

Landmarks Preservation Board

Seattle Historic Building Data Sheet

1. Name (common or present and/or historic) St. Nicholas Cathedral
2. Street and Number 1714 13th Avenue Block 26 Lot 3 John Nagle's Add. Year Built 1932-38
3. Present Owner Russian Orthodox Church Present Use church
Outside of Russia, New York
4. Interim Owner(s) _____ Interim Use(s) _____
1976- mortgage by Pacific First Federal S. and L. 1310 4th Ave.
5. Original Owner same Original Use same
6. Architect Ivan Palmov Builder parishioners
7. Assessed Value: Building 36,700 Land 25,600 Assessors File No. 600-300-0910

8. Classification:

- ☒ Building
☐ Site
☐ Structure
☐ Object
☐ Other

- ☐ Public
☒ Private
☐ Both

- ☒ Occupied
☐ Unoccupied
☐ Preservation work
 in progress
☐ Threatened by
 demolition
☐ Unknown

Open to Public:

- ☒ Yes
☐ No
 Hours services only

9. Neighborhood Information:

A. Compatibility With Neighborhood

Structure Yes X No _____Use Yes X No _____

B. Importance to Neighborhood

Great _____

Moderate X

Minor _____

C. Architecturally Strong Neighborhood

Comments An older neighborhood
of small homes, now some
multiple dwellings. St. N.
is in good scale with its
neighbors.

10. Special Research Sources (Be Specific, list name or item and where found)

Mr. Sergei Kalfov, 1815 E. John, Seattle, 98112Museum of History and Industry, Seattle City directories

11. Cross Street Reference



12. Photos Attached & Photographer

LPB office, John Jochman

13. Physical Description

A. Style of Architecture
16th Century Russian Orthodox
(modified) traditional

B. Construction Material
frame construction, with tan
brick facing
composition roof

C. No. of Stories
two stories

D. Condition
Excellent _____
Good X needs repainting
Fair _____
Poor _____

E. Exterior Desecration of
Original Design

None or little X
Moderate amount _____
Considerable _____

F. Architectural worth at
Example of Its Style

Exceptional _____
Excellent X
Good _____
Fair _____
Poor _____

G. Notable Features: (Be specific, i.e., detailing, craftsmanship, proportions, materials, colors, interior, etc.)

Refer to Guidelines of Landmarks Preservation Board).

Interior is plain with many icons attached to walls and stands.

St. Nicholas is a Russian Orthodox cathedral of the 16th Century tradition, modified. It is generally square with a small rectangular portico at the west, front, entrance.

The building is of frame construction, faced with tan brick, with a composition roof, and colored panes in the side windows. The portico roof is galvanized tin sheathing painted blue. Front facia on the portico is a double arch with two corner vase-shaped columns on rectangular bases. The tiny onion dome on the portico roof is repeated on the top of the octagonal brick tower immediately to the rear of the portico, on its octagonal spire which is adorned with small "gables". Atop the central portion of the building is a large central gold onion dome. Four blue onion domes stand at the four corners on three-segmented shafts. The domes represent Christ and the four Apostles. Each dome is capped with an eastern cross.

Part of the central upper portion of the brick facing has been painted tan. A small dentil detail of brick appears at the outer front corners and continues around the sides of the structure at the eave line. The building sits on a concrete foundation with only crawl space below. The outer line of the windows, in the brickwork, reflects the onion shape of the domes; while the inner window frames are rectangular, with sets of 12 or 16 lights.

The domes are constructed of riveted metal sheating applied in vertical strips. The shafts of the corner domes are sheathed in metal strips applied horizontally.

14. Significance

A. Major Significance

- ☒ Historical
- ☒ Architectural
- ☐ Engineering
- ☒ Cultural
- ☐ Geographical
- ☐ Archaeological

B. Level of Significance

- ☐ National
- ☐ State
- ☒ Community

note: numbers refer to numbers of the criteria:

C. Statement of Significance (Be specific, history, personages, events, etc.)

1. St. Nicholas is the focal structure of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in the Seattle area, and indeed in the Northwest. The members of this congregation are strongly opposed to the present regime in the USSR. The church itself is readily identifiable to members and passersby alike as a Russian cathedral, by its Russian style onion domes.

3. The Russian community had established a church (St. Spiridon) on Lakeview Boulevard in 1898. Most of the congregation were emigrants from Russia after the death of Alexander III in 1894. In the early years, the church was listed as Greek-Russian in the Seattle city directory. But by 1930 a Greek church was established at Yale and Thomas, and the Russian church remained on Lakeview Boulevard. The Russian community, however, was itself splitting, over the authority of the church and the possible recognition of the new regime in the USSR. During the 1920's the more conservative members, and the new refugees of the Communist revolution, disagreed on theology with the more moderate members. By 1933, by mutual disagreement on theology, St. Spiridon was listed as being located on Lakeview Boulevard, and St. Nicholas had separated and was temporarily on E. Marion Street. A court battle ensued over the original church property, and eventually the decision closed the original structure. It remained standing until the construction of the I-5 freeway. From 1935 on, St. Nicholas is listed at its present location on 13th. The St. Nicholas Cathedral was built in the orthodox tradition, construction taking place from 1932 to its completion in 1938. Donations to the church came from Orthodox church members in various parts of the United States, and the structure remains the stronghold of the conservative Russian community. St. Nicholas' membership is about 100 families, descendants of Russian refugees and also of refugees through China, Alaska, and Europe.

5. St. Nicholas was designed by a member of the congregation, Ivan Palmov, as a memorial to Nicholas II, last Czar of Russia. The congregation raised \$18,000 toward the structure. Construction began in 1932, and was completed in 1938, in a race with the construction of St. Spiridon. To have the church built by the parishioners was a new concept to Russian Orthodoxy: churches in Russia were always built

Surveyor Signature _____ Date _____

Reviewed: _____
 Historic Preservation Officer _____ Date _____

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by the Czarist government, but here in the U.S. there was no such association of church and state. Its construction thus is traditional in style yet innovative in having been executed by the parishioners.

9. Since its erection, St. Nicholas has been well established as a notable feature of the neighborhood, well loved for its architectural style and foreign tradition. The neighborhood supports its activities by attending the annual bazaars.

Surveyor Signature

Margaret A. Corley

Date

1975-76

Reviewed:

Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Landmarks Preservation Board

Nomination Form

NAME (present) St. Nicholas Cathedral(historic) (same)ADDRESS 1714 13th. Avenue, Seattle

NOMINATION AS:

- ☒ Building
☐ Site
☐ Structure
☐ District
☐ Object

DEC 13 1974

OFFICE OF HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

NOMINATED UNDER CRITERIA (ORDINANCE 102229)

☒ (1) has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or Nation; or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or

☐ (2) is the site of an historic event with a significant effect upon society; or

☒ (3) exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the community; or

☐ (4) portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or

☒ (5) embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type or engineering specimen; or

☐ (6) is the work of a designer whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of Seattle; or

☐ (7) contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or

☐ (8) by being part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area, should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural or architectural motif; or

☒ (9) owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or city; or

☐ (10) has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history.

NOMINEE Karl D. Layman HPOaddress Office of Urban Conservationphone 583-4471NOMINATION DATE November 27, 1974Reviewed [Signature]

Historic Preservation Officer

date 12/13/74BOARD SPONSOR [Signature]

Geraldine Lucks

date Dec. 18, 1974