



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649  
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

### **REPORT ON DESIGNATION**

LPB 196/08

Name and Address of Property: Women's University Club  
1105 Sixth Avenue

Legal Description: Lots 6 and 7, Block 17, of C.D. Boren's Addition to the City of Seattle, according to the plat thereof recorded in Volume 1 of Plats, Page 25, records of King County, Washington.

Situate in the County of King, State of Washington.

At the public meeting held on April 2, 2008, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Women's University Club at 1105 Sixth Avenue, as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards 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; and*
- D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction; and*
- E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.*

### **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Women's University Club is directly associated with the early twentieth century era between 1920 and 1930 when the modern downtown commercial district was fully established. During this era numerous large commercial buildings were constructed and virtually all of the old residential properties - as well as many of the immediate post-fire era commercial buildings outside of Pioneer Square - were demolished or removed. The economic prosperity of the 1920s stimulated the development of major highrise commercial buildings, as well as the construction of smaller-scale bank and specialty retail stores, major hotels including apartment hotels, club buildings and entertainment facilities. By 1930, the original late-nineteenth century residential district that extended eastward from Second Avenue and northward from Yesler Way had been entirely absorbed by commercial and other real estate development. While the original

**Administered by The Historic Preservation Program  
The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

residential district was primarily composed of single-family homes, it always included numerous churches and buildings used for meeting and fraternal hall purposes. Despite ever-increasing commercial real estate development throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, this land use pattern continued as major new churches, fraternal halls and club buildings - typically designed by skilled local architects – continued to be constructed in the evolving and expanding downtown commercial district.

### ***Historic Context - Social Clubs in Seattle***

Social clubs and fraternal organizations were an essential aspect of burgeoning communities throughout the American West that were becoming established during the late nineteenth century. They offered places and opportunities for community members with shared interests or common backgrounds to meet and develop local contacts and social networks. Membership in fraternal organizations provided social, religious, ethnic and labor-related networks. Membership in businessmen's clubs provided social, business marketing and recreation opportunities, and in particular cases residential accommodations. Women's clubs typically provided opportunities to pursue educational, philanthropic, civic or cultural activities outside of home, family and church life.

Social clubs in Seattle and the nation as a whole were typically limited to one gender and most often had other restrictions based on age, education, race and religion. Among the earliest men's clubs in Seattle were the Rainier Club founded in 1888 and the University Club founded in 1900, as well as several athletic-oriented groups established around various sporting activities including golf, tennis, riding and polo. Among the earliest women's clubs in Seattle was the Women's Century Club founded in 1891 by a group of early feminists in order to provide intellectual stimulation and cultural enrichment. A booklet described as "Seattle Society Addresses and Women's Club Roster" was published in 1904 and listed 23 individual women's clubs. This roster included two chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution, nine clubs organized within the Seattle Federation of Women's Clubs, and three music-oriented clubs. Various community or independent local women's organizations were also listed as well as the local YMCA and the local Red Cross Society.

In 1925, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce published a directory that listed over 700 clubs based within the city. Fraternal and religious organizations were not included in the directory; however, it did list a wide range of professional and industrial organizations, athletic clubs, community groups and social clubs. Numerous alumni organizations representing major colleges and universities across the nation were listed as were several education-based social clubs. The education-based social clubs that operated out of their own downtown clubhouse buildings were the male-only College Club and the Women's University Club.

### ***Women's University Club – 1913 to 1920***

The Women's University Club was established in 1914 by Edith Boetzkes Backus and thirteen other prominent Seattle women. The club was originally housed in a modest, one-story brick masonry building that had been specifically constructed for the club by the Metropolitan Building Company. It was located at 1205 Fifth Avenue, just to the southeast side of the Metropolitan Theater. This first little clubhouse was adjoined to the north wall of the original College Club, which was then located at the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Seneca Street; the entire site is now occupied by the Olympic Hotel. The College Club was established in 1910 and after

operating out of a suite of rented rooms, the club moved to its original two-story club building; it was constructed 1912 and also built by the Metropolitan Building Company. The College Club included several members with direct ties to the Metropolitan Building Company. Many of the women who established the Women's University Club were either married to or associated with members of the College Club and the two clubs have been closely linked since 1914.

From the beginning, the Women's University Club served as an educational organization and as a social gathering place. Membership in the club was open to all women with a university or college degree, not just those from prestigious schools. An early member noted that "in those early years there were few attractive places in downtown Seattle for women to lunch and dine," By 1914, friends often lived within in-city suburban neighborhoods somewhat distant from one and other and there was a need for a convenient and comfortable place to meet in downtown Seattle. Thus, an initial purpose of the organization was "to acquire a clubhouse and such other real property as may be desirable."

By 1913 a well-established women's organization dedicated to similar educational, civic and cultural purposes already existed in Seattle, the Association of Collegiate Alumnae. It was a national organization founded in Boston in 1882 and had a Seattle Branch that was organized in 1904. Several members of the local chapter hoped to reshape the organization by building a clubhouse as a center for their activities. However, the national organization discouraged this idea believing that focusing on the care and maintenance of a clubhouse would interfere with the primary purpose of the group, which was to raise funds for graduate level fellowships granted to qualified women. Thus, the local chapter continued the tradition of meeting in the homes of members while some members began to consider merging with another club or creating a new club.

The articles of incorporation for the Women's University Club were formally signed in January 1914 and by May of that year the organization had 276 members. The early meetings were held in the Henry Building on the Metropolitan Tract. The initial Board of Trustees was chosen from among the incorporators with Mrs. LeRoy Backus elected as president and Mrs. Daniel B. Trefethen, as secretary. The other incorporators included: Miss Otilie Boetzkes, Mrs. John F. Douglas, Mrs. Richard Waldron Huntoon, Mrs. Kenneth Mackintosh, Mrs. Walter B. Nettleton, Miss Jeannette Perry, Mrs. Alva L. Carr, Miss Mable Chilberg, Mrs. Pierre Frein, Mrs. Logan Geary, Mrs. Frank Macklem, and Miss. Adelaide Pollick.

The original clubhouse was constructed during the summer of 1914 according to a design prepared by the architecture firm of A. H. Albertson Associates. A.H. Albertson served as the local representative of the New York architecture firm of Howells & Stokes for the Metropolitan Building Company, the long-term leaseholder and developer of the former University Grounds. This one-story clubhouse had a flat roof and was a long narrow building (measuring 25' by 120') with both a basement and subbasement due to the steep westward slope of the site. The lower floor levels appear have been used for storage purposes only. The club facilities were entirely housed on one floor level with a formal entry vestibule and lobby at the Fifth Avenue entrance. The interior space was divided between a main "lounging room" with a fireplace, a main dining room lit by two skylights with windows facing north and a small private dining room at the southwest corner of the building. These areas could be separated by the use of accordion type doors. A pantry and kitchen facility was located at the northwest corner of building and a passage/corridor running along the center of the south wall provided access to a small "retiring room" and toilet facilities with skylights.

The Fifth Avenue elevation was divided into four narrow bays that were distinguished by brick cladding and quoins. Brick cladding and pavers were laid in ornamental patterns at the recessed entry vestibule walls and porch floor and a brick parapet with continuous dentils capped the facade. The entry vestibule was located in the southernmost bay and was further adorned by classical inspired columns and an arched opening with an ornate wooden grill surmounted by a classical pediment. The remainder of the façade was dominated by three tall windows (measuring 4'-0" by 7'-6") with multi-pane double-hung sash and transom panels surmounted by recessed blind arches with brick infill. The north elevation included multi-pane casement sash windows with transom panels that provided light and ventilation to the lounging room and main dining.

The Metropolitan Building Company is known to have provided equipment and furnishings for the College Club and may have had a similar arrangement with the Women's University Club. Both clubs appear to have leased their original clubhouse buildings from the Company. While the two clubs were closely associated there were some distinct differences; the men's club included a large library, a card room and accommodations for members and guests, while the women's club did not. Suggestions that the club building have a direct interior doorway connection were not received positively by College Club members.

The Women's University Club clubhouse opened on October 4, 1914. It was intended to be a literary and artistic center where college women could maintain their interests in liberal arts and the sciences, participate in cultural and social activities, and obtain a greater understanding of world affairs. The organization operated a club tearoom and provided dining facilities and regularly held musical evenings and dinner events with guest speakers or honored guests. One of the first large events at the club was a dinner held in 1914 to honor members Florence Denny Heliker and Dr. Mable Seagrave who had recently returned from France where they had been active in war-related work. Typical events included lectures by prominent Seattleites and internationally known speakers. Professor Edmund S. Meany spoke on Puget Sound history subjects and members and guests often discussed literature, medical subjects and world affairs. A drama group was established by Alva L. Carr early in the club's history. She was an officer in the Drama League of America and began a drama study group in 1916; this group evolved into a local performing troop. Language and writing study groups were also established.

During World War I the focus of the club changed as the organization adopted a ward at Camp Lewis, now known as Fort Lewis. Club members established a Red Cross program and met twice a week in order to prepare bandages and garments for wounded soldiers. Twelve members served overseas in varying capacities and Dr. Seagrave was decorated by the French government for her work in a war relief hospital in France. This tradition also continued during World War II when the club raised the funds necessary for the purchase of five Red Cross club mobiles that were used by social workers and recreation specialists who operated in rest and recreation areas in the field and at military hospitals, hospital ships and hospital trains.

### ***Women's University Club since 1920***

In 1920, the Women's University Club and the College Club learned that their clubhouses would be razed so that a "huge" hotel, the Olympic Hotel, could be constructed on the site. The Women's University Club members promptly made the decision to have their own new clubhouse constructed. Club members determined it should be located "south of Pine Street" and began to raise funds and sell bonds in order to finance the construction. With Dr. Seagrave as

chairman of the building committee, the entire club became active in the effort. It was decided that the clubhouse should be a multi-purpose facility with an easily accessible ballroom-auditorium that could be available for rental by other groups. The main floor should include a drawing room, kitchen and dining room, library and meeting rooms; the second and third floors should be devoted to guestrooms intended to accommodate young college-educated women seeking lodgings and the companionship with their peers.

As fund raising progressed, architects A.H. Albertson and E. F. Champney were selected to design a new clubhouse. By this time the club had nearly 600 members. In late August of 1921 a rendering of the “projected” new clubhouse building was published on the front page of the *Daily Journal of Commerce*. The rendering shows a significantly larger Beaux Arts-inspired building design than what was ultimately constructed. The brief companion article states that the impressive building would be erected “on a site yet to be selected” and that “the new building is to be one of the finest club structures in the northwest.” This design may have been intended for the entire half block facing Seneca Street. For whatever reason –most certainly related to finances – the initially planned size and elaborate design of the new clubhouse was ultimately reduced.

The club members sold \$90,000 in bonds during somewhat unsettled post-war business conditions and raised cash for new clubhouse furniture and furnishings. By early January of 1922, they were able to purchase the building site at the northwest corner of Sixth Avenue and Seneca Street for \$30,000; the seller reportedly accepted \$7,500 in bonds as part of the purchase. The building contractor –as yet not known - was also willing to take bonds.

Excavation for the new building began in early February 1922. A press report noted that the new club building would cost \$100,000 and that approximately 3,000 cubic yards of soil would be removed by steam shovel in order to build the three-story clubhouse. By April of 1922, the construction drawings for the new clubhouse had been prepared by A. H. Albertson – who had designed their original 1914 clubhouse building - along with associate architect E. Frère Champney and consulting engineer John L. Hall. The architectural drawings and the earlier press report indicate that the clubhouse would include an auditorium (seating 500), a large dining room (seating 150) but only 28 “sleeping rooms.” At some point early in construction the design was revised to include an additional floor level devoted to guest and residential accommodations. An undated rendering, possibly drawn by E. Frère Champney, shows the final exterior design of the clubhouse as constructed.

The exterior of the new clubhouse appears to have been designed to be quite similar in character to the prior club building. A.H. Albertson and Paul D. Richardson were involved with both projects, thus, such similarities are not particularly surprising. The most notable design elements that recall the old clubhouse are the brick cladding, the Georgian-inspired central entry vestibule and the prominent multi-pane double-hung windows surmounted by recessed blind arches. The design of the main floor of the new clubhouse also possessed many similarities to the layout and room configuration of the much smaller 1914 facility. A formal entry vestibule at the east elevation with an ornate recessed porch opens onto the entry lobby. The “Living Room” with its central fireplace is located along the south wall and is very similar in size and fenestration to the prior “lounging room.” The original dining room layout at the west end of the main floor included a private dining room that could be cordoned off with folding doors. However, the new clubhouse possessed several additional amenities; the main floor included a grand entry hall with an open stairwell and lobby corridor, a large library, a card room, an office, a board meeting

room, a much larger and more efficient kitchen facility and spacious restrooms for men and women.

The new clubhouse was specifically designed and constructed to serve as a multi-purpose facility. The desired auditorium/assembly hall with stage is located at the mezzanine and basement floor levels and is easily accessible via a formal entry and lobby at the downhill west end of the Seneca Street elevation. Additional laundry and mechanical facilities, as well as storage and restrooms were also provided at this floor level. The original second and third floor levels were designed to provide guest accommodations for both visitors and semi-permanent residents.

With the completion of the new clubhouse the organization continued to expand its activities and its membership, which by late 1923 was raised to a maximum of 900, so that all members could be comfortably served. The depression era proved to be challenging as membership dwindled and the club faced financial and labor issues. A particular highlight for the club members was the March 27, 1939 visit of dinner guest Eleanor Roosevelt. During the late 1930s and WWII era the club guest accommodations were particularly popular due to increasing numbers of women in transit or relocated due to employment or educational opportunities.

Over the years, the club continued its cooperative relationship with the College Club, which after eviction from the Metropolitan Tract had relocated in 1921 to a new clubhouse on the opposite east side of Sixth Avenue at 605 Spring Street. The two clubs regularly shared personnel, some use privileges and meeting/banquet spaces. In 1953, the College Club learned that their property would be condemned for the proposed interstate freeway construction. The Women's University Club clubhouse was spared due to the fact that the route was designed to avoid the U.S Federal Courthouse located on the southwest corner of their common street intersection at Seneca Street. By the early 1950s, the club membership had been raised to 1,000 and the club purchased an adjacent lot to the north of the clubhouse for parking purposes. During this era, several of the once busy guestrooms were converted to classroom use or for other purposes. Increasingly, the clubhouse was used primarily for education, entertainment, and luncheon and dinner programs. The clubhouse basement level and auditorium space were first remodeled in 1946 and again in 1965.

In the late 1950s, consideration was given to relocating to a suburban location. However, the overwhelming sentiment of the membership was to retain the clubhouse and to remodel and expand it in order to meet then current club needs. In 1962 an addition – designed by the notable local architecture firm of Durham, Anderson and Freed - was constructed on the parking lot site. The addition was interconnected with the original clubhouse building; it included covered parking areas, a new dining room and a modern kitchen facility. The former dining room was remodeled for use as a multi-purpose room. Gradually, all of the guest room facilities were phased out – many of which had been used by long-time, semi-permanent residents. By 1974 the club was no longer classified as a “women's residential club.” Various interior remodeling projects and heating and mechanical upgrades have been undertaken during the last decade.

Today, the mission of the Women's University Club continues to focus on serving educated women members, encouraging the pursuit of educational and social activities and providing camaraderie, friendship and community connections. Their historic clubhouse building has been well cared for and remains a central and important part of this mission.

### ***A.H. Albertson***

The original clubhouse building was designed during the brief partnership of A.H. Albertson and Édouard Frère Champney. Champney also designed the nearby downtown YWCA (1914) with A. Warren Gould and often served as an associate architect on large or pretentious projects with other firms or architects. Abraham Horace Albertson (1872-1964) was one of the city's most prominent and prolific architects. He received his architectural training at Columbia University and migrated to Seattle in 1907 in order to serve as the local representative of Howells & Stokes, a prestigious New York architectural firm. Albertson worked for the firm, preparing the development plan and designing several commercial buildings on the Metropolitan Tract for the Metropolitan Building Company. Joseph W. Wilson and Paul D. Richardson began working with Albertson during this era. In 1914, Howells & Stokes Architects with A.H. Albertson and Associates prepared that plans for the first Women's University Club building. The initials "P.D.R." are noted on those plans; thus, it appears that Paul D. Richardson was responsible for the delineation and possibly some aspects of the design of both the 1914 and 1922 club buildings.

The partnership of Howells and Albertson succeeded the earlier firm and subsequently completed designs for several downtown buildings. Albertson continued to work in partnership with Joseph W. Wilson and Paul D. Richardson until 1939. Among Albertson's best known works are the Northern Life (now Seattle) Tower (1927-29), the downtown YMCA (1929-31) and, on Capitol Hill, St. Joseph's Church and Cornish School (1920-21) as well as, on Queen Anne, the Mrs. Grant Smith residence at 619 W. Comstock Street; St. Anne's Convent (1930), and an addition to the former Children's Orthopedic Hospital (now Queen Anne Manor). In 1939 Albertson joined the state office of the Federal Housing Administration, retiring as its chief architect in 1949. He died in 1964.

### ***Édouard Frère Champney***

Édouard Frère Champney (1874-1929) was one of the few Pacific Northwest architects to possess formal École des Beaux Arts academic architectural training. His skills and knowledge enabled him to participate in the design of Beaux Arts eclectic style buildings at several turn-of-the-century expositions, including: the U.S. Government Pavilion at the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland, Oregon (1903-04); buildings and grounds at the Pan-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco (1912-14); and to serve as chief designer on the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle (1909). Champney formed a partnership in 1909 with August Warren Gould that produced several notable Seattle and Vancouver B.C. commissions until the firm was dissolved in c.1913. The initial published rendering from 1921 that Champney appears to have produced shows a much larger and more elaborate Beaux Arts inspired design than that which was constructed. While it is unclear the extent to which he contributed to the design of the clubhouse building, his name is included in the architectural drawings title block and mentioned in several press clippings. After 1926, Champney resided in Berkley, California.

### ***Durham, Anderson & Freed***

The architecture firm of Durham, Anderson & Freed designed the distinctive 1961-2 addition to the Women's University Club. The firm was established in the early 1950s through the partnership of Robert L. Durham, David R. Anderson and Aaron Freed. Robert L. Durham was born in Seattle in 1912 and raised in Tacoma where he attended the College of Puget Sound prior to earning a B.Arch. at the University of Washington in 1936. He initially worked as a draftsman

for noted Seattle architect B. Dudley Stuart before then working for the Federal Housing Administration from 1938-1942. He subsequently rejoined Stuart and formed a ten-year long partnership that lasted until Stuart's retirement. During the early years of the partnership, the firm designed mostly war housing. Robert Durham practiced on his own for a brief period before joining with David R. Anderson and Aaron Freed to form their firm. This firm is best known for the design of some 200 churches including the Fauntleroy Congregational Church, the First Methodist Church in Mount Vernon, and Highline Covenant Church of Bellevue, for which they received considerable local and national attention,. During this era, the partnership's projects also included the design of numerous schools, banks, residences, master plans and public buildings, including the Seattle Public Library Southwest Branch (1961) and Fire Station No. 5 (1963).

Robert L. Durham was very active within the architectural community, both locally and at the state and national levels. He served as the president of the Seattle Chapter AIA prior to heading the Washington State Chapter in 1954. He served as the chairman of the Seattle Municipal Arts Commission and was selected in 1961 to lead the Cultural Arts Advisory Board for the Century 21 - Seattle World's Fair. He was elected to the AIA College of Fellows in 1959 and in 1961 to the national AIA Board of Directors. Durham served from 1967-68 as the 44<sup>th</sup> president national AIA – to date the only architect from the Pacific Northwest to have held the position.

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

### ***Site, Setting and Urban Context***

The Women's University Club is located on a steep westward sloping site at the northwest corner of Sixth Avenue and Spring Street. The original portion of the clubhouse was constructed in 1922 and occupies the southern half of the site with prominent exterior elevations oriented to both of the side streets. A modern club building addition was constructed in 1962 and is interconnected to the original building. It occupies the northern half of the site and is oriented toward Sixth Avenue. Together, the two building components occupy the entire southeast quarter of a city block. A north-south alley bisects the entire block and runs along the west or rear elevation of the clubhouse.

Sixth Avenue runs immediately in front of the principal east elevation and façade of the clubhouse. The opposite side of Sixth Avenue is abutted by the western alignment of the Interstate 5 freeway; thus, the clubhouse is noticeable from various viewpoints to the east and from the north and south along Sixth Avenue. The United States Courthouse and forecourt (1939) occupies a full city block along the opposite south side of Spring Street. The Hotel Vintage Park (Spring Apartment Hotel, 1922) is situated immediately to the west across the alley on the southwest quarter of the block. The downtown Seattle YWCA Building (1914) is located at the opposite northwest corner of the block. The 1962 clubhouse addition abuts a modern highrise hotel located on the northeast quarter of the block. Due to its small scale, traditional architectural character and cladding the Women's University Club contrasts with its surroundings and is a distinctive component of the streetscape and the nearby urban environment. Views of the Women's University Club from the east are dominated to a significant degree by the new downtown Seattle Public Library, which contrasts sharply with all of the nearby buildings.



The Women's University Club is a three-story building that was designed and constructed in 1921-1922 to serve as a private women's club, purposes for which it continues to be used. The original 1922 building measures 60' x 116' and is functionally interconnected to a two-story addition of roughly equal measurement. The original building exhibits a distinctive two-part façade composition and Georgian Revival style architectural details. The lower scale 1962 addition is interconnected at a common north wall and partially setback from the original building façade. It was designed in a modern minimalist architectural mode utilizing complementary massing, fenestration patterns, materials and architectural details and is notable for its architectural character.

### ***Current Appearance – 1922 Building***

The original three-story clubhouse building is a reinforced concrete structure with a concrete foundation and full basement (and mezzanine) level below the first floor level. The building exterior is distinguished by wire-cut red brick masonry cladding laid in a common bond and accentuated by cream-color terra cotta trim and ornament. The building has a flat roof with a plain brick parapet that is accentuated by a prominent denticulated galvanized iron cornice and is terminated by a narrow metal coping. The denticulated cornice is painted a cream-color to compliment the terra cotta trim and ornament.

The Sixth Avenue façade is set back approximately four feet from the property line and the sidewalk edge, which allows for a narrow planting bed along the base of that elevation. The façade is distinguished at the first floor level by base trim composed of a wide 12" cream-color terra cotta watertable and stringcourse. This design element extends the width of the façade and wraps the Spring Street and alley elevations forming an intermediate cornice at those elevations. Sixth Avenue gradually slopes downhill to the north and a portion of brick cladding is visible below terra cotta band at the north end of the façade.

The symmetrically composed Sixth Avenue façade is dominated by a Georgian-inspired central entry vestibule with a recessed porch. The arched vestibule opening is terra cotta clad, surmounted by an ornate broken-scroll pediment with central finial and flanked by classically composed terra cotta pilasters. Original double-hung wooden windows that exhibit a multi-pane (12/12) pattern with narrow mullions remain in place at all floor levels. All of the windows are set in individual openings with wooden trim; they exhibit varied surrounds and associated details at each separate floor level. At the first floor level the windows have wide painted wooden surrounds that are accentuated by terra cotta corner blocks. All of the window at this level are capped and accentuated by recessed blind arches clad with brick headers; each arch is trimmed by brick voussoirs and a terra cotta keystone. At the second floor level the central window includes a fluted terra cotta surround and keystone that corresponds with the elaborate terra cotta entry vestibule feature located directly below. This window is flanked to each side by windows with flat brick voussoirs and terra cotta keystones and sills. The third floor level is distinguished by a deep terra cotta sill course or intermediate cornice that runs below the window line. Each of the windows at this level is simply trimmed with plain brick openings and headers. At the lower floors the brick masonry cladding is laid in a common bond; however, at the third floor level the brick spandrels between windows are enframed and laid in rectangular brick header panels.

The recessed entrance vestibule is finished with a cement plaster painted to match the adjacent terra cotta. The entry stairway projects from the façade with brick treads and risers that die into curved concrete curbs or checks to each side. Original curved wrought iron handrails with brass

ball finials are attached to the concrete checks. The porch floor is quarry tile and an original leaded glass fan light remains in place above the main entry doors.

The Spring Street (south) elevation exhibits the same fenestration arrangement and terra cotta and cornice details as the façade with some minor exceptions. This elevation is articulated to include a slightly recessed and wider central bay with symmetrical end bays that include a small central narrow window at the upper two floor levels. Due to the westward sloping grade, the terra cotta intermediate cornice accentuates the first floor, mezzanine and basement levels. At the western end of this elevation and integrated into the intermediate cornice trim is another ornate Georgian-inspired terra cotta clad entryway that leads to the basement level auditorium/assembly hall space. This entry vestibule is recessed; the rectangular opening is surmounted by an ornate broken-scroll pediment with central finial and flanked by classically composed terra cotta pilasters, very similar in detail to the design feature at the main entry. The porch floors and walls are also finished in a similar manner.

The alley (west) elevation is utilitarian in character. With the exception of southern corner where the brick cladding, terra cotta details and cornice are terminated, the wall surface is finished with a painted cement plaster cladding. Windows are typical multi-pane sash set in individual untrimmed openings. Fenestration at the basement level reflects the utilitarian interior use of the space. Portions of the north elevation are visible above the 1962 addition. This elevation is also utilitarian in character. It is entirely clad with common brick and the windows are typical multi-pane sash set in individual untrimmed openings. The north elevation originally included a slightly recessed lightwell at the first floor level and a U-shaped plan at the second and third floor levels in order to provide sufficient light and ventilation; thus the remaining visible portion of this elevation is recessed approximately twenty feet at the center bay section.

### ***Current Appearance – 1962 Addition***

The 1962 addition to the north side of the original 1922 building was designed in order to provide a large modern kitchen facility and efficient at-grade and underground parking facilities. It also includes a large formal dining room that is interconnected at the original main floor level. This dining room opens onto a terrace at the east (Sixth Avenue) elevation. The parking levels are accessible from both Sixth Avenue and from the alley side. Due to the construction materials, the building form and height of the addition, in combination with the downhill northward sloping site, the 1962 addition is non-obtrusive. It appears to complement rather than detract from the historic and architectural character of the original building.

The building exterior is finished with red brick and cast stone trim similar in color to the brick cladding and terra cotta trim of the original clubhouse. The building form as expressed by the Sixth Avenue elevation is rather complex and modern in design; it exhibits an asymmetrical composition, multiple vertical planes and a mixture of materials and textures. The lower level is dominated by parking facilities that are screened by metal grills. The one and one-half story main floor level rests on a deep concrete girder that echoes the adjacent terra cotta base. The principal east elevation is set back approximately twenty feet from the original clubhouse façade and is dominated by eight bays of large window and door assemblies with delicate mullions. Two of the bays include double door assemblies leading to the terrace. A small one-story pavilion projects from this façade at its southern end immediately adjacent to the original building. The terrace then projects beyond this pavilion, out over the parking entrance and girder below, to the actual property line and beyond the face of the original façade. The terrace handrail is composed of a

band of delicate vertical steel members. The alley (west) elevation is utilitarian in character and finished with a cement plaster cladding. There are no windows and the only opening is the garage access/egress point.

### ***Non-Historic Exterior Alterations***

The most substantial alteration made to the exterior of the original 1922 clubhouse building is the installation of a modern canvas entryway canopy. The canopy extends from the entry vestibule into the sidewalk area. It is attached to the ornate terra cotta surround at the face of the vestibule, at points within the vestibule and supported by brass tube posts at the sidewalk. The canopy covers portions of the terra cotta surround and includes an infill panel within the arched opening that obscures views of the ornate fan light above the entry door. One other notable alteration to the original clubhouse is a modern steel security gate assembly at the Spring Street entryway that leads to the basement level auditorium /assembly hall space. The east elevation of the 1962 addition is relatively unaltered with one exception; an obtrusive galvanized mechanical duct runs along a portion of the south end of the façade where it is interconnected to the main clubhouse building and up and over the roof line and coping.

### ***Interior Features and/or Finishes***

The interior of the original 1922 clubhouse was originally decorated and furnished in the Georgian Revival style. Reportedly, the building interior retains some original plaster and wood finishes, features and details within the lounge, library and dining room, however these are rooms not generally open to the public. The entry lobby at Spring Street and the basement level auditorium and stage have been remodeled. The upper two floor levels have been repeatedly remodeled and adapted to serve as private offices, work and lounge rooms. The 1962 addition does not appear to have included architecturally distinctive interior building features, finishes or public spaces.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCES**

*The Women's University Club of Seattle – Historical Highlights 1914-1980.* Written and published by the WUC History & Traditions Committee, 1980.

Ochsner, Jeffery Karl, ed. *Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994, 1998.

“Development of the University Tract.” [Pamphlet published for the Metropolitan Building Company, ca.1916.]

### **Newspaper Articles:**

“Projected Home of Women's University Club” *Daily Journal of Commerce.* August 25, 1921, pg 1.

“Excavation for Building is Started” *Journal of Commerce,* February 3, 1922.

“W.U.C. History Told” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer,* November 7, 1948.

“Women’s U. Club Dedicates \$300,000 Addition” *The Seattle Times*, July 19, 1962, pg. 21.

Public Records:

“Women’s University Club” architectural drawings prepared by Howells & Stokes Architects and A.H. Albertson Associates, dated June 25, 1914. [University of Washington Special Collections.]

Building Plan & Permit Records. City of Seattle, Department of Planning & Development, Microfilm Department.

King County Property Record Card (c.1937-1972). Washington State Archives - Puget Sound Regional Branch, Bellevue, Washington.

Krafft, Kate & LaFever, Alison. “Historic Property Inventory Report.” 2006.

Other Sources of Information:

“The College Club of Seattle” City of Seattle Landmark Nomination, prepared by BOLA Architecture & Planning, 2006.

Women’s University Club web page: <http://www.wucofseattle.com>

***The features of the Landmark to be preserved include:***

The exterior of the building, excluding the 1962 addition.

Issued: April 7, 2008

Karen Gordon  
City Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Suzanne Price, President, Women’s University Club  
Gary Huff, Karr Tuttle Campbell  
Susan Boyle, BOLA Architecture + Planning  
Stephen Lee, LPB  
Stella Chao, DON  
Diane Sugimura, DPD  
Cheryl Mosteller, DPD  
Ken Mar, DPD