, materials, and workmanship. Due to an enclosed section of the front porch at the northeast corner (c. 1981) and modifications at the rear of the property, the house has lost a little of its exterior integrity. It does however, retain good integrity in original design, materials, and workmanship because it retains its original Foursquare form, Colonial Revival styling, symmetrical fenestration patterns, accentuated front door, hip roof, hip roof dormers, Palladian window dormer, widely overhanging eaves, prominent cornice and frieze course, covered front porch, square porch supports, porch wall, tongue-in-groove soffits, narrow-width clapboard siding, beveled bay, square box bay, water table course, and black basalt ashlar rock foundation wall. These original retained features clearly reflect the American Foursquare house type and the Colonial Revival style, and convey designs, materials, and workmanship popular in 1909 when the house was built.

Summary

The Hill-Hilscher House is a finely crafted home which represents the Colonial Revival and American Foursquare traditions, retains overall good historic integrity, and is one of the largest and first homes built in the Cannon Hill Addition on Spokane's South Hill. Achieving importance from 1909 to 1948, it is architecturally significant as an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style and the American Foursquare form, and is historically significant for its association with prominent Spokane printing business leaders, C. W. Hill and E. D. Hilscher. Under Categories B and C, the Hill-Hilscher House is nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places for its historical and architectural significance.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid, p. 45.

³⁰ Although included in the nomination report, the detached garage is NOT nominated to the Spokane Register of Historic Places at this time.

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Current photo



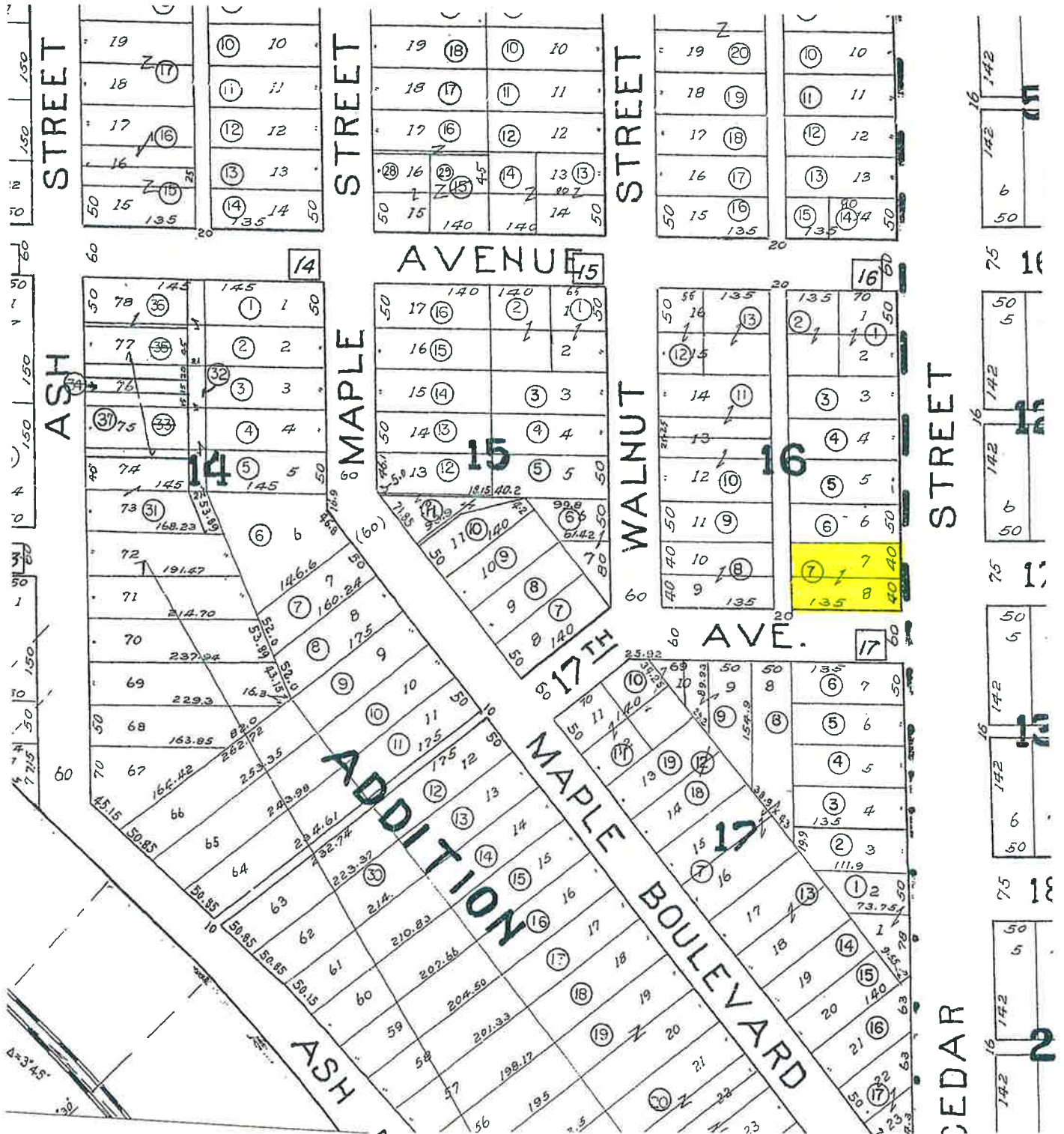


Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
CHARLES & LULU HILL HOUSE

Section 10

Plat map

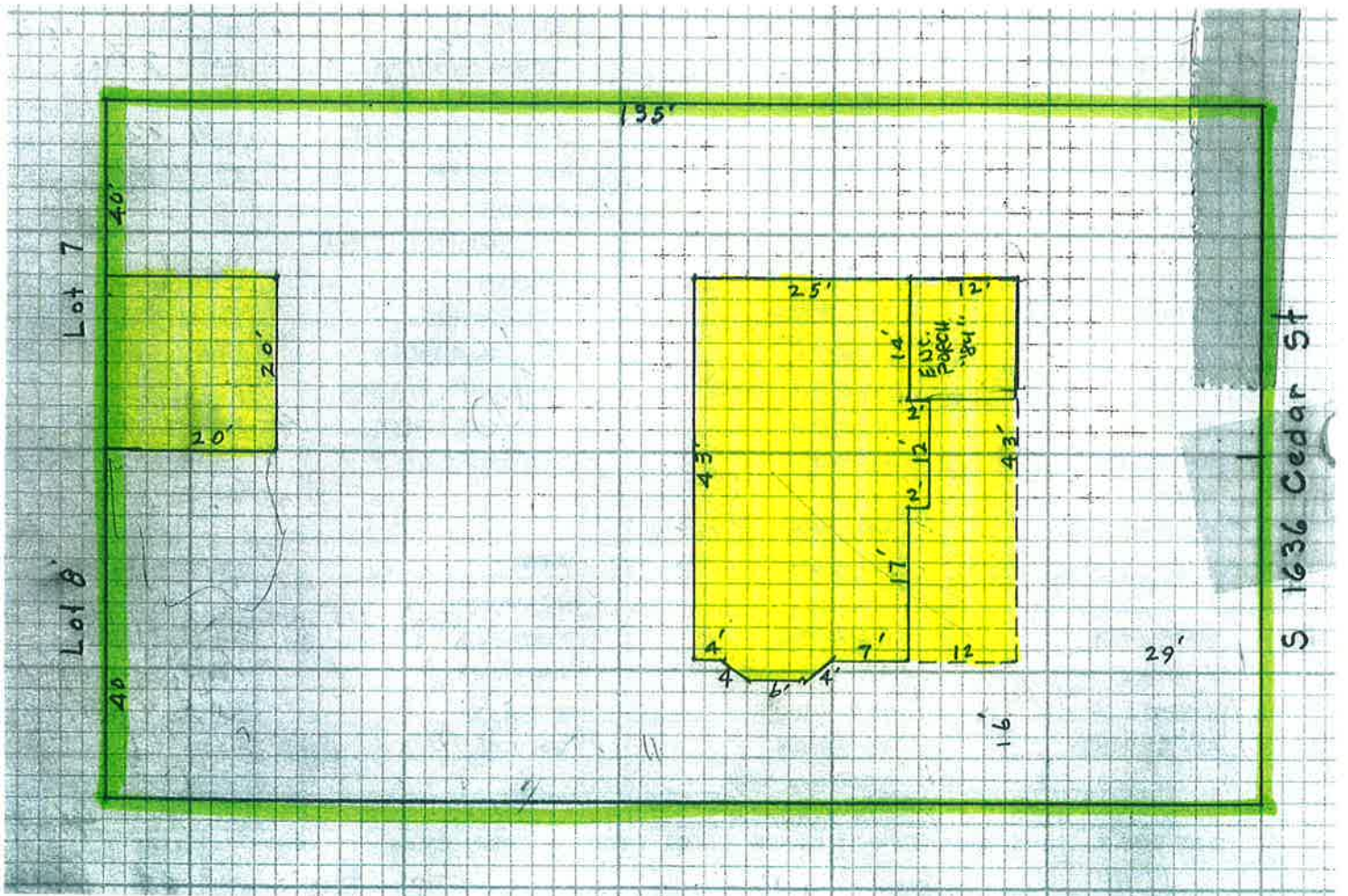
Plat map of property in 2007



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
CHARLES & LULU HILL HOUSE Section 10

Site plan

Site plan of property in 2007 (source: Spokane County Assessor)



Spokane City/County Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
CHARLES & LULU HILL HOUSE **Section 10**

Assessor photo

Photograph taken in 1959 of property (source: Spokane County Tax Assessor)

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