



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

LPB 345/20

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Name and Address of Property: **Swedish Club**
1920 Dexter Avenue North

Legal Description: LOTS 13 THROUGH 17, BLOCK 4, WESTLAKE BOULEVARD ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SEATTLE, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN VOLUME 11 OF PLATS, PAGE 69, RECORDS OF KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON; EXCEPT THAT PORTION CONDEMNED IN KING COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CAUSE NO. 17628 FOR WIDENING OF DEXTER AVENUE NORTH; AND EXCEPT THAT PORTION CONVEYED TO THE CITY OF SEATTLE UNDER RECORDING NO. 4994727, TOGETHER WITH THOSE PORTIONS OF VACATED ALLEYS IN SAID BLOCK FOUR WHICH ATTACHED TO SAID PREMISES BY OPERATION OF LAW.

At the public meeting held on September 2, 2020 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Swedish Club at 1920 Dexter Avenue N as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standard for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

- C. *It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state or nation.*
- D. *It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or of a method of construction.*
- F. *Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of its neighborhood or the City and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City.*

Administered by The Historic Preservation Program
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

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DESCRIPTION

Location & Neighborhood Character

The subject building is located at the southeastern corner of the intersection of Dexter Avenue N and Newton Street on the sloping hillside between Aurora Avenue N and the Lake Union shoreline adjacent to Westlake Avenue N. The surrounding neighborhood is a mixture of single-family homes and smaller, older apartment buildings dating from the 1920s to the present day. Recent zoning changes have allowed higher-density apartment and mixed-use developments south of the site along Dexter Avenue N, and along Westlake Avenue N.

Due to the change in slope and angle of Dexter Avenue N near the southern end of the subject building site, the southern and western façades of the building are highly visible from Dexter Avenue N, especially when traveling in the northern direction.

Building Site

The site is a 39,950-square foot (0.92 acre) irregularly-shaped tax parcel with the club building located at the site's northwestern corner adjacent to Dexter Avenue N and Newton Street. The site slopes steeply approximately 20 feet down from Dexter Avenue N to 8th Avenue N. An on-grade 25-car parking lot is located to the south of the building with its grade level equal to the lower floor. A reinforced concrete retaining wall approximately 14 feet high is situated on the western side of the parking lot. The parking lot is accessed by a concrete automobile ramp running down from Dexter Avenue N along the southern side of the building. There are two exits from this parking lot: a concrete automobile ramp runs up and westward along the southern edge of the property line, providing access to Dexter Avenue N, and another automobile ramp runs down approximately 10 feet and northward to Newton Street along the eastern side of the building. The site also includes a lower 31-car parking lot on the eastern portion of the site that is separated from the upper parking lot and the northern access ramp by a reinforced concrete retaining wall. This parking lot is accessed on its northern side by way of Newton Street and has a concrete stairway leading to the upper parking lot near its southwestern corner. An older converted single-family house and a 1960s-era apartment building are located on separate parcels in a "notch" to the south of the lower parking lot and adjacent to and east of the upper parking lot. The Swedish Club also owns another parcel to the west across Dexter Avenue N, which provides additional parking.

Landscaping is primarily located in a triangular entrance garden located on the western side of the subject building, formed by the angle of Dexter Avenue N. The garden has a wide concrete walkway leading from Dexter Avenue N to the main building entrance and entrance canopy located at the center of the western façade. To the north of the walkway is a landscaped area with a central three-tiered concrete fountain surrounded by various shrubs including rhododendrons, Oregon grape, Skimmias, oak leaf hydrangeas, small yews, and a Japanese maple. A mature Cyprus is located near the northwestern corner of the building and a large European birch tree is situated at the northwestern corner of the parcel. On the southern side of the walkway is another garden space featuring a mature cedar tree and a

large three-ton iron ore stone with a plaque, a gift by Granges Bergsbolaget in 1962. Landscape plantings include a laurel, a *Fatsia japonica*, a rhododendron, and numerous ferns and perennials.

Building Form, Structure, and Exterior Features

The subject building is a two-and-a-half-story steel-frame rectangular block measuring 80'-0" north-south with eight 10'-0" bays, and 90'-0" east-west with eight 15'-0" bays. The building is located on the northwestern portion of the site. The dramatically sloping site allows for a partial daylight lower floor with the main floor located a street level. The building enjoys sweeping views of Lake Union and the western side of Capitol Hill from the main and second floors. The main and second floors are composed of reinforced concrete slabs. The lower floor has a slab-on-grade foundation, and the flat roof has a structural steel deck carrying R-30 rigid insulation and a relatively new membrane coating. The main and second floor exterior of the building are clad in an architectural cement-plaster ("marblecrete"), while the lower floor (partial basement) is composed of exposed aggregate. The main and second floors have bands of original aluminum-sash glazing concentrated on the eastern portions of the northern and southern façades and the entire eastern façade. Reinforced concrete egress walkways project approximately 4'-10" from the main and upper floor of the building, wrapping around the building on the northern, eastern, and southern sides. The cantilevered concrete walkways and the cantilevered horizontal roof cornice support a two-story (originally continuous) sunscreen, or a brise soleil, composed of interlocking round aluminum molded sections.¹ The screen was originally continuous, but the eastern upper portions of the screen on each floor have since been removed, down to guardrail height to allow unobstructed views. The height of the building from grade to the roof coping measures approximately 26'-0" on the western façade, while the height at the building's northeastern corner is approximately 50'-0" feet from grade to the roof coping.

All façades are primary.

The western façade faces Dexter Avenue N. Three centrally placed pairs of solid one-panel doors wooden doors access the main floor on grade. The entry is sheltered by a non-original projecting sheet metal canopy composed of three raised sections of interlocking metal panels supported by eight rectangular columns that extend up through the canopy to become flag poles. Each of the canopy's metal sections feature a five-point golden crown at the western opening; the central section has a non-original sign reading "THE SWEDISH CLUB." The northern portion of the façade, at ground level, has three plate-glass windows, while the southern portion is relatively blank painted concrete block, containing an egress door with upper transom light. A plaque serving as the building's cornerstone is located near the southern corner. The upper portion of the façade is blank painted stucco divided into three sections, with the central section painted blue, while the two outer sections are painted white. The building's architect presented the crown shaped metal and terrazzo door pulls as a memorial to his father.

The southern façade faces the upper and southern parking lot with the grade sloping down to the east to the lower floor level via an adjacent car ramp. The upper and main floors project outward to form the egress walkways mentioned above. These walkways terminate

near the central part of the façade, allowing egress stairways that lead down respectively to the main floor and lower floor grades. The floor extensions also support the sun screen. The eastern upper portions of the screen on each floor were removed at some time down to guardrail height to allow unobstructed views. A large non-original sign with three five-point crowns and the words spelling out “THE SWEDISH CLUB” is located near the second floor level on the western side of the screen. The inner building façade behind the sunscreen has eight spaced rectangular reinforced concrete pilasters, creating bays running the length of the building. The western portions of the upper floors are of painted stucco, while the eastern portion has aluminum-sash glazing between pilasters. Egress doors with upper transoms are located near the center of the façade and the westernmost portion of the upper floor projects fully outward to the sunscreen. The lower floor has exposed aggregate panels between the pilasters with two pairs of non-original entrance/egress doors located in the easternmost bay and the third bay from the east. A non-original raised planting bed is located between the entrance/egress doors.

The eastern façade faces Lake Union and the lower parking lot. As with the southern façade, the main and upper floors also have projecting floors forming walkways with the screens extending upward to guardrail height.² The floors are fully glazed from floor level to the height of the ceiling. Nine concrete pilasters divide the glazing into eight bays. The lower floor also has eight bays; of these, the two outer bays on each side are filled with exposed aggregate panels, and the four inner bays are glazed with non-original full-height aluminum glazing. The lower floor rests on a blank painted one-and-a-half story concrete plinth, with a driveway sloping down from the southern parking lot to the Newton Street right-of-way.

The northern façade faces Newton Street. The façade is similar to the southern façade, with its eastern glazing and two egress stairways. The lower floor has a ramp leading from Newton Street to a pair of doors and a single doorway accessing the lower kitchen area. A small non-original storage shed is located adjacent to the sidewalk at the building’s northwestern corner.

Building Plan & Interior Features

The subject building consists of three floors organized around a central interior court extending from the main floor to the building roof. The main floor is accessed by way of three pairs of centrally arranged doors on the building’s western side. The entrance foyer has a floor covered with non-original ceramic tile. The foyer leads eastward to the central interior court. The interior court connects all the levels in the buildings, with two different stairs, one going up on the northern side and one going down on the southern side. All ancillary spaces—including office spaces and small kitchen on the north, meeting rooms on the east, and mechanical and restrooms on the south—are arranged around the interior court. The interior court and meeting rooms have non-original laminate flooring, with the exception of the small library in the southeastern corner, which has non-original carpeting.³ A large non-original crystal chandelier is suspended from the ceiling in the center of the court. Interior walls are generally painted plaster, and the ceilings have blown-on asbestos surfaces. The northern grand stairway leading up to the upper floor is suspended from the ceiling by steel rods and is composed of metal pans filled with terrazzo flooring. The stair has open risers and teak handrails.

The grand stairway on the northern side of the interior court provides access to the upper floor. The stair runs along a wall of exposed red brick and leads to a gallery overlooking and providing a visual array of the interior court. The gallery leads to the cocktail lounge on the southern side and a dining room on the northern side, both looking outward to the east to views of Capitol Hill and Lake Union. Both the lounge and the dining room have nonoriginal carpeted floors and a non-original acoustic fabric ceiling. Several non-original small crystal chandeliers are suspended from the dining room ceiling. A hallway leads westward to the stairs accessing the main floor, the restrooms and a mechanical room, and an elevator located near the building's southwestern corner. A large commercial kitchen is located on the building's northern side.

The lower floor, one story down from the entrance and main floor, is daylit on the eastern side due to the sloping grade. There is a large assembly room/auditorium on the eastern side and an adjacent, smaller assembly room on the west with a folding partition separating the two areas. The large assembly room has four large non-original glazed windows facing the east, a hardwood floor, and a non-original suspended ceiling. An entrance foyer is located on the southern side of the main assembly room, and a hallway to the west leads to the stairs accessing the main floor, the restrooms, a mechanical room, and an elevator are located near the building's southwestern corner. The hallway and the smaller assembly room have commercial vinyl flooring. A large commercial kitchen is located on the building's northern side.

A small basement is accessed from a stairway in the lower-floor kitchen. It contains mechanical equipment rooms and a small storage/workshop at the eastern end.

Building Alterations

Exterior

1. Removal of exterior aluminum screen units on eastern portion of southern and northern façades, ca. 1970
2. Removal of concrete walls and the installation of three large window units to eastern façade lower level auditorium, ca. 1975
3. Addition of fountain at northwestern corner of site, ca. 1970
4. Addition of entry canopy, 1971
5. Addition of sliding aluminum door on upper floor, eastern façade, 2014
6. Replacement of roof, 2015
7. Replacement of two pairs of entry/egress doors on lower level, southern side, 2017

Interior, Main Floor

1. Removal of wall in center eastern meeting room and addition of new wall to create a smaller southeastern meeting room (now library), ca. 1970
2. Addition of bookcases in southeastern meeting room, ca. 2010
3. Overlay existing vinyl/asbestos tile flooring with laminate plank flooring, ca. 1995
4. Reconfiguration of staff kitchenette, 2017

Interior, Upper Floor

1. Addition of serving station at kitchen entry, ca. 1970
2. Reconfiguration of bar area to include secure liquor storage, bar changes, and addition of doors on the western and eastern ends to enable bar security, ca. 1970
3. Alterations to restrooms to include accessible stalls, ca. 1980
4. Addition of a corridor to the former private dining room between the kitchen and elevator area to allow shortened pathway to exterior for caterer, ca. 1980
5. Addition of acoustic panel ceiling, 2014

Interior, Lower Floor

1. Reconfiguration of lobby to eliminate coatroom, ca. 1970
2. Elimination of chair storage in southern corridor and replacement with display cabinet, ca. 1970
3. Addition of small anteroom near auditorium northern exit, ca. 1970
4. Addition to storage area on western wall of small assembly area (Vasa Room), ca. 1980
5. Alterations to restrooms to include accessible stalls, ca. 1980
6. Replacement of non-original tiles floor in lobby and southern corridor with vinyl plank flooring, 2016

Recorded Building Permits

Date / Description of work / Permit number
1/29/1959 / Construct a building per plan / 472770
1960 / Complete work on 472770 / 481693
1961 / Complete work on 472770, 481693 / 487642
1961 / Install kitchen equip. on third floor - renewal / 492097
1962 / Erect and maintain 2 signs / 493434
1962 / Construct chair storage locker (first floor) / 495331
1963 / Install paneling on por. of first floor / 501789
1967 / Alter por. of lower level / 500901
1970 / Install sliding glass door on third floor / 536918
1971 / Construct entrance canopy / 540102
1971 / Const. partition & alt. por. third floor / 540536
1972 / Alter lower level of exist. bldg. / 545397

SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Neighborhood Context: Westlake/East Queen Anne Neighborhood

The immediate site area was located on the wooded eastern slope of what would later be called Queen Anne Hill overlooking Lake Union. The lake was called *meman hartshu* by the Duwamish people, who had a traditional summer camp on a meadow on Denny Hill near the

present Seattle Center.

In the early 1860s, a rudimentary north-south military road was constructed that connected Lake Union and the main settlement area on Elliott Bay. The route, originally known as Lake Avenue and eventually Dexter Avenue N, followed an old Duwamish trail that extended northward along the western side of the lake.

The first European American commercial use was David Denny's Western Mill, built at the southern end of Lake Union in the early 1880s. Luther H. Griffith constructed a streetcar line on wooden trestles along the western side of Lake Union in the 1880s. This line was built to stimulate development of Griffith's property in what would become Fremont. The areas west of the trestle were filled in, and a road paralleling the streetcar right-of-way, now known as Westlake Avenue N, was constructed sometime between 1907 and 1915.

From the 1890s through the early 1900s, the general area was predominantly residential, mainly composed of immigrant worker housing. By 1915, the southwestern corner of the lake had transitioned from a swimming beach to a landfill.⁶ The Cascade School (John Parkinson, destroyed 1955) was built in 1894 in the general south Lake Union area to serve the growing residential community including those houses being built along Dexter Avenue N. Several churches of various ethnic groups were also scattered throughout the greater neighborhood.

Around 1909, rail spurs were built along the southern and western sides of Lake Union, as well as a north-south spur along Terry Avenue, where in 1914 a freight depot was constructed at Thomas Street. These spur lines, the modernized Westlake route and the freight depot (and distribution center) attracted new enterprises to South Lake Union. New commercial and industrial ventures were connected with Northern Pacific Railway shipping routes and encouraged further development in the area. With the opening of the Lake Washington Ship Canal in 1917, additional piers and railway spurs were constructed.

A major landslide occurred along Dexter Avenue in 1911. The eastern slope of Queen Anne Hill had additional landslides in 1933, 1934, and 1955.

Advocates for municipal ownership of streetcar lines were able to place a \$800,000 bond issue on the 1911 ballot. The issue passed, allowing the city to commence construction of their "Division A" line. The line originated at the intersection of Third Avenue and Pine Street, running to Clay Street, on to Fourth Avenue to Broad Street and then to Dexter Avenue. It ran north up the hill along Dexter Avenue and then down to Nickerson, where it passed closely by the Westlake/Fremont line that ran from Westlake Avenue across a bridge to Fremont. The line then ran west along Nickerson Street and through the early settlement of Ross to 13th Avenue and terminating near the southern end of the old 14th Street trestle over the eastern end of Salmon Bay. The total distance of the new line was approximately four miles, costing a little less than \$400,000. The line was not particularly well-used, serving only a narrow band of residential properties along Dexter Avenue as well as the small private college that would become Seattle Pacific University. Skeptics quickly dubbed it "the line that began nowhere, ran nowhere, and ended nowhere."

The Aurora Speedway was constructed in the early 1930s, west of Dexter Avenue, with the

George Washington Memorial Bridge crossing high above the Lake Washington Ship Canal near Lake Union's northern end.

Between 1941 and 1942, the United States Navy built the Naval Reserve Armory (1942, William R. Grant with B. Marcus Priteca, City of Seattle Landmark) as an advanced training facility on the site of the Brace Hergert Mill (formerly the Denny Mill), using funds provided by the Works Progress Administration.

In the 1950s, most commercial activity within the neighborhood was concentrated along Westlake Avenue and the southern portion of Dexter Avenue N. The northern portion of Dexter Avenue N was mostly single-family residential, although a few apartment buildings had been constructed.

In the second half of the 20th Century, the area changed little until property values increased as result of major land acquisition stimulated by the northward expansion of the downtown commercial core and redevelopment of these properties by major developers, including Paul Allen's Vulcan Inc. A new streetcar line running down Westlake Avenue now connects the South Lake Union, Cascade, and Westlake neighborhoods with the Central Business District.

Cultural Context: Scandinavian Communities in Seattle

In 1900, Seattle was home to approximately 5,086 foreign-born Scandinavians, approximately 21 percent of the total foreign-born population in the city. By 1910, immigration had brought the number of foreign-born Scandinavians to approximately 19,046, about 31 percent of the foreign-born population. After this point, immigration from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark began leveling off, reaching a peak of 23,856 foreign-born in 1920, before declining.

During these early years Scandinavians established both fraternal organizations and churches where immigrants could find mutual support and continue cultural traditions. These organizations and churches originally consisted exclusively of immigrants of individual countries of origin. Later, as Scandinavian immigrants were successfully integrated into Seattle's general population, they used their wealth to reinforce their identities and cultural traditions.

In the mid-twentieth century the Scandinavian community came into its own, prosperitywise, and began to celebrate its identity. Churches and institutional buildings replaced their more provisional predecessors with structures that generally reflected more conservative Modernist design traditions. Church construction and expansion were especially marked during this time, albeit uneven in quality.

Organizations founded by Swedish, Norwegian and Danish immigrants and buildings constructed by these organizations are described below:

Swedish

The Swedish Club was founded in 1892, by Swedish immigrants who lived at the Stockholm

Hotel, located at First Avenue and Bell Street in the Belltown neighborhood. The hotel also housed the local Swedish newspaper, Svenska Pressen. One of the club's concerns was the health care of Swedes in the area, and when Svenska Lasarettet (Swedish Hospital) was organized in June 1908, nearly all the men signing the papers of incorporation were members of the club, including Dr. Nils A. Johanson, considered the hospital's founder. The hospital opened in 1910, in a leased building, moving to a new building on Summit and Columbia in 1912. The Swedish Gethsemane Lutheran congregation was formed in 1885, by Reverend Peter Carlson; in 1906 Swedish-born architect John Creutzer was commissioned to design their Swedish Tabernacle church. The Columbia Lutheran Home, founded by the predominantly Swedish Augustana Lutheran Church, was built in 1920 in the Phinney Ridge neighborhood.¹¹ The Swedish Club became the center of Swedish cultural programs in Seattle into the 1960s, before membership began to decline in the 1990s.

Norwegian

The Norwegian community, Seattle's largest Scandinavian immigrant group, followed suit when the Sons of Norway commissioned Norwegian-born architect E. Sonnichsen to design Norway Hall (now a City of Seattle Landmark) in the Cascade neighborhood. At the time, this neighborhood was home to a significant number of Norwegian immigrants, second only to Ballard. The Norwegian Hospital Association was founded in 1913, and a hospital was established in 1923. Although the hospital closed in 1926, the association would continue to support the Norwegian community. One of the many early churches linked to the Norwegian community is the Immanuel Lutheran Church (Vernon Watson, 1912, City of Seattle Landmark, NHR), also built in the Cascade neighborhoods.

Norway Center Inc., a group of fraternal organizations, originally commissioned Edward K. Mahlum to design the Norway Center (demolished) in 1949 and owned and operated the building until 1983. Norway Center Inc. consisted of four groups: Sons of Norway Leif Erickson Lodge no. 1; Knute Rockne Lodge no. 12; Daughters of Norway, Valkrein Lodge no. 1; and the Norwegian Male Chorus. The Norway Center incorporated an auditorium, several large meeting rooms, and a restaurant open to the general public. Norway Center Inc. sold the building in 1983, after finding that it no longer met their needs.

Mahlum was active in the Norwegian community, helping to spearhead fund raising for and then designing the Norse Home in the Phinney Ridge neighborhood, which opened in 1957.

Danish

In 1908, the Danish Brotherhood Society commissioned architect Victor Voorhees to design Washington Hall in Seattle's Central District. Washington Hall served as a venue for cultural events, and provided housing for single male Danish immigrants. The building is now owned by Historic Seattle Preservation and Development Authority and is a designated City of Seattle Landmark.

Nordic Museum

The Seattle Scandinavian community as a whole has supported the Nordic Museum, which

since 1980 has interpreted the cultural traditions of all Scandinavian countries including Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and Finland. The museum has recently opened a large state-of-the-art museum building in the Ballard neighborhood.

Fraternal and Social Support Organizations

Although the Swedish Club was primarily a men's social club, it shared characteristics of more general fraternal organizations, such as reinforcing ethnic and cultural identities, while lending a helping hand to fellow members by preferential hiring and mutual aid. While the Sons of Norway, the Vasa Order, and other Scandinavian organizations were clearly more focused on both social and charitable activities, Seattle's Swedish community's main charitable effort was the founding of Swedish Hospital and support of other charitable organizations including the Millionaire Club.

Fraternal organizations (such as Ancient Order of United Workmen, Knights of Pythias, Masons, IOOF, Eagles, Sons of Norway, etc.) in the United States were generally groups of people with shared common bonds of religion, ethnicity, gender, occupation or shared values, which formed to assist members through a mutual aid affiliation. Although the majority of these organization consisted of European immigrants, other organization were also formed for Asian- and African American communities. The Chinese community had *tongs*, which evolved into benevolent organizations including the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. African Americans tended to be members of fraternal lodges that were offshoots of corresponding white organizations such as the Masons, the Odd Fellows, and the Knights of Pythias due to racial discrimination.

As many immigrants lacked the support provided by family and friends found in their home countries, formal organizations developed to fill this need in their adopted communities in the United States. The turn of the twentieth century saw a proliferation of fraternal orders, which were able to provide additional benefits such as funeral expenses, health plans, and educational and dependent support to their members. Members receiving such benefits also committed to supporting their local community.

Most fraternal organizations were originally made up of groups of white men; most growth in fraternal membership occurred in the first half of the twentieth century; and these grouped gradually began to include women and minority populations. The federal Social Security Act of 1935 included unemployment insurance, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children and grants to the states to provide various forms of medical care, traditionally primary benefits of fraternal membership. The development of nationwide Social Security—along with the time commitment problems of dual-income families, single parenthood, and the increased kinds of activities available to younger adults and their children—has resulted in the general decline of fraternal membership. At least one social organization, the Modern Woodmen of America, adapted to the changes by evolving into an insurance company.

Building Owner and Building Construction: Swedish Club

The idea of a social club for Swedish immigrants living in Seattle originated in 1892 at the Stockholm Hotel, which was owned by Swedish Honorary Consul Andrew Chilborg (1845-

1835), at the southeastern corner of First Avenue and Blanchard Street. At that time the northern part of the city housed many immigrant populations, mostly northern Europeans. In the 1890s, the Stockholm Hotel provided not only housing accommodations for young male Swedish Immigrants, but also a restaurant and an office for Svenska Pressen, Seattle's Swedish-language newspaper. Young Swedish men would lounge in the afternoons and weekends under an old Madrona tree next to the hotel to read the paper, chat, and watch women parading by on their way to town or back. At that time there were few places where young single men could meet young women, so they came up with the idea of forming a club where they could socialize.

In August 1892, 30 young men met at the new Masonic Temple at Pike Street and Second Avenue. There was a general agreement that a social club for Swedes was needed, and committees were formed to start the club. There was, however, disagreement concerning membership. Originally, most attendees thought it should be open to both sexes, while a contingent headed by Otto Roseleaf (1861-1950) wanted a club for men only. At the second meeting, Roseleaf prevailed, and the club did not admit women as full members until 1989.¹⁵ In less than a year the club had grown exponentially, and the idea of a social club to meet young women was soon expanded to include families. Women were welcome to come to social events, but meetings were exclusively for men. Initially the club rented rooms at the Carpenter's Union Hall, and for a time at a small apartment at Seventh Avenue and Columbia Street, but by summer of 1893, the club was located in the basement of the first Ranke Building at Pike Street and Fifth Avenue.

Over the years the Swedish Club sponsored many traditional Swedish events including midsommarfesten, the summer festival, and hosted choral and stage performances.

Discussions concerning the club building its own clubhouse began in 1901. Nels B. Nelson (1857-1907), one of the founders of the Frederick & Nelson department store chain and member of the club, had purchased a double lot on the corner of Eight Avenue and Olive Street (now the Hyatt Hotel) for \$6,000 and sold the mid-block lot to the club for \$3,000. Nelson allowed the club generous terms to pay off the debt as it could.

Club member and contractor, Otto Roseleaf, prepared the construction drawings for the Swedish Club's first building and constructed the modest wood-frame clubhouse that opened in 1902. The clubhouse was built for \$5,000 and financed through the sale of bonds and a modest fund in the treasury. Roseleaf was later the contractor for the first Swedish Hospital.

In 1909, the City of Seattle regraded Eighth Avenue 20 feet lower than previously, leaving the main building entrance accessible only through crude wooden stairs. Recognizing the necessity of renovating the building and the opportunity to improve the facility for the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, the club excavated the basement, made additions on both sides and renovated the interior and the exterior. The building also received a brick façade and new windows. The building appeared to members as much more Swedish, "with stepped gables and bold, striped rustication." After the renovation, the building contained a large hall with a stage, a smaller hall, bar, dining and conference rooms, kitchen, offices and staff apartment. The club financed the \$18,000 renovation by taking on a 30-year mortgage,

paid off in 1940.

After World War II, progressive members of the club began considering constructing a new, larger club building. Club president Andy Berglund had high aspirations and coined a slogan—"Membership of 1000 and a new building"—initiating a campaign to realize his vision. The campaign increased the number of members from 150 to 500. The club also explored purchasing property on the northeastern corner of Eight Avenue and University Street (now Freeway Park), but members deemed it too expensive.

In August 1951, the club's leadership invited other Swedish organizations and societies in Seattle to participate in their discussions about forming a joint building association to build a new building. After September 1951, the Swedish Club's building committee started working jointly with other organizations. Two lots at Second Avenue and Broad Street were bought in February 1952.

Seattle architect Oliver William Olson (1914-1993), who was both a member of the Swedish Club and a part of the building committee, provided the club with "temporary drawings to serve as a basic instrument for the final blueprint," as well as initial estimates. Olson appears to have then been in a partnership (1947-1951) with Bjarne Olsen, with offices on Market Street. Oliver Olson's sketches show a two-story building with a basement. The first floor measured 108'-0" by 160'-0" with 12-foot ceilings, and included a clubroom, stage, kitchen, office, and auditorium. The second floor was the same size, included a restaurant, more offices, and an auditorium with balcony. The expected cost for project was approximately \$527,000.

In 1953, the club announced that the architectural partnership of Miller & Ahlson had been chosen as the architects for the new Swedish Club building. Miller & Ahlson was a partnership between Frederick Theodore Ahlson (1905-1996), and Charles Taylor Miller, which lasted from 1946 to 1962.

Miller and Ahlson based their design on Olson's initial work and at the Swedish Club board meeting in September 1953, they showed their initial sketches for the property at Second Avenue and Broad Street. Their proposed building design had a footprint of 160'-0" x 180'-0", significantly larger than the design Olson earlier proposed, and included an auditorium, lodge hall, committee rooms, a restaurant, stores and office space.

In 1954, a cooperative joint venture between the Swedish Club and the other organizations was officially formed under the name "Swedish Community Building Association." These other groups included two auxiliary organizations: the Svea Male Choir and the Ladies Auxiliary; Lodge 101, Order of Runeberg; Klippan Lodge 228, Order of Vasa; Seattle Lodge 61, Scandinavian Fraternity of America; Skold Lodge 98, Independent Order of the Vikings; Alfreda Lodge 55, Independent Ladies of Vikings; and the Swedish Businessmen's Club. To raise money for the new building, the association arranged a series of activities and fundraisers. On the Swedish Day celebration in 1955, previous club president Berglund spoke about the new building. The annual Swedish Day picnic in 1956 generated a net profit of \$2,150, and all the money went to the building fund. In June the same year, the Swedish Community Building Association sent a letter to Miller & Ahlson saying that they approved

the preliminary plans with only some minor suggestions.

Financing a joint venture proved more difficult than originally anticipated. The total cost of the lots and construction of the building were anticipated to cost \$900,000. After repeated attempts the Swedish Community Building Association dissolved and the board of directors of the Swedish Club decided to move forward on a smaller-scale building without partners. The money the different parties had contributed to the association was then returned. However, the Swedish Club still owned the two lots at Second Avenue and Broad Street. The club considered the site too valuable for the smaller building they now envisioned, so they sold the lots in early 1957 for a profit. A few weeks after the sale of the old property, the club was offered a new site at 1920 Dexter Avenue N by one of the members and moved to purchase it. The old club building at Eighth Avenue was later sold and demolished and served as a parking lot for several years.

The new property was less expensive and also had the advantage of adequate space for parking and a great view over Lake Union. The club now engaged architects Steinhart, Theriault & Anderson to design their new building. Einar V. Anderson, a member of the Swedish Club, was the firm principal in charge of the design, signing all the original drawings. The resulting design was inspired by Minoru Yamasaki's Reynolds Aluminum Building (1959) in Southfield, Michigan, sharing the same exterior aluminum sunscreen composed of interlocking aluminum rings developed by the Reynolds Aluminum Company

The groundbreaking ceremony was held on November 28, 1959. Speakers included Senator building committee chairman Roy Lundberg, and Ivar Cederwall, the club's master of ceremonies. Generally, the speakers anticipated that the new building would be greatly appreciated and envisioned its use by visitors of the coming Century 21 Exposition (World's Fair).

The construction process took longer than expected due to rainy weather, and the cornerstone was laid in October 1960. A small copper box was inserted into the cornerstone, containing the book *Svenska Klubbens Historia* by club manager John Nordeen, some newspapers, photographs, a few Swedish coins, and a list of donors.

The new Swedish Club building officially opened in April 1961, featuring a central atrium and an upper-floor restaurant. Final cost for the building was around \$500,000, which came wholly from the organization's own funds, sale of bonds to members and others, and from donations. Members also did all the painting work and installed the exterior aluminum sunscreen.

With the new facility, membership rose from around 500 in 1961, to nearly 5,000 in the 1970s.

As the organization approached 100 years of age in the 1990s, however, it was forced to curtail some operations and begin a long period of deferred maintenance decisions. The once-popular restaurant was closed and rented to an outside caterer for additional income. A corridor was inserted into the club's private dining room/board room to allow the catering business direct access to the elevator, with the caterer using the southern auditorium

entrance for loading rather than the original northern loading area. The main offices near the entrance were also rented to a related organization, and the building was marketed to individuals and organizations with no cultural connections to the club. Non-members were also allowed access to the facility's meeting rooms and auditorium on a rental basis and were invited to enjoy the club's bar area for a small fee. Although these actions allowed the club to barely survive financially, cumulatively they have weakened the sense of community. In spite of concerted efforts to revive the Swedish Club, by 2005 the organization had reached an impasse. Without clear direction or purpose, other than continuing the monthly popular Swedish Pancake Breakfast offering, membership had dwindled to around 550 members who paid annual dues of \$85 for minimal benefits. Discussions were held with the Nordic Heritage Museum with the idea of either purchasing the club's property on Dexter Avenue N for their own use, or selling the property to help finance their own capital campaign. At the same time, developers approached the club with an initial proposal to purchase the property, and dissolution of the club seemed imminent. Many, including the club's executive director and several of the board members, thought its failure and liquidation of the club's assets was inevitable.

Several club members—including Karl Larsson, Brandon Benson, and Kristine Leander—rejected this premature death certificate and in fall of 2005, began meeting every other Saturday morning in order to preserve and create a future for the club.

In 2008 Leander was hired to market the club and help implement the new plans. Several years later, the long-time executive director left and two interim executive directors were hired to lead the organization until plans were solidified for the future. However, each executive director left after a few months. Additionally, a number of decisions had been made that resulted in a large debt. Leander offered to take over the position as executive director and was hired by the Board of Directors in March 2011.

Today, the Swedish Club's membership appears to be stable, with approximately 1,100 members. The club publishes a monthly newsletter and has an active website describing events. The Club's Swedish Pancake Breakfast has become a Seattle community tradition, usually serving approximately 400 people the first Sunday of every month. The club facilities are currently used by many smaller Scandinavian and non-Scandinavian organizations and clubs, and also operates as an entertainment and event venue.

Historic Architectural Context: International Style

The Swedish Club building at 1920 Denny can be classified stylistically—by its massing, scale, and use of an exterior brise soleil—as being in the Modern/International Style, expressive of the New Formalism, and classified by its materials as loosely derived from contemporary Northern European precedents.

The Modern movement originated in Europe after World War I with an underlying belief that advances in science and technology would generate a new form of architecture, free from the pervasive eclecticism based on revival forms. The possibilities of curtain wall construction utilizing steel frames and the freeform massing using ferro-concrete were explored by Continental architects, as well as American modernist pioneers including Frank

Lloyd Wright. By the 1920s, these experimentations produced two distinct branches of modern architecture: the steel and glass classicism, “International Style,” of the Bauhaus architects Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, and *béton brut*, usually attributed to Charles Edouard Jeanneret (Le Corbusier), and the “New Brutalism.”

In 1929, Mies’s German Pavilion of the Barcelona Exhibition demonstrated the austerity and purity possible in the steel frame. After immigrating to the United States, Mies created a number of buildings that became icons of the International Style, including the Farnsworth House in Illinois (1950), Lake Shore Drive Apartments in Chicago (1952), Crown Hall at the Illinois Institute of Technology (1956), the Seagram Building in New York (1956-58), and the Bacardi Offices in Mexico City (1963)—all essays of the “frame rectangle.”³² Mies sought to reduce architecture to its basic form, eliminating all ornament and superfluity, creating the well-known aphorism “Less is more.”

Concurrently, in Scandinavia, architects were influenced by what was happening elsewhere in Europe and adapted the functionalism of the Modern Movement but blended in national traditions. Finnish architect Alvar Aalto was working at the same time in a similar environment. Although his use of wood and masonry was in keeping with the idea of honesty of materials, his ideals of relating the organic relationship between humans, nature and buildings were evident in the sculptural, natural shapes of his projects. Important differences between the architecture of Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier included the Scandinavian reliance on simple materials and moderation, as well as the inclusion of national traditions and historical material that resulted in a straightforward, understandable construction. Architect Ove Bang, whose designs melded a combination of Norwegian traditional forms with the emerging Modern style, spearheaded regional functionalism in Norway. Arne Korsmo and Knut Knutsen were other influential architects carrying the ideals of simple solutions using honest materials and the idea that buildings should be modest and subordinate to their surroundings.

Architects in Europe and the Americas also experimented with sunscreens, or *bris soleil*, on buildings, primarily after World War II through the 1960s. Sunscreens could reduce glare and internal cooling loads. Lucio Costa’s and Oscar Niemeyer’s Ministry of Education and Health building in Rio de Janeiro exemplifies these efforts.

Architectural design in the Pacific Northwest also went through a radical transformation during the 1940s and 1950s. The progressive enthusiasm of the war years had essentially overtaken eclecticism, and traditionalist architects were either retiring or reluctantly adapting to Modernism—first Art Deco style and eventually the International Style. In 1944 in Portland, Oregon, Pietro Belluschi designed the Equitable Building, the first curtain wall building in the United States. In Seattle, J. Lister Holmes (1891-1986), George Stoddard (1896-1967), William Bain (1896-1985), and Paul Thiry (1904-1993) were among the local architects who successfully made that mid-career leap and were rewarded with major Modernist commissions during the immediate post-war period. Other slightly younger architects, including Victor Steinbrueck (1911-1985), Paul Hayden Kirk (1914-1995), Omer Mithun (1918-1983), and Roland Terry (1917-2006), emerged from their apprenticeships immediately embracing a new Northwest Modernism. Additionally, a new generation of architects was emerging from architectural schools, including the University of Washington,

where traditionalist professors were being challenged by early Modernists, including Lionel “Spike” Pries (1897-1968).

Building Architect: Steinhart, Theriault & Anderson

The Seattle architectural firm of Steinhart, Theriault & Anderson designed the Swedish Club building at 1920 Dexter Avenue N in 1959.

The firm’s senior partner, Arden Croco Steinhart (1906-1994), was born on November 21, 1906 in Bucoda, Washington. He earned his architectural degree at the University of Washington in 1929. Between 1930 and 1939 he worked as a lathe foreman in a local lumber mill where his father was a superintendent. Between 1937 and 1942, Steinhart worked as a draftsman for William Jones and Roy Chester Stanley (1886-1956) at the Seattle architectural firm of Jones & Stanley. He served in the military between 1942 and 1946, before returning to work for Jones & Stanley. In 1951, Steinhart became a third partner in the firm, now known as Jones, Stanley & Steinhart, Architects

Robert Dennis Theriault (1922-2005) joined Steinhart & Stanley in 1953 (Jones had retired the previous year), forming the partnership of Steinhart, Stanley & Theriault. Theriault was born in Tacoma on May 28, 1922 and attended McCarver Common School, graduating from Stadium High School. He enlisted in the military and serving as a First Lieutenant navigator/bombardier in the Army Air Force in the Pacific during World War II, receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross. In 1945 his family moved to Seattle so that he could attend the University of Washington on the GI Bill. Theriault received his degree in Architecture in June 1950. Theriault was then employed by engineer E.G. Putnam, and by architect Alfred F. Simpson, as an architectural and structural designer, drafter, renderer, and in 1950-1952 as a job supervisor.

Einar V. Anderson (1925-1970) became the fourth partner in 1955. Stanley left the firm in 1959. Anderson was the partner who primarily was responsible for the design of the Swedish Club and signed all the construction documents.

Einar Vincent Anderson was born in Seattle on January 22, 1925, the third son of Swedish immigrants Emil W. and Hannah B. (Arvidsson) Anderson. Einar grew up in Seattle’s Wallingford neighborhood, and graduated in 1942 from Lincoln High School. At that time he was considered a talented illustrator and cartoonist, expressing an interest in becoming a commercial artist. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1943, serving in the Aleutian Islands, among other posts. After he was discharged in 1946, he enrolled in the University of Washington, graduating in 1951 with a Bachelor of Architecture (Tau Sigma Delta). He served as a lieutenant in the Army during the Korean War between 1951 and 1952. He was a second-generation Swede and also a member of the Swedish Club. He died prematurely at age 45 in 1970.

After Anderson’s death, the firm was reorganized as Steinhart, Theriault & Associates. In 1985 the firm added a new partner, John Courage, under the name of Steinhart Theriault & Courage.

Steinhart, Theriault & Anderson designed a number of projects in the Seattle area in the 1950s and 1960s. The firm specialized in low-scale buildings in the Northwest Modern style. These included public schools in Highline, Mercer Island, Burien, and Shoreline that dated from 1953 to 1962, a small West Seattle dental office, banks in Burien and Kent in the 1960s, and at least five churches in the Seattle area. The firm's most notable designs were their own architectural office building (1958-1959, 1264 Eastlake Avenue E), the Swedish Club (1959-1960, 1920 Dexter Avenue N), Normandy Park Community Center in Normandy Park Cove Building (1960, Normandy Park), and Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Lower Queen Anne (1962).

Known constructed buildings by Steinhart, Theriault & Anderson, as individuals or as a firm, include the following buildings by type:

Schools

Sylvester Junior High, Highline School District (1953, Highline)
Highline High School (1957, Highline)
Island Park School (1958, Mercer Island)
Northeast Senior High School complex (1959, 24th Avenue S & S 152nd Street, Burien)
Aldercrest Elementary School (1960, 2800 NE 200th Street, Shoreline)
Pacific Junior High School (1961, 22705 24th Avenue S, Burien)
East Highline High School (1962, 225 S 152nd Street, Highline)
Kellogg Middle School (1962-1986, 16045 25th Avenue NE, Shoreline)
Tyee High School (1964, SeaTac)
Benson Hill Elementary School (1970, Renton)
Shoreline Community College (1964-1966, various buildings, Shoreline)

Commercial and Public Projects

Rainier Golf and Country Club Addition (1958, 11133 Des Moines Memorial Drive, Des Moines)
The Swedish Club, (1959, 1920 Dexter Avenue N, Seattle)
Portable Seattle First National Bank (1959, Seattle)
Normandy Park Community Center (1960, Normandy Park)
West Seattle Dental (1962, Seattle)
400 Building (1965, 400 SW 152nd Street, Burien)
Western Federal Savings Banks, (1965 and 1966, Burien and Kent)
Broadview Library (1967, 12755 Greenwood Avenue N, Seattle)
Surflin Motel (ca. 1960, Ocean Shores)
400 Shopping Arcades Building (1965, Burien)

Residential Projects

Marius Anderson Home (ca. 1957, Issaquah)
Theriault Residence (1958, 18585 Marine View Drive SW)
Residence at 18610 Marine View Drive SW (Normandy Park)
Bowmont Terrace and Sierra Homes development (ca. 1959, S 170th Street & Seattle-Tacoma Highway)

Skylark Apartments (1960, 126 SW 155th Street, Burien)
Harriet Manor Apartments (1966, 1304 E Harrison Street, Seattle)
Rosamond Carlton House (1970, Three Tree Point, Burien)

Religious Buildings

Broadview Lutheran Memorial Church (1956, 13047 Greenwood Avenue N)
Addition to 13th Church of Christ, Scientist (ca. 1959, 3500 NE 125th Street, Seattle)
United Presbyterian Church (1962, Edmonds)
Addition to Swedish Baptist Church (1962, 4600 Sunnyside Avenue NE, Seattle)
Calvary Lutheran Church (1963, 7002 23rd Avenue NW, Seattle)
John Knox Presbyterian Church (ca. 1965, Normandy Park)
St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1966, 15 Roy Street, Seattle)
Glendale Evangelical Lutheran Church (1967, 13455 Second Avenue, Burien)

Building Contractor: Oscar Turnquist Construction Company

Oscar Turnquist (1892-1992) was president of the Swedish Club in 1958 when his firm won the construction contract for the Swedish Club building at 1920 Dexter Avenue N. Turnquist was born in Seattle on March 27, 1892, in Grasmark, Sweden. He came to the United States in 1912. Turnquist found work in Seattle delivering milk, driving a jitney and laying streetcar tracks. He found his niche in 1917 when he began working as a carpenter. He served in the Army in France and Germany during World War I. He later became a general contractor and between 1930 and 1965 his firm constructed schools, churches, and commercial structures all over Western Washington, including the Swedish Club on Dexter Avenue N and the Fauntleroy Community Church in West Seattle.

Turnquist joined the Swedish Club in 1929 and served terms as trustee and president. He sang with the Svea Male Chorus for 52 years and was a longtime member and former chairman of Frihet Lodge, Order of Vasa.

Turnquist passed away on September 10, 1992, in Seattle.

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved include: *the site defined by lots 13-17 together with the vacated alleys to the south and east; the exterior of the building; and a portion of the interior including the 2-story lobby, open stair, and landing/hallway at the top.*

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