

FINAL

OMB NO. 1024-0018

EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only	
received	
date entered	

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Esplanade Apartments

and/or common The Esplanade

2. Location

street & number 3015 North Pennsylvania Street N/A not for publication

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state Indiana code 018 county Marion code 097

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Apartments

4. Owner of Property

name The Esplanade Apartment Company  
J. Scott Keller, General Partner

street & number 423 Massachusetts Avenue

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46204

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County Center Township Tax Assessor's Office

street & number City-County Building, Room 1360  
200 E. Washington Street

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana 46204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Esplanade Apartments, sited at the branching intersection of Talbott and Pennsylvania Streets, provides a visually strong southern terminus for the wide, tree-lined, residential Pennsylvania Street. The elaborate U-shaped plan (see plan, page 3), nearly filling the entire site, is composed of three wings. The center wing, which faces north up Pennsylvania, forms the base of the "U"; the two south wings are perpendicular to the central wing. In addition, a garage structure at the south end of the complex closes the courtyard formed by the three wings.

The Explanade, completed in 1913, today retains its Midwest architectural character featuring Craftsman and Prairie elements. The flat surface of the brick-veneered, two story base is capped by wide overhanging boxed eaves in the two-story sections, or a wide board "belt course" which serves as a transition to the frame third stories of the corner units. In the three-story units the upper level is finished with a geometric pattern of simulated half-timbering, infilled with straight wood shingles, and is capped by an asphalt-shingled, hipped roof with wide eaves. All gables and dormers on the two-story sections are similarly finished, with prominent, kicked-out, boxed eaves, and hipped roofs.

Each wing is composed of a variety of levels and projections. The central wing (Photo 2) is essentially a two-story brick rectangle, with three-story pavilions at each end. The end pavilions each contain one three-story, three-bedroom unit, and have brick porches and hipped canopies supported by battered wooden pillars. Parapet walls on the porches are punctured by scuppers, and capped by stone coping. Windows are typical of those on the rest of the complex, with six-over-one, double-hung sash, in groups or single, with soldier-course lintels on the ground floor, no lintels on the second, and angled header sills. Third story windows are 12-light casements in groups of three.

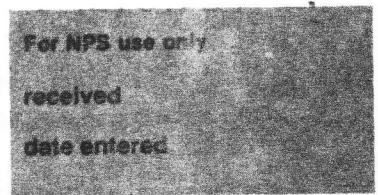
The middle portion of the central wing (Photo 3) contains four, two-bedroom flats, and features a full-width, two-story porch, supported by two, two-story brick piers with battered bases. The first level of the porch has low brick parapet walls as described above. A massive molded wood entablature underscores the second level railing, which is composed of closely placed flat slats, each containing a vertical, double cross cut-out. Access to each unit thus retains a degree of privacy, in addition to exterior covered space. Access to the first level is provided by four center steps, flanked by stone-capped brick piers. A center doorway opens to a straight-run staircase to the upper two flats. Angled, terraced steps to the east and west provide access to the side entrances of the first floor flats. Two dormers provide light to the attic. Windows in these units are typical, with the added attraction of triple casements, with single lights below, and geometrically leaded glass panels detailed in white, opaque glass above, which light the main living areas.

The east wing is, again, a two-story brick structure, with a three-story pavilion at the south end, but a two-story angled unit at the north end, connecting it to the center wing (Photos 1 and 6). Again, the end pavilion contains one, three-story, three-bedroom unit. This unit (Unit 1) shares a hipped-roof, brick porch with the two-story unit next door. Originally, the entire porch was open, but the north and south sections have been glazed with four-over-one casement sashes, paired under eight-light panels (Photo 5). These units also feature leaded glass windows, with detailing in white opaque glass similar to those already mentioned.

At the north end of the east wing is another two-story unit, which connects the east wing with the central wing with its angled bay (Photos 1 and 4). Here, again, we see single lights below, with leaded glass above, in the angled bay window. A simple, open brick porch leads to the entrance just north of the bay.

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Continuation sheet Esplanade Apartments

Item number 7

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The west wing is a mirror image of the east wing.

All courtyard windows, although grouped similarly to those on the main facades, are composed of single light, double-hung sashes or casements (Photo 9). The interior courtyard is laced with projecting, enclosed, one-and-two story rear porches, bulkheads, and second story balconies (Photos 9 and 10). When the 12-unit complex was converted to 20 units in 1952, balconies and open wood, straight-run stairways were evidently added to provide the necessary upper level access. Although the foundations of the enclosed porches appear to be original, the vertical, boarded, hipped roof, single story super-structures appear either to have been added or altered.

The south facade, now viewed from a large, private, commercial parking lot (Photo 6), is tightly bounded by an alley, the southern site boundary. The openness of the U-shape plan is enclosed by a two-and-one-half story, five bay, wood clapboarded garage (Photo 7). This structure, the first to be built on the site in 1912, contained the boiler and stack, as well as original apartment #13 for the custodian. Today, access to the basement is provided by a straight-run, open staircase parallel to the south facade. The open stair well is enclosed by a contemporary, utilitarian iron railing and gate (Photo 8). An interior stairway is approached by a door located between the first and second overhead garage doors, south facade (Photo 7). A later addition of an open wood staircase, east end, provides access to a screened porch and apartment #14. A ventilating cupola is located at the east hip intersection of the low-pitched, asphalt-shingled, hipped roof. The prominent exterior red brick stack centered on the south facade rises to almost the height of the three-story pavilions (Photo 6).

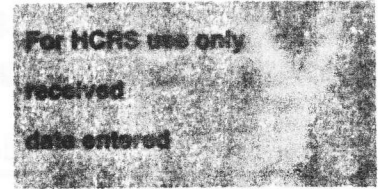
The interior finishing of the complex repeats the Craftsman and Prairie character of the exterior. All first floor, multi-level units contain a typical four or five step, open stairway approach, framed by an enclosed, low wall pier and newell post (Photo 11). An enclosed dogleg provides access to the second floor. All living rooms of these units contain a projecting, tile-faced fireplace with a simply bracketed mantel. In the typical example (Photo 12), the original gas-fired heater is in place. The tile hearth and face, although painted here, have been stripped, revealing matte green glazed, Grueby-like tiles. French doors separating the living room from the dining room were often fitted with leaded glass panels, repeating the design of the windows. The dining rooms were finished with beams and flat wood paneling, composed of a simple rail and stile, terminated by a plate rail with the plaster walls exposed. All crown molding is finished with a flat ceiling extension or plate (Photo 13). All interior trim, originally dark stained, is flat with little or no molding (Photos 13, 14 and 15). All baseboards are wide with upper beveled edge and flat nosing at floor level (Photo 14).

Another important feature is the comparatively large window areas, as seen in a typical bedroom (Photo 14). The concerns for home planning, convenience, and the necessity of storage areas created the built-in linen closet finished with typical flat, dark stained members (Photo 15).

The present owner has begun renovation and restoration. Of primary concern has been the elimination of added walls in order to conform to the original plan. Stabilization of exterior materials has begun with paint selection consisting of muted salmon-tan for the framing elements and muted olive green for window sashes.

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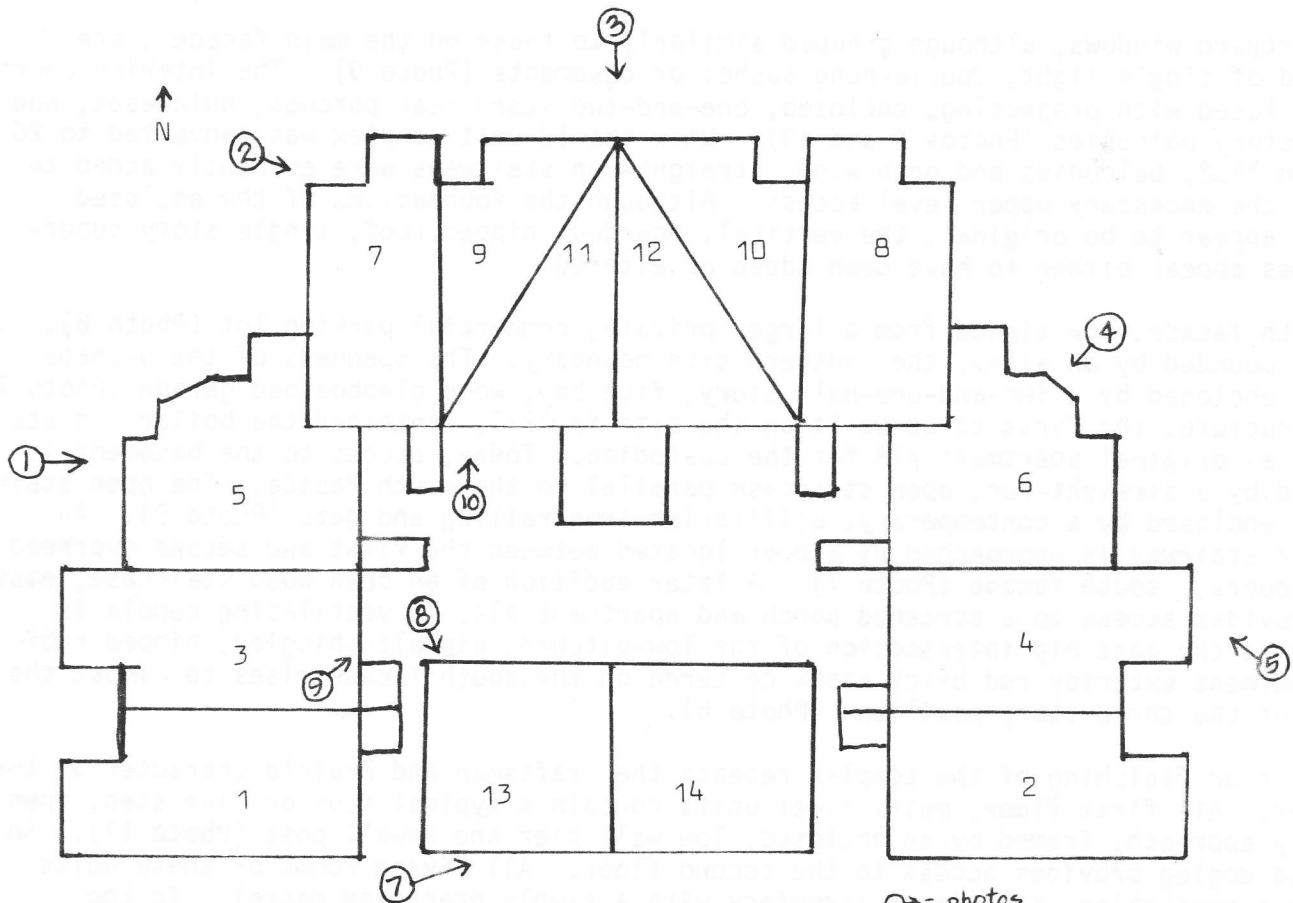
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Continuation sheet The Esplanade

Item number 7. Description

Page 2.



The Esplanade, first floor plan  
3015 N. Pennsylvania Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana

○ → = photos  
not to scale

Apartments

- 1, 2, 7, 8 three story units with basements
- 3, 4, 5, 6 two story units with basements
- 9, 10, 11, 12 flats
- 1, 2, 3, 4 solariums
- 13, 14 flats above the garage

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1912-1913 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (~~in one paragraph~~)

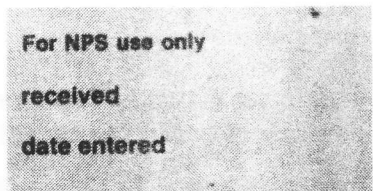
The Esplanade, developed and constructed in 1913, is a unique expression of the development of this early 20th century neighborhood. Architecturally, with pronounced Craftsman details, this multi-unit, multi-level building exemplifies those qualities advocated by Gustav Stickley in his arts and crafts magazine, Craftsman (1901-1916). Its proximity to downtown and country, as well as to existing streetcar lines, and its fronting on a wide, tree-lined residential street created an ambience which was most accommodating to middle and upper-middle class professional adults. Its location at the foot of Pennsylvania Street makes it a well-known landmark today.

The Esplanade, developed by Charles E. Plummer, real estate agent, and Charles E. Hollingsworth, contractor, was one of several joint speculative building projects. Between 1909 and 1911, Plummer developed nearby apartment and duplexes at 2325-27 N. New Jersey, 2250, 2727-29 N. Pennsylvania, and 3067 N. Delaware. By 1912, both men were associated not only with The Esplanade, but also with The Esplanade Annex, 3034 N. Pennsylvania Street. This two-story, four-unit structure is located directly west of The Esplanade. Both men were associated with others in the real estate business. In 1914, Plummer was with the Peerless Realty Company and with the Hiram Plummer Agency, which specialized in loans, real estate and rentals. Until 1917, Plummer resided at #10, The Esplanade. Hollingsworth, still associated with Plummer in the Penn-Talbott Realty Company, owners of The Esplanade, moved to the building with his brother, Maurice, in 1922. Both listed themselves as real estate agents. Both Plummer and Hollingsworth, in their apartment ventures, selected an area for development in which multi-family buildings were interspersed with their own duplexes and single family houses. Such a richness of fabric was possible only before the enactment of zoning laws.

The architectural style and plan of the structure afforded the residents the comforts and ambience of a contemporary, single family dwelling. According to the tenets of Progressive architecture, each structure should emphasize practicality, simplicity, and honest expression of materials. As interpreted by Gustav Stickley in his publication, Craftsman, as well as in his furniture designs, these ideas were to direct one toward the value to unpretentious living as demonstrated by such standard dwelling accouterments as flat trim surfaces, uncarpeted hardwood floors, plaster walls, or any surface which was easy and efficient to maintain as a sanitary home. Indeed, the housewife was expected to maintain a nearly germ-free atmosphere. This, of course, was possible based on technological and scientific advances in home building: central heating, electricity and gas, and discovery of the germ and its dwelling place in the unkempt and unclean person and his residence. Stickley defended the scientific study of housekeeping, home economics, with a moral philosophy of the good life which advocated porches for the healthfulness of the outdoors, undecorated structures built of local materials, and the hospitality of the home represented by the fireplace. The Esplanade, with its separate entrances within each porch, a site plan which dictated the stepped-back protective configuration of the units, a combination of natural exterior finishing materials, and the ever-present fireplace, is a fine example of the Craftsman ideal. What is unique is that, although this is an apartment building, each of the multi-level units is treated as a single family dwelling.

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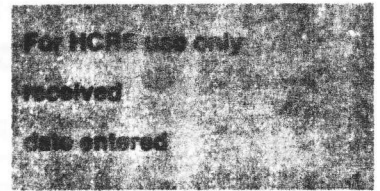
No other contemporary multi-family dwelling in Indianapolis offered the variety in the vertical stacking which increased the isolation of each unit's plan. With the Prairie overtones of the hipped roofs, horizontal banding and rigid geometry of the facades, The Esplanade Apartments is a unique example of a once fashionable Midwest architectural style.

The amenities of the structure and its location, made most desirable by its proximity to the Meridian Heights streetcar line which crossed Pennsylvania Street at 34th Street, attracted people representing middle and upper management, and professionals. In 1914 and 1915, the first fully rented years, the residents included Harry C. Block, secretary of the William H. Block Company (a local department store); and William E. Russ, architect, who designed the Piccadilly Apartments in Indianapolis (1929), hotels in Terre Haute, and other structures in Dayton, Evansville and Richmond. As a partner in the firm of Russ and Harrison, he designed the Coliseum at the Indiana State Fair Grounds, Indianapolis, and various projects for the U.S. War Department. Captain Robert Grinstead was an inspector and instructor, Indiana National Guard. George H. Moore was president of the Peerless Realty Company and of the George H. Moore Company, Real Estate, Insurance and Rentals. The average age of these men was 39. They were mature, established business people. The average tenancy was three to five years until 1925, when the turnover grew even slower.

These qualities, although fashionable for only a short time from 1900-1917, created a specific and desirable residential atmosphere until the end of World War II. At that time public transportation was replaced by the automobile, and the American dream became home ownership in the burgeoning suburban sprawl. However, today those same qualities and conveniences are recognized, again, as appropriate and necessary to a lifestyle which considers commuting time and distinctive, natural surroundings as important.

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Item number 9. References

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Handlin, David. The American Home: Architecture and Society, 1815-1915.  
Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979.

Polk, R.L. Indianapolis City Directory. Indianapolis: R.L. Polk and Company,  
1910-1952.

Stickley, Gustav. Craftsmen Homes: Architecture and Furnishings of the American  
Arts and Crafts Movement. 1909. New York: Dover Publishers, 1979.

Wright, Gwenolyn. Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America.  
New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Atlas of Indianapolis and Marion County. Philadelphia: Griffin, Gordon and Co., 1889.  
 Baist's Property Atlas of the City of Indianapolis and Suburbs. Philadelphia: G. Wm. Baist, 1908, 1916, 1927.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Indianapolis West

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	6	5	7	2	3	7	0	4	4	0	6	8	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing							

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Lot 59, Osgood's Meridian Park Addition. Beginning at the NE corner of intersection of Pennsylvania Street and alley; running 222' east to NW corner of intersection of Talbott Street and alley; running NW 114.8' to a point 60' north of S east-west line; then westerly continuing the circumference 130.9' to a point 60' N. of S east-west line, SW 114.8' to point of beginning.

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries**

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan R. Slade, Architectural Historian  
Jacqueline L. Munson, Archival Asst.

organization N/A date 12-23-82

street & number 4560 North Broadway telephone 317/283-6114

city or town Indianapolis state Indiana

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*James M. Anderson*

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date April 21, 1983

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

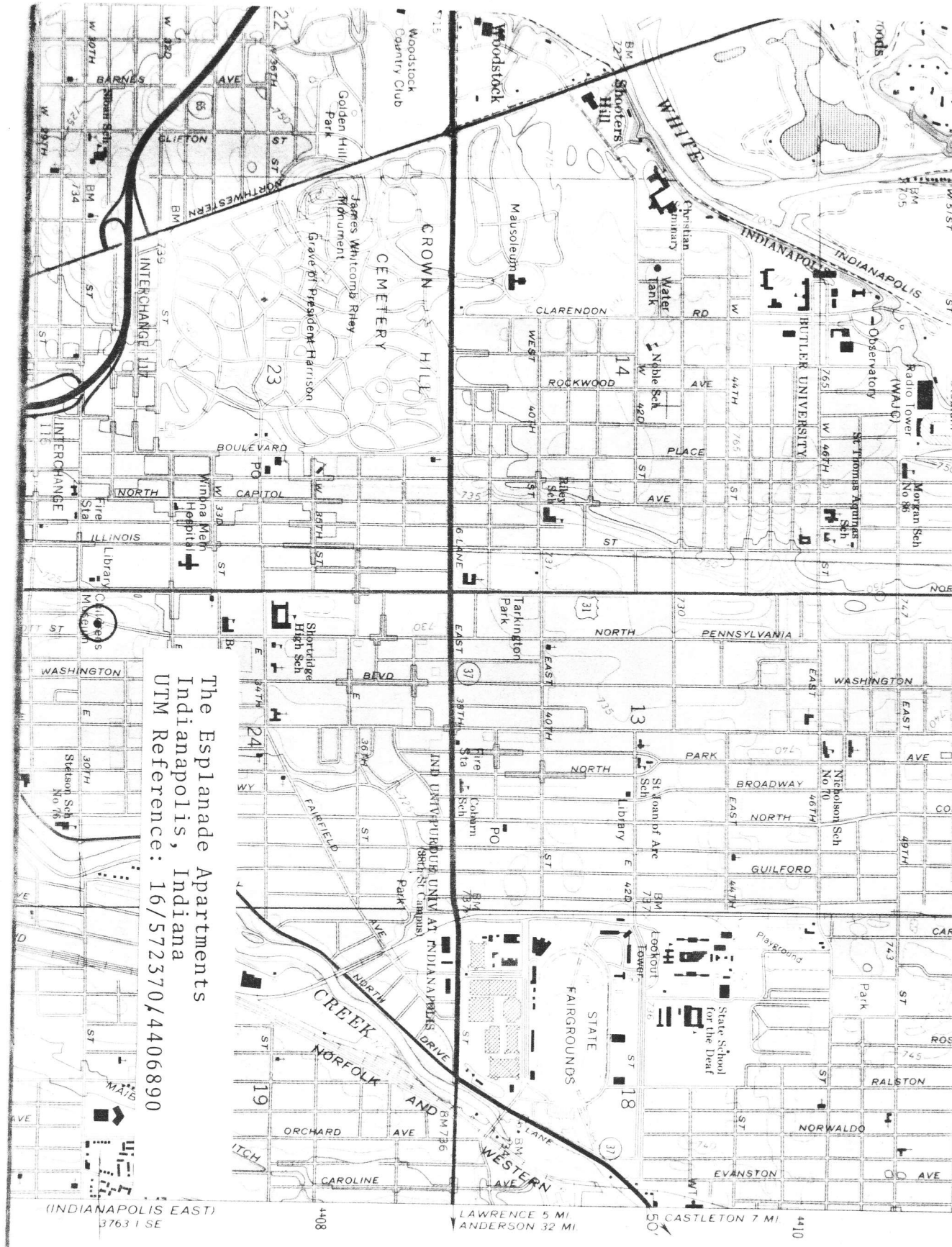
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration





The Esplanade Apartments  
 Indianapolis, Indiana  
 UTM Reference: 16/572370/4406890

(INDIANAPOLIS EAST)  
 3763 1 SE

LAWRENCE 5 MI  
 ANDERSON 32 MI

CASTLETON 7 MI  
 4410

4408