



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

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

Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

LPB 132/21

### REPORT ON DESIGNATION

Name and Address of Property: **802 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
**Immaculate Conception Convent /**  
**Considine House / Cohen House**

Legal Description: Lot 1, Block 23, Supplementary Plat of Edes & Knight Addition to the City of Seattle, according to the plat thereof recorded in Volume 2, Page 194 in King County, Washington.

At the public meeting held on March 17, 2021 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of 802 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue 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 a method of construction.*
- E. *It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.*

### DESCRIPTION

#### *Location*

The Immaculate Conception Convent, for which construction began in 1900 (the Seattle Daily Times published an announcement of the building permit in its December 17 edition), is currently a four-unit residential multiplex (approximately 5,909 square feet on a 7, 690-

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**The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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square-foot lot) located on the northeast corner lot of 16th Avenue and East Columbia St in Seattle's Central District.

To the north of the house sits the former site of the Buford family house, home of local jazz legend Vernon "Pops" Buford (Beers, 1994). In the summer of 2018, the house was sold by the family to DEP developers. It was demolished in December of 2018. To the south (across E Columbia Street) there is a large apartment building, and a newly renovated single-family home, which is currently for sale. To the west (across 16th Avenue) there is an occupied single-family home, 801 16th Avenue. To the east sits a vacant single-family home, with the address 1614 E. Columbia (constructed in 1907, according to the King County Assessor). The landscaping is overgrown, blocking the facade.

The property slopes sharply up from the sidewalk along 16th Avenue to the concrete and brick landing at the front of the house. The slope is covered in well-established shrubs. The rest of the lot is relatively flat, with the exception of a small sloping path at the back of property.

The property has five well-established conifers around the house, two in the parking strip along 16th Avenue on the west side of the property, and three along the southern facade on E Columbia St. Three adolescent birch trees were planted in the parking strip on the corner of E Columbia St and 16th Avenue in 2008 by current owners Sue and John Perry.

The immediate surroundings are residential, with the exception of several houses of worship. The neighborhood has become a strange mix of old and new homes in various styles.

### ***Description of Original Form and Alterations***

The original main portion of the 1900 house was two stories, approximately 37-feet wide and 46-feet deep, with a full attic and basement. In 1922, a 9-foot by 36-foot "sleeping porch" was added, according to permit records. A 36-foot x 26-foot, two-story, flat roofed addition was built on the east end of the residence in 1925, for expansion of the convent. In 1937, the second floor was expanded on the west side, enclosing the upper northwest and southwest balconies.

### ***Exterior***

The stately building can be described as Neoclassical in style with beveled cedar siding and original brick foundation. The striking main entrance on 16th Avenue opens into the lower front apartment via full width porch, floored with tongue and groove fir. It features two monumental smooth shaft Corinthian columns at the top of the steps on either side. These full-height columns pass in front of the second-floor sun porch/solarium, which are living spaces for the upper front apartment. There are also four smaller columns at each corner of the porch. The front door (fir with ½ glass window) appears to be original with sidelights and pilasters on either side. Large square windows (some original, some replaced) sit in parlors on

either side of first and second floor living spaces, and  $\frac{2}{3}$  top to bottom windows enclose the front of the second-floor solarium.

### ***Entrance Doors***

The main entrance to 802 is located on 16th Avenue. Eight concrete stairs lead to a concrete landing and small brick patio, and five wooden stairs allow access to the wooden deck and front door.

A brick pathway leads along the north side of the house to a side door on the north facade. Just inside this door one can observe the mailboxes formerly used by the nuns who resided in the home. This entrance is used by the residents of the upstairs apartments, and allows access to the main staircase, and the stairs to the basement. Directly above the door, large windows offer a glimpse of the staircase and the second-floor landing.

The entrance to the owner's apartment (Lower Rear Apartment) is located on E Columbia St. A stone pathway laid by the current owners leads to a wooden gate which opens onto the back patio and garden. Double doors up at the top of four wooden stairs on the southern corner of the east facade serve as the apartment's primary entrance. Another double door with a classical portico is located up two wooden steps at the northern corner of the east facade. This door leads into a room used by the current owners as an office and library, but which was originally used as a dressing room for Catholic priest who led mass for the resident nuns.

### ***Windows***

Most exterior windows are original wood windows, including the large yellow slag glass on the South side of the lower rear apartment. These were removed/stolen by an antiques dealer during a period when the house was uninhabited, and remarkably were located, purchased, and re-installed by Anthony Ventura after he and Norman Glassman purchased the house in the late 1970s. Original curved glass windows line the South exterior wall of the master bedroom in the lower rear apartment, and most of the large rectangular exterior windows throughout the house are also original. There are also several exterior stained glass windows which were created and installed by John Oliver Perry after he and his wife Sue Perry (current owner) purchased the house in 1988.

### ***Roof Form and Material***

The portions of the roof that are low pitch or flat have a torch down surface with CertainTeed brand white gravel. This work was done in 2014. The pitched parts of the roof are a 30-year laminate surface with a CertainTeed brand silver birch color. It has black metal W valleys and black metal venting. The roof was finished in 2016.

### ***Yard and Garden***

The yard surrounding 802 is filled with well-established shrubs and flowers. Evergreen shrubs and hedges line the north side of the house up to the property line. The back of the house (which serves as the front of the owner's apartment) boasts an impressive annual flower garden that is built into the stone patio, and refreshed every year by a local gardener. Perennial flowers and small shrubs line the north side of this yard.

John and Sue Perry also participated in the pilot program of the Seattle's Pollinator Pathway, the brainchild of design thinker Sarah Bergmann. The Perrys turned several yards of their parking strip on E Columbia St into a lush sampling of perennial flowers, one of 20 pollinator landing pads between 12th and 29th Avenue on Columbia Street. This parking strip still contains the majority of the plants that were installed here, a testament to Bergmann's vision, and the Perrys dedication to their community and to sustainability.

### ***Interior Layout***

The interior of the house is divided into four apartments (lower front, lower rear, upper front, and upper rear). A main staircase on the North side of the house provides interior access to each of the four apartments, as well as the basement and attic. The North exterior door opens into a room with slate tile flooring (installed in the early 90s). This room contains the basement access door, a small original closet which still has original mail cubbies for the Nunnery, and a small staircase up to the first landing, which has doors into both lower apartments. The railing from the first landing to the second landing is not original. Ornate, hand carved railings from the second landing up to the third and final landing (where three doors provide access to both upper apartments and the attic) are original, but may have been moved/shifted during construction. Throughout the hallways, staircases, apartments, attic, and basement, are original ornate radiators. Many have been restored (scraped and repainted) by hand, and are still in use as the main heat throughout the building. The flooring throughout most of the living spaces in each unit is original tongue and groove fir, which has been refinished a number of times.

### ***Lower Front Apartment***

The lower front apartment, originally the entrance hall to the single-family residence, opens into a small entryway room with original windows and hand carved fir trim. A bedroom/office on the south side contains a newly installed murphy bed in an original closet with original sliding fir doors. A nearly identical room on the North side is a living space with original hand carved fir and tile fireplace. The door to the north room has been removed but is on site. Both rooms feature original ornate plaster detail designs on the ceilings and hand carved ornate gold painted picture molding. The central hallway contains a railroad kitchen with newly installed granite countertops and leads to a newly remodeled white hex tile bathroom with walk in closet. The kitchen ceiling features mock plaster detail done to match the rooms on

either side, completed by Anthony Ventura in the late 1970s. The apartment features original, ornate, hand carved fir trim throughout.

### ***Lower Rear Apartment***

The lower rear apartment is partially an addition to the building, constructed in the late 1920s. This unit is currently occupied by the homeowner, Sue Perry, and has three exterior access doors as well as an interior door into the main stairway. The main exterior entry (originally created as the priest's entrance) opens to a tongue and groove fir platform with a single step down into the main living space. Featured on the South wall is a wood stove which sits atop a brick platform flanked by two halves of an original staircase post from the lower front apartment. This room provides access to the master bedroom, the main bathroom, and has an open floor plan into the dining room on the North side of the apartment. The Northeast corner of the living room contains a small open room (originally used as the priest's dressing room) with blue ceramic tile flooring, wood panel walls, and a spiral staircase which leads up to a large room (currently used as Sue Perry's oil painting studio). There is a built-in fir wall cabinet in the studio that Sue Perry now uses for art supplies. We believe the priest might have kept his robes and supplies there.

The master bedroom is located on the South side of the apartment and is accessed via original door to a small hallway, which is lined with a narrow closet on the North side and original windows as well as John Perry's stained glass on the South side. It also contains a small, newly remodeled tile bathroom featuring a walk-in shower and sink with new granite countertop. The bedroom features an original curved window bay on the South side of the room with two sets of original curved windows and wooden blinds. The pull chain light fixture in the center of the room is likely original to the house, and the room also features built in bookshelves on the North wall which was once an access point to another apartment. This bedroom was part of the original floorplan of the house, and has embellished hand carved trim around the doorways. Two small nooks/bump outs are located on either side of the West wall.

The main/guest bathroom of this apartment features tongue and groove fir flooring, blue toilet, blue Jacuzzi tub, and 4" blue tiling. The top edge of the East wall is lined with John Perry's blue stained glass windows.

The dining room sits on the North side of the apartment with John Perry's 1990s stained glass as well as leaded glass windows on the North exterior wall. The West side of the room features a built-in fir China Cabinet with original glass doors, as well as a kitchen access door. The Southeast corner of the room contains a door that leads to another bedroom/study, which has one of the three exterior access doors. The Southwest corner of the room contains a walk-in coat closet.

The kitchen, which provides access to the building's main staircase on the West wall, also contains a small mudroom through an open entryway on the North wall. The mudroom has

an exterior door on the East end of the room which opens to cement steps into the garden area. The kitchen and mudroom are both floored with Saltea tiles. The counters are lined with 4" ceramic tiles and embellished with ornate Japanese tiles. The brick section of the South wall was originally the chimney for the cook stove in the kitchen, which has since been removed from the roof.

### ***Upper Front Apartment***

The upper front apartment is accessed via the West door on the top landing of the building's main staircase. This door opens into the apartment's main living room, which features original fir doors to a main bedroom, a bathroom, and two small closets. Original fir curved archway doors with full length glass open into the solarium on the West side of the house (this is located directly above the main front entrance porch). The solarium contains a small bedroom on the South end (newly remodeled with original door), and a kitchen on the North end features new granite countertops. A central window seat in the solarium provides a view of Capitol Hill. This apartment features tongue and groove fir flooring throughout, except in the bathroom and main bedroom. The main bedroom is accessed via original door on the North side of the living room, and was redone with laminate tiles in the 1970s. The bathroom, accessed via original door on the East side of the living room, is newly remodeled. It features the original claw-foot tub and rounded window bay on the South exterior wall, a new walk in shower with glass door on the North wall, a new toilet and sink on the East wall, and white hex tiles across the floor.

### ***Upper Rear Apartment***

The upper rear apartment is accessed via the East door on the top landing of the building's main staircase. This door opens into a hallway which provides access to a large bedroom with attached deck on the North side of the building, a main living room and smaller bedroom to the East, a small central kitchen, and a bathroom (remodeled in the 1990s) which contains a North exterior window. This apartment features tongue and groove fir flooring throughout the main living spaces/bedrooms, and large original exterior windows in bedrooms/living spaces.

### ***Attic***

The attic is accessed via the North door on the top landing of the building's main staircase. This door opens into a narrow staircase which leads to a large open high-ceilinged room, also lined with tongue and groove fir (unfinished). This area of the building was plumbed with plans to convert it into a living space, but construction was halted because of zoning restrictions. This is believed to have happened in the 1980s. The space has recently been converted into an art studio with a large bathroom on the South wall. There is a newly installed glass roof hatch on the East roof/wall, which opens onto the flat roof above the oil painting studio in the lower rear apartment.

## ***Basement***

The basement is accessed via a staircase in the main tenant entrance on the ground floor. The exterior walls are comprised of the original double layer brick foundation, suspected to be structurally sound after a recent inspection. Floors and upper walls are concrete. There are five doorways off of the main area at the bottom of the basement stairs, which lead to the paint room, the laundry room, two tenant storerooms, and the furnace room. The furnace room contains a clothesline with labels/instructions for doing laundry in the original Convent. Also located in the furnace room are the main breaker boxes (converted to modern wiring from the original knob and tube), and a brick square on the floor which once supported the original coal furnace (now converted to gas). Large main pipes located on the basement ceilings were originally wrapped with asbestos and recently replaced with new plaster wrapping. Nearly all galvanized water pipes have been replaced with copper, and drainpipes include original cast iron as well as new ABS plastic.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

### ***Introduction***

Construction of the house at 802 16th Avenue began in December 1900 when Thomas J. Considine, stage manager of the People's Theater, envisioned a grand home for his family. His dreams were reflective of the building boom that took place in Seattle after the Great Fire of 1889, and the growing success of his brother, John W. Considine's vaudeville and gambling empire (Nard, 1972). Unfortunately for Considine, a failure to compensate his sub-contractors coupled with the scandal surrounding the murder of former Seattle police chief William Meredith, meant he would never see the house finished.

Considine sold the house to Aaron L. Cohen, a tobacco shop owner and future Seattle City Councilor in 1904. Cohen lived at 802 with his wife, Ida, and their two children, Joseph and Lottie for 15 years. In 1919, the house was purchased by the Immaculate Conception Church--located three blocks northeast of 802 at 18th Avenue and E Marion Street--as a convent for the nuns who taught at the Immaculate Conception School. 802 remained a convent for 53 years during which time the church commissioned several changes to the building including constructing a sleeping porch, and updating the wiring throughout the house.

In 1972 the Immaculate Conception Church put The Convent on the market. However, the redlining of the 1960s, and lingering racist attitudes about the Central District made finding a buyer impossible. The house sat empty for six years, during which time some of the original fixtures were removed from the house, and sold to antiques dealers. Neighborhood children roller-skated through the vacant rooms, and musicians--including local celebrity Jimi Hendrix--met for practices (Interview with Ronetta Buford).

Fashion designer Toni Ventura and therapist Norman Glassman purchased 802 in 1978. They prioritized restoring the original fixtures of the house, and were able to track down the slag glass windows that had been removed from the former chapel during the house's vacancy. They did not alter the exterior of the building, but they did divide the house into four units to provide separate living spaces and counseling offices for Glassman.

In 1988, after Glassman moved his practice out of 802 and Ventura got divorced, the two decided to sell the property. It was purchased by Sue and John Perry, who moved into the lower rear unit. Sue's daughter, Amy Hagopian, moved into the lower front unit in 2013. John Perry died in 2016. He passed away in the living room of his apartment, surrounded by friends and family. Sue and Amy continue to reside at 802. They currently rent out the upper two units.

### ***Neighborhood Context***

The land on which 802 sits was platted in 1870 with a rectangular street grid and a pattern of rectangular lots and blocks. When this area first developed around 1900, large houses

surrounded by small lawns lined the north-south avenues. Over time some of the lots have been subdivided, but the early pattern of lots and houses is still discernible. Some of the houses, such as 802 have been converted to multi-family use, but their consistency with the single-family scale of the neighborhood remains largely intact. Over time the lots were planted, so the vegetation today on many lots consists of mature trees and shrubs giving the neighborhood a comfortable, settled aspect.

The early residential construction in the neighborhood was wood frame with wood siding. Many of the houses from the early years of the twentieth century present variations on the classical styles. 802 16th Avenue is an example of a Neoclassical house. However, many houses have been altered whereas 802 16th, although converted to multi-family use, retains a surprising amount of its original fabric.

802 can easily be classified as one of the oldest and grandest houses in the surrounding blocks. The residential area contains mostly single-family homes built in the 20th century, which are rapidly being replaced by modernist homes and, even more commonly multi-unit dwellings and large apartment buildings. However, there are a handful of other large, neoclassical buildings surrounding 802. With each passing year, these gorgeous testaments to Seattle's history are sold, falling into disrepair before they are torn down and replaced with new-builds.

### ***History of Ownership & Renovation***

#### **The Considine Family**

Construction on 802 16th Avenue began in 1900, when Thomas J. Considine, stage manager of the city's famous People's Theater, commissioned a home for his family from well-known architect Edwin W. Houghton (*The Daily Bulletin*, 1900).

Completion was delayed because of conflicts between the builder and the Considine family, ending in a lawsuit and a change of contractors. Under the 'Chamber of Commerce' heading in the Tuesday, August 6th, 1901 edition of the *Seattle Daily Times*, Thomas Considine's issue with his builder, M.J. Gallagher, can be seen under the subheading 'Alleged Violation of Contract.' The *Daily Times* reports that: "Thomas J. Considine has instituted an action against M.J. Gallagher and the United States Fidelity and Guarantee Company... for failure to comply with terms of a building contract... it is alleged that in April last Gallagher abandoned the contract and that the plaintiff was required to finish the building" (*Seattle Daily Times*, 1901).

On July 14th, 1902, the *Seattle Daily Times* announced that "the case of Tom Considine vs. M. J. Gallagher is on trial today in Judge Bell's court. In this case Considine sues for the recovery of some \$2,500 alleged to be due from Mr. Gallagher for failure to complete the construction of a house on Sixteenth Avenue last year" (*Seattle Daily Times*, 1902).

The Considine family was very prominent in Seattle in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Tom's brother, John W. Considine, became the manager of the People's Theater in 1891, and the two initially found their work there to be very lucrative. The theater and vaudeville circuit in Seattle was booming, and the Considines were at the forefront (Elliott, 1944).

Once close friends, William L. Meredith, former Seattle police chief, and John Considine had a falling out when Meredith started work as a detective with the Seattle police department. When Meredith was made acting police chief in November 1900, he began targeting John Considine's businesses, enforcing laws (mostly about serving liquor and employing women) that were actively ignored by the police in other parts of the city. Before long, allegations of corruption were brought against Meredith, and Mayor Thomas Humes told Meredith to resign or he'd be fired. Meredith quit on June 22nd, 1901, believing vehemently that John Considine was to blame for his disgrace. On June 25th, 1901, Thomas and John Considine were confronted by Meredith, who had armed himself with a shotgun and a revolver. Meredith shot twice at John Considine, but missed him. John ran at Meredith and attempted to subdue him, and Tom managed to take Meredith's revolver from him. He began hitting Meredith over the head with the butt of the revolver, fracturing his skull. With Meredith incapacitated, John Considine drew his own revolver, and shot Meredith three times, killing him (Dougherty, 2014).

John and Tom Considine were both tried for 1st degree murder. Although both were famous and well-liked within the vaudeville circuit, many Seattle citizens did not look favorably on the brothers' professions and were vehemently opposed to their presence in the city after the incident with Meredith. John's trial lasted three weeks, at the end of which he was acquitted, and charges against Tom were dropped. Despite this outcome, the event did take a social and financial toll, and likely influenced Tom's sale of the subject property (Dougherty, 2014).

### The Cohen Family

A mention in the January 1, 1904, *Seattle Times* indicated that Tom Considine had sold the property to A. L. Cohen, "the well-known cigar dealer of Seattle," for \$10,000. Cohen's purchase of the property marked the influx of a wealthy Jewish population into the neighborhood. The proximity of the house to Cohen's downtown cigar shops, as well as the local synagogue made it the perfect hub from which commute to his businesses and spend time with this family. According to the 1910 US Census, at that time Aaron L. "Lou" and Ida Cohen lived in the house with their grown children Joseph (age 23) and Lottie (age 20), along with Lottie's new husband Benjamin [sic] Harris, Ida's widowed mother, and two servants.

The Cohens prospered during their time in the house. Aaron's cigar and tobacco business flourished and expanded, and he began to get involved in local politics. Cohen was a 2-term Seattle city councilman in the 1920s, and state legislator for two terms in the 1930s.

Mr. Cohen joined the American Federation of Labor in 1883, just two years after its founding, and was named as a personal friend of the AFL's founder, Samuel Gompers. Cohen was also

president of the Seattle Baseball Club 1903-1906. In his 1952 obituary, Aaron Cohen was described as a pioneer labor union official.

In the 15 years that they spent at 802 Aaron and Ida's children, Joseph and Lottie, grew up and started professions and families of their own (Polk's Seattle Directory, 1904-1919).

### Immaculate Conception Convent

The significance of the house in the context of the neighborhood changed drastically in 1919, when the Cohens sold their property to the Immaculate Conception Church to be used as a residence for the Sisters of the order who taught at the nearby Immaculate School. The church is a Seattle Landmark that stands at its original location at 820 18th Avenue, and still hosts services and community events. The church runs along the length of E Marion Street between 18th and 19th Avenues. The Catholic Church's purchase of the house marked the beginning of the extensive remodel which resulted in the house's current footprint, and a building with approximately twice the square footage of the original dwelling. The original façade was not modified, but it was during this time that most of the lower rear apartment was constructed, and the solarium in the upper front apartment was closed in as an interior living space. In addition to providing kitchen, laundry, and sleeping facilities for the nuns, space was allocated for a roomy chapel, community gathering space, and music classrooms.

The decades that the Sisters resided at "The Convent" marked hugely significant changes to the neighborhood's demographics. When the nuns first moved in, most of the parishioners at the Immaculate Conception Church were wealthy and white. Then began a gradual influx of Irish and Italian immigrants, who altered the socioeconomic makeup of the community. The neighborhood was comprised largely of white, working-class families, who also made up the Immaculate Conception Congregation during the 1940s and 50s (Tu & Mayo, 2011).

In the 1950s African American, Japanese, and Filipino families began to move into the neighborhood, and the demographics of the congregation changed once again. By 1960 the neighborhood was 64% Black, and by 1970 it was 79% Black. Many of the white community members who had lived in the area for decades were growing old and dying. Fueled by racism, the majority of remaining white families relocated to the suburbs (Tu & Mayo, 2011).

The convent housed 19 religious sisters who staffed the Immaculate Conception School. These women were prominent in the civil rights struggle for equity and inclusion that characterized the Central District generally. Dr. Dorothy Cordova's history of the Central Area and Immaculate Conception Parish, prepared for the Filipino American National Historical Society, is full of stories of the convent and the teachers it housed, along with stories of students and the community.

The Sisters continued to reside at the convent until 1972. According to Sister Kay Burton, who lived at the house during this period, the church intended to sell the property and use the proceeds to preserve the Immaculate Conception Church. However, the hideous and racist

practice of banker “Redlining” in the Central District meant that no one could get a loan to purchase the property, and the house ended up sitting vacant, gradually falling into disrepair.

### Vacancy

Although no one lived in “The Convent” between 1972 and 1978, it was rarely free of visitors. Ronnie Buford, son of famous jazz musician Vernon “Pops” Buford, liked to rollerblade through the big, empty rooms. Local bands used the house for practice space. It was rumored that Jimi Hendrix played there a time or two, as confirmed by Ronnetta Buford, granddaughter of Pops. The Bufords moved in 1946 to Seattle, where Pops - named for his take-charge manner, according to historian Paul de Barros - played all the old swing clubs, from Fort Lewis to Pioneer Square. Pops died in 1994, a year after he was awarded a certificate of recognition in a Jazz Pioneers Reunion at the Museum of History and Industry. He is mentioned prominently in de Barros' book "Jackson Street After Hours." And his first instrument was on view at Columbia Seafirst Tower (Beers, 1994). There was also some looting that occurred at the house during this period. One of the most notable elements that was removed was the yellow slag glass windows that were used in the chapel. When Pops' wife Lillian died in 2017, the neighboring Buford family lost the home to developers, who now have built four modern box structures on the site, obliterating the Buford family home and its history.

### Ventura & Glassman

In the late 1970s the Seattle City Council finally took a stand against Redlining, but it wasn't until 1978 that Anthony Ventura and his business partner, Norman Glassman, were able to secure a loan and purchase the house for \$30,000. Ventura and Glassman went to great lengths to restore the house in the vision of Considine and Cohen. They removed the buff-blend imitation brick that had been added to the entire exterior as insulation during the nuns' residence, revealing the original beveled cedar siding, which was still sporting its original coat of paint. They restored the claw-foot tub--which was being stored in the basement--to the front upstairs apartment, and, incredibly, were able to track down the original yellow slag glass windows that had been stolen from the house while it sat empty.

The new owners preserved most features, with the exception of the interior of the fireplace itself, which was replaced. The building was converted to a four-unit multiplex, with the lower front section used as a counseling center, and the rest of the building used as living spaces for the owners and a series of tenants. At this time, the kitchen in the upper front apartment's solarium was added, and the main staircase for the building was reconfigured to remove the “Servant's Staircase” and close off the opening to the lower front apartment where there is now a kitchen. The original railings were preserved, though may have been shifted. This was also the time period during which the original yellow slag windows were reclaimed and reinstalled in the South wall of the lower rear apartment's living room.

Ventura and Glassman spent years restoring and updating the house according to antique aesthetics and modern codes and sensibilities. They converted the house into a 4-plex with office space in the lower front unit for Grossman's counseling practice, and residential apartments in the former chapel and second story.

In 1988, the arrangement of owners sharing the building broke down, and the entire building was sold to the current owners, who made minor changes to the makeup of the four apartments between 1988 and 1990. Also, during this time, the spiral staircase in the lower rear apartment was added, and the painting studio it leads to was walled off from one of the upper apartments. The second-floor space currently used as a painting studio still contains built-in fir furniture which may have been used to store the priest's vestments.

### Sue & John Perry

Sue Perry, the current owner of The Convent, is an accomplished oil painter. She spends much of her time pictorially documenting the demolition of the Central District's single-family homes and cultural landmarks. She and her late husband, John Oliver Perry, purchased the house from Ventura in 1988. They have gone to great lengths to preserve the historically significant elements of the house, and are dedicated to maintaining its integrity for years to come.

The Perrys made only minor changes to the makeup of the four apartments between 1988 and 1990. No significant changes occurred for the two front apartments constituted from the original Cohen spaces, and the rest of the former convent. Some interior traces remain of the presence of the nuns, most obviously the conversion of the chapel with a priest's entrance into a large living room with a main entry for the lower rear apartment, which is now occupied by owner Sue Perry (and has distinct address of 1606 East Columbia Street).

### ***Architectural Style and Significance***

The building can be classified as a Neoclassical style home. Its striking facade features two-story Corinthian columns, and an elaborate pedimented portico combined with a full story full width porch. Houses of this style often feature porticos rather than full facade porches to emphasize the size of their surrounding columns and increase the sense of grandeur (Swope, 2005). This architectural style was very popular in the first half of the 20th century, and can still be seen in many of the larger Seattle homes built during this period. Architectural history professor Caroline Swope writes: "Unlike the Colonial Revival style, Neoclassical houses are usually grand, and smaller vernacular examples are almost unknown" (Swope, 2005). Neoclassical homes tend to feature symmetrical facades, and side gabled or hipped roofs. They are often characterized by large front porches, and symmetrically placed windows and doors (Swope, 2005). 802 remains one of the largest and grandest homes in the neighborhood, and is the primary example of Neoclassical architecture in the area.

### ***Edwin W. Houghton, Architect***

Thomas Considine commissioned the stately mansion from prominent Seattle architect Edwin W. Houghton, who designed many well-known homes, hotels, and theaters--including the Moore and the Majestic--in and around Seattle (Ochsner, 2014). Houghton is listed as the architect in the Seattle Daily Bulletin article of December 17, 1900. This listing can be found under the 'Building News' heading, in the "Building Permits, Contracts, Etc." section of this issue. The Daily Bulletin reports: "Architect Houghton has... completed plans for... handsome residence for Considine to be erected at Sixteenth avenue and Columbia street. Excavations are now being made..." (*The Daily Bulletin*, 1900).

University of Washington architecture professor Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, editor of *Shaping Seattle Architecture : a historical guide to the architects*, has written about the importance of this architect. Edwin Walker Houghton (1856-1927) was a leading designer of theaters in the Pacific Northwest during the early 20th century. Born in England to a family of architects and surveyors, Houghton received his architectural training in the practices of his family members. He emigrated to western Texas during the mid-1880s, before moving to California, where he established an independent architecture practice in Pasadena. He eventually came to Seattle, perhaps through his association with Seattle architect Charles Saunders, who had also been working in Pasadena, in 1889. Their partnership, Saunders & Houghton, dissolved in September 1891, after which E. W. Houghton practiced independently. Houghton worked with theater proprietor John Cort to design Seattle's Grand Opera House, 1898-1900, and went on to design a number of theaters throughout the Pacific Northwest, including the downtown Moore Theater and Hotel, 1903, and the Majestic Theatre, 1908-9. Houghton was a founding member of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA in 1894 (Archives West, Creative Commons Licenses).

Houghton's role in Seattle's early theater scene definitely would have put him on the radar of the Considine brothers. Thomas's older brother, John W. Considine, owned the People's Theater (where Thomas Considine worked as the stage manager), which was located just a few blocks from the Grand Opera House (Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Historical Sites). The Opera House was gutted in a 1913 fire.

### ***M.J. Gallagher, Builder***

In the summer of 1901, Considine brought legal action against his builder, Gallagher, who was ordered (August of 1901) to finish Considine's project. In July of the next year, Tom Considine sued the builder for failing to complete the project. Gallagher's history is unknown.

### ***Closing***

The property at 802 16th Avenue has borne witness to almost 120 years of social and cultural evolution in the heart of Seattle's Central District. Since its construction in the early 1900s, the house has served as a reflection of the diverse and ever-changing neighborhood.

Commissioned by a prominent figure in Seattle's early art scene, and designed by an architect whose buildings remain well known landmarks, 802 has held the dreams of hundreds of the city's movers and shakers. The house has been home to multiple prominent figures in Seattle's history, as well as a residence to members of a religious institution that continues to shape the community around it. It shaped the people who in turn shaped the city that we know today.

Although it was originally intended to be a single-family residence, 802 has been utilized in myriad ways, indicative of the needs of its community. Even during the periods that it sat empty, 802 was a playground for local children and a creative space for artists and musicians. Today it stands amidst a sea of newly constructed box-style housing, and a smattering of older single-family homes, whose future existence becomes less certain by the day.

It is crucial for the survival of the historic roots of the neighborhood, for this, the keystone building, to remain in place. Its grand stature and central location bind together the community. The rich history of this structure and its imposing visual presence maintains the atmosphere of historical grandeur which makes this area of Seattle such a treasure to its residents, and to everyone who witnesses it.

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Interviews:

- Amy Hagopian (current resident of 802, daughter of Sue Perry)
- Marcia Arunga (niece of the Bufords - former neighbors of 802 16th Ave)
- Sister Kay Burton (Immaculate Conception Church, former resident of The Convent)
- Steve Ludwig (head contractor for post-1988 construction)
- Sue Perry (current owner)

**The features of the Landmark to be preserved include:** *the site, and the exterior of the house (including the stained glass windows).*

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