

Staff Report and Findings of Fact Nomination to the Spokane Register of Historic Places Fifth Avenue Flats – 519 W Fifth Avenue

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. SMC 17D.100.090: "Generally a building, structure, object, site, or district which is more than fifty years old may be designated an historic landmark or historic district if it has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city, county, state, or nation."

- Completed in 1909; the Fifth Avenue Flats meets the age criteria for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

2. SMC 17D.100.090: The property must qualify under one or more categories for the Spokane Register (A, B, C, D).

- **Category A** – Constructed in 1909, the Fifth Avenue Flats Apartment Building is eligible under Category A because it was constructed during the city's most significant period of growth, 1900 to 1910. As an early downtown apartment building, it represents the residential movement beyond the city's central business district to neighborhoods such as the lower south hill, Browne's Addition, and the Monroe street car route. Apartment buildings, as a distinct multi-family housing type, were in the early stage of development in Spokane. The Fifth Avenue Flats was a precursor to the dozens of apartment buildings that would be built between Fourth Avenue and the basalt bluff of the south hill.
- **Category C** - The building is eligible under Category C – Architecture. The three-story pinkish-red brick building is a richly-detailed and beautifully-articulated apartment building that displays sophistication in design and use of quality materials with a bit of European flair. Although using classical elements, the building does not represent a definable style in the lexicon of American architecture. Unique in Spokane is the elongated archway that frames the deep main entry bay and recessed open porches that are highlighted by elaborate wrought iron balconies. Its basalt rubble and brick foundation; symmetrical brick façade with contrasting white brick voussoired flat and segmental-arched window bays; and pronounced pressed cornice; are characteristic building features of the first decade of the 20th century, and are blended nicely to create a pleasing building facade.

3. SMC17D.040.090: "The property must also possess integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association." From NPS Bulletin 15: "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance...it is not necessary for a property to retain all its historic physical features...the property must retain, however, the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity."

- The Fifth Avenue Flats retains excellent architectural integrity in original location, design, materials, workmanship, and association. The building is essentially unaltered from its original construction, including the double-hung wood sash windows.

4. Once listed, this property will be eligible to apply for incentives, including:

Special Valuation (property tax abatement), Spokane Register historical marker, and special code considerations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The **Fifth Avenue Flats** qualifies for eligibility under Spokane Register Categories A & C.

Preservation Officer Review: Megan Duvall

Nominations Committee: Shockley, West, Rast

Landmarks Commission Review: Pending

Report: 11/1/19

Site Visit: 11/19

Hearing: 11/20/19