

**SPOKANE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Nomination Form**

**City/County Historic Landmarks Commission
Sixth Floor - City Hall
Spokane, Washington 99201-3337**

Type all entries--complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Transient Hotel
and or common Minnesota Building

2. Location

street & number 423 West First Avenue (also 421 West First)
city/town Spokane vicinity of _____
state WA county Spokane

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site			<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: office
		<input type="checkbox"/> no		

4. Owner of Property

name Mound Hardware General Partnership
street & number 423 West First Ave.
city, town Spokane vicinity of _____ state WA

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds etc. Spokane County Courthouse
street & number 1116 Broadway
city, town Spokane state WA 99260

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title _____
date _____ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local
depository for survey records _____
city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair
 deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

General Description

Rising two stories in height, the Transient Hotel is located on the 400 block of First Avenue in downtown Spokane. Completed c.1904 by McVay Builders, the Transient Hotel was designed for commercial space on the first floor and as a hotel on the second floor. The Transient is located on a block which is noted as a remarkably intact streetscape of contiguous brick buildings from the turn of the century.

This simple commercial structure is faced with pressed brick laid in stretcher bond. The exterior brick has been recently painted in a multi color paint scheme. The building has a primary or north elevation that is 50 feet wide by 100 feet in length. The street level consists of paired store-front bays that have seen minimal alteration over time and a third bay to the west containing a door which serves as an entrance to the second floor from the street level. The paired storefronts are remarkably intact and retain their original configuration and appearance.

Above street level, original wood-frame sash windows remain intact. On the west and east are shared walls with adjacent buildings. On the south, the brick-faced alley wall has two evenly spaced window openings and a central door.

First Floor Primary Facade

Paired storefront bays of equal size comprise the primary facade's storefront spaces and consist of large plate glass windows over low brick bulkheads separated by narrow, cast iron piers. Original, recessed, storefront doors have been retained. Above the storefront windows are clear glass transoms. A third bay to the west features a recessed door opening and transom which serves as an entrance to the second floor from the street level. The arched door opening is topped by a flat arch with a projecting keystone.

8. Significance

Period

- prehistoric
- 1400-1499
- 1500-1599
- 1600-1699
- 1700-1799
- 1800-1899
- 1900-

Areas of Significance-Check and justify below

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> archaeology-historic <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> architecture <input type="checkbox"/> art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce <input type="checkbox"/> communications <input type="checkbox"/> community planning <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> economics <input type="checkbox"/> education <input type="checkbox"/> engineering <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement <input type="checkbox"/> industry <input type="checkbox"/> invention <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture <input type="checkbox"/> law <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> music <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government <input type="checkbox"/> religion <input type="checkbox"/> science <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture <input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> theater <input type="checkbox"/> transportation <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
|---|--|--|

Specific Dates

c. 1904

Builder/Architect

McVay Builders

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Statement of Significance

One of Spokane's first Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) hotels, the Transient Hotel was built c. 1904 by McVay Builders. An excellent representation of one of the more modest SRO's to remain in Spokane, the Transient represents the working class residency of the turn of the century. In the tradition of SRO's, the Transient housed laborers and workers on the second floor, while the first floor served a variety of commercial purposes.

History of the Transient Hotel

William and Alice McVay built the property as an investment in 1904. Prior to construction, the lot contained a feed barn with blacksmith and wagon shop on part of it and part on the Stewart building lot next door. The Stewart building was built in 1903 as a blacksmith shop and apartments.

The McVays owned and resided in the California Apartments at S. 409-11 Ash. William McVay served as a Spokane County Commissioner. Alice McVay was a woman who was known for her dedication to community service. A charter member of El Karnak temple, Daughters of the Nile, she was supreme queen of the order in the year before her death. As head of the order she made a tour of inspection of the temples in the United States, Canada and Honolulu.

Known over the years by several different names, the Transient Hotel was first run by John Swearingen. By 1906 the hotel was run by Mrs. Minnie Burke as "furnished rooms." The hotel then changed to the Santa Rita and was operated by Mrs. Agnes Jacobson for several years, who lived at the hotel with her daughter and husband. Lodgers in the hotel were mostly single males with various jobs such as laborer, cook, butcher, barber, woodworker. One couple lived in the hotel; the wife was employed as a waitress.

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Second Floor Primary Facade

Above the storefront windows, a string course marks the beginning of the second floor. The second floor fenestration consists of four identical and evenly spaced paired windows, each with a five-light transom. The four wood frame windows are each topped by a flat arch with a projecting keystone. A fifth window on the west, an arched opening directly over the first floor recessed door opening, features an arched double hung sash wood window. A stringcourse tops the second story windows, and above the stringcourse a simple cornice embellishes the parapet.

South Elevation

The south elevation, of red brick laid in common bond, is plain and unadorned. This rear elevation features a door flanked by 2 two-over-two double hung sash windows.

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History of the Transient Hotel, cont.

In 1918 the name changed to the First Avenue Hotel, then became the Bellview Hotel, and later, the First Avenue again. Known as the Bell Hotel in 1927, it was then estimated at a value of \$40,000 (the primary asset of the Alice McVay estate) and was passed along to her sisters and a brother.

The main floor storefront claims a long tradition of commercial establishments. Beginning as a single shop in 1910, it was divided into two storefronts by 1928. The main floor storefront began as the Empire State Bowling Alley run by C. N. Smith. In 1912 it became Albrecht Stationery Store. The main floor storefront became Standard Plumbing and Heating in 1918 and remained so for many years. By 1955, it became Standard Finance Company and Patten's Pawnbrokers. It was later a beauty supply shop on one side while Standard Finance remained on the other. Converted into law offices, the Transient is now known as the Minnesota Building.

Significance as an SRO

Built c. 1904 in Spokane's Central Business District, the Transient Hotel was one of Spokane's first Single Room Occupancy Hotels (SRO), built at the onset of the construction boom of 1905-1910. In 1900, 21 hotels were listed in Spokane and Hillyard, by 1905 there were more than 56; in 1910 there were nearly twice as many as five years earlier: 126 total, or a gain of 70 hotels in five years, perhaps more than had been built in all the city's history. Certainly not all of those were constructed to serve working class clientele, but there can be little doubt that the vast majority were built specifically for that purpose.

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Significance as an SRO, cont.

A construction boom resulted in many buildings being constructed to meet the housing demand around 1910, and the predominant type of lodging was the SRO. As the first decade of the 20th century drew to a close, and the growth began to subside, an SRO hotel could be found on practically every block in Spokane's CBD.

Built for a common purpose, these buildings display similar physical features which make them recognizable in the present as characteristic of their era. The Transient Hotel embodies the distinctive characteristics of the SRO hotel construction type: plain brick construction, from two to five stories in height, commercial space on the ground floor, and a stairway entering from the front of the building which provides direct access to the second level. Fenestration patterns on the upper levels reflect the regular arrangement of guest rooms; plate glass display windows are featured on the street level commercial bays. Floor plans of the upper floors are the most character-defining feature of SROs. The overwhelming majority of rooms were designed for single occupancy; the majority of these rooms did not have baths nor toilets. Kitchens were not provided in single rooms; dining rooms and community kitchens may have been located in the basement. Today, the upper floors of the transient have been renovated into office space.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Compau, Nancy. Historian, Northwest Room, Spokane Public Library.
Holstine, Craig Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District,
Spokane Register Nomination, 1993.
Polk, R.L. City Directories. Spokane. Various issues.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Spokane Public Library, Spokane, 1910.
Spokane Spokesman-Review. Various issues.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Lot 2, block 12, RAILROAD Addition to the City of Spokane Book D of Plats
page 82, Spokane County, State of Washington.

Verbal boundary description and justification

list all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state _____ county _____
state _____ county _____

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen K. Eugster, General Managing Parnter (with assistance from Nancy
organization Mound Hardware Compau, Research Librarian) 2/13/96
street & number 423 West First telephone 624-5566
city/town Spokane state WA 99204-0206

12. Signature of Owner(s)

Mound Hardware, General Partnership

By: Stephen K. Eugster
Stephen K. Eugster, General Managing Partner

For Official Use Only:

Date Received: _____

Date Heard: _____

Commission Decision: _____

Council/Board Action: _____

Date: _____

Attest: _____

City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

Shelby Johnson
Asst. City Attorney

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

MAYOR, City of Spokane

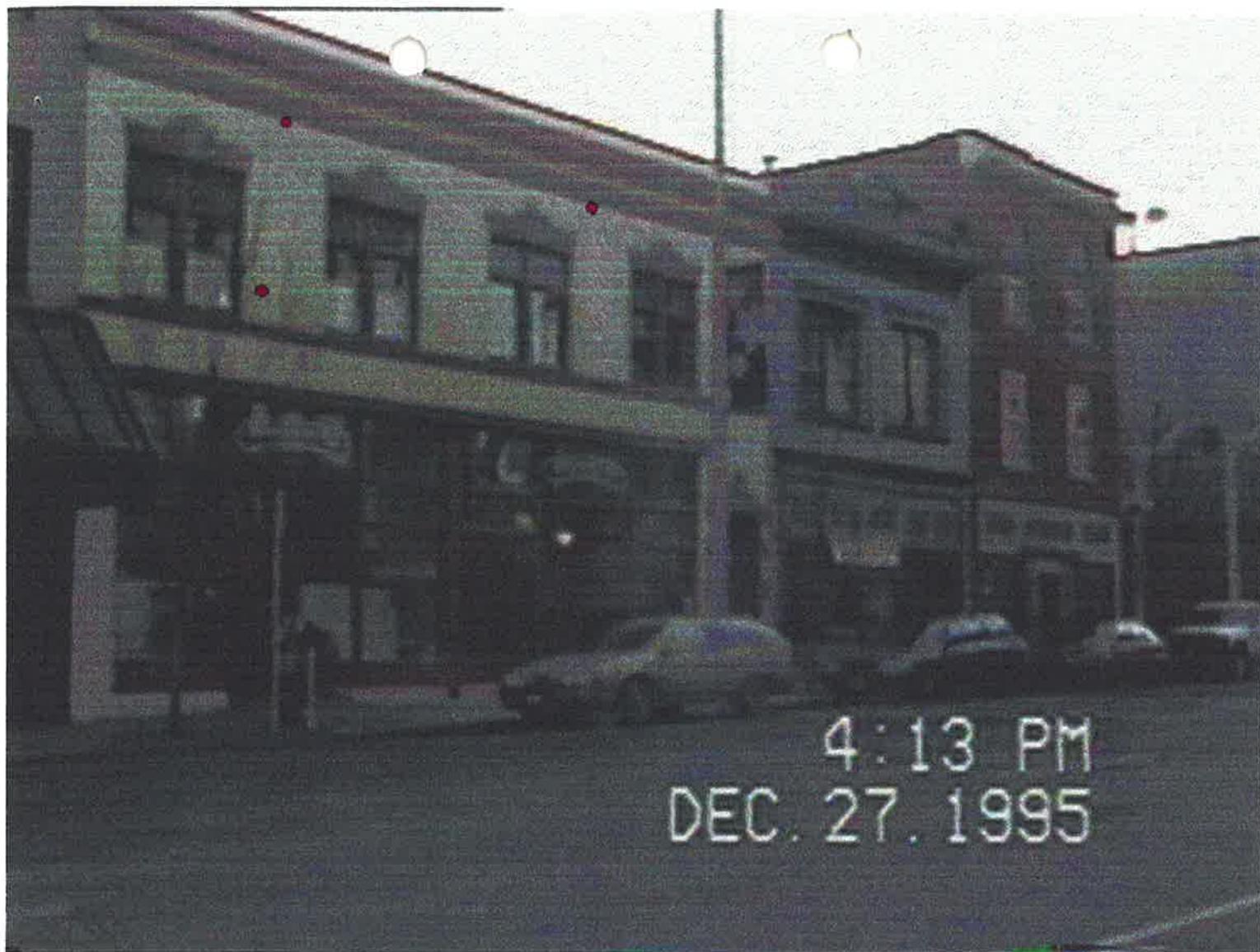
or

CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioner

CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

City/County Historic Preservation Officer





Front of building. The building on the corner at First and Stevens is also in the process of being renovated.



Rear of building.



Main floor of building looking to the rear.



Main floor of building looking to the rear. This on the east side of the main floor.



This is a view of lobby area on the main floor. This is the common entry area of the building which leads to the main floor office space and the elevator lobby. The elevator goes to the second floor. There is also another entrance to the second floor from the front. This entrance is the old entry-way to the hotel on the second floor.



This is a view of the rear door on the first floor. A stairway to the right goes to the basement. The open door to the left goes to a kitchen area. The other doors go to lavatories.



This is the stairway to the second floor from the front of the building. This is the old entry to the hotel.



This a view of the main hallway on the second floor.

This is the original size of the hallway.

The door to the right is to a kitchen area (common).

The other hallway is to the lavatories and shower. The doors beyond are to office suites.



This is an interior view of the larger office suite on the second floor.



Front of building. The Stewart building is to the right.

Transient Hotel