

## D/DRC Case

1525 Bull Street

Pending Individual Landmark

TMS: 11402-03-07

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**DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT**  
**HISTORIC CONSENT AGENDA**  
**EVALUATION SHEET**  
**Case #1**

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**ADDRESS:** 1525 Bull Street (Beverly Apartments)

**APPLICANT:** William D. Paradeses, property owner

**TAX MAP REFERENCE:** TMS#11402-03-07

**USE OF PROPERTY:** Residential

**REVIEW DISTRICT:** Pending Individual Landmark

**NATURE OF REQUEST:** Request for recommendation for Individual  
Historic Landmark status.

**FINDINGS/COMMENTS:**

The brick three-story 20<sup>th</sup> Century Romanesque Revival building located at 1525 Bull Street is commonly known as the Beverly Apartments. It was constructed in 1912 for Dr. Oscar Ernest (O.E.) Thomas at a cost of \$17,200. Dr. Thomas was a well-known local druggist who owned a business on Main Street and served as the President of the South Carolina Pharmaceutical Association. The building originally featured six flats, each with four rooms and a bathroom. The accommodations were advertised in 1913 as modern “high class” flats with gas cooking ranges and McCray refrigerators. Although the city directories referred to the building as the Beverly Apartments, newspaper ads frequently referred to the building as the Thomas Apartments, which was likely a result of the building being owned by Dr. O.E. Thomas. Unlike many of the named apartment buildings in the city, the Beverly Apartments does not have its name imprinted on the building. The building once featured a substantial cornice on the parapet and a canopy over the front entryway, so perhaps the name once graced the building in one of these areas. The earliest photo staff could find of the building is from 1914, but the quality is so poor that only the shape of the building and its cornice can be seen.

As early as 1975, the City of Columbia recognized the Beverly Apartments as being an architecturally significant building. As such, it was included in the 1977 publication entitled *Columbia's Commercial Heritage* and was referred to as “A highly interesting and inventive design with a great deal of character.” The building has had a number of exterior alterations over the years, but its footprint has not changed. Notable architectural features that have been removed include the upper cornice, the historic wood windows, and the canopy over the front door. Some of the windows that were removed are stored inside the building. Despite these alterations, it is a good example of the “Named Apartments” in Columbia from the early twentieth century.

Apartments began in Columbia in the 1890s as bachelor flats inside larger, multi-use commercial buildings downtown. They followed some of the trends of the apartment houses in New York City, which birthed the apartment era, including the naming of the buildings. Some of the apartments in Columbia were named after their owners' surname, such as the Boling, while others were given first names such as the Susannah, Lucille, Celeste or Bryan. The first apartments to be constructed solely as an apartment "house" as they were first called, were Evan's Flats, on the southwest corner of Main Street and Elmwood Avenue, and an almost twin building constructed on Pickens Street, both of which are now demolished, and both of which had a townhouse quality to their arrangement. Following styles he witnessed in New York City, the owner of the Marlboro Apartments on Blanding Street had this modern apartment house designed by James B. Urquhart and built in 1911. With its central, single entry and symmetrical façade, the Marlboro set the tone for a number of apartments that followed during the 1910s and 1920s. During the 1920s there were several new apartment complexes erected near the University of South Carolina, including the Charles Edward, the Kirkland and the Nada apartments. Contrary to popular belief, these early apartments did not generally house students or professors, but rather salesmen, professionals and sometimes widows. Most of these new apartment buildings were placed close to the street and prominently displayed their multiple stories and nameplates, indicating they were multi-family housing.

The Beverly Apartments is one of the earliest remaining examples of the named apartment trend in Columbia and is an excellent candidate for Group II Individual Historic Landmark Designation. With designation, the building would be eligible to apply for the Bailey Bill, which would make a rehabilitation proposal for the building more economically feasible. The building is in need of significant repairs, and the property owner is seeking landmark designation as the first step in the rehabilitation process.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR DESIGNATION:**

#### **Following are the criteria for listing as a Group II Landmark:**

Group II consists of structures or sites which constitute a delineation of Columbia's material visual history to a lesser degree than those of Group I; they evidence one or more of the following criteria for selection:

- (1) The sites of events, homes of men, etc., having contributed to local history.
- (2) Reasonably distinctive characteristics in architectural design, not necessarily unique.
- (3) Somewhat rare type within Columbia.
- (4) Belonging to a family or "genera" of buildings of which it is a good example.
- (5) The work of an architect of local importance.
- (6) A good example of a style or type of building which is becoming, or is in danger of becoming extinct locally.

Where at all possible, these should be preserved on their original sites, possibly by "adaptive use." Where the interior is impossible to preserve, the exterior should be retained by conservation and/or restoration.

**The apartment building located at 1525 Bull Street is eligible for local landmark designation under Group II by the following criterion:**

- (2) The Beverly Apartments has reasonably distinctive characteristics in architectural design, and was described in Columbia's Commercial Heritage, published in**

1977, as having “A highly interesting and inventive design with a great deal of character.” Its Romanesque arches and detailed brickwork show a level of craftsmanship that is quite unique.

- (4) The Beverly Apartments is included in a grouping of structures within the city known as “named apartments.” A recent study by the City of Columbia’s planning division recently concluded that approximately 51 named apartments were built between 1908 and 1940. More than half of these, 29 to be exact, have been demolished. Located in desirable downtown lots or neighborhoods, these buildings have not typically received recognition for their unique part of the city’s history. The Beverly Apartments is one of the earliest remaining examples of this type of building in the city, and historic landmark status will help promote its architectural and historical significance.

A few buildings that have been designated as Group II Historic Landmarks include: Kirkland Apartments (1619 Pendleton Street); Boling Apartments (930 Laurens Street); Granby Mill Office (339 Heyward Street); W.T. Grant Building (1614 Main Street); Fox Theater (1607 Main Street); and Canal Dime Bank (1530 Main Street); and the Owen Building (1321 Lady Street).

#### **ARCHITECTURE:**

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Romanesque Revival building known as the Beverly Apartments is a three-story, solid brick U-shaped structure with a symmetrical 5-bay façade. The two corner bays project out toward Bull Street approximately two feet beyond the main façade, and feature paired windows on the first and second floors. The other three bays feature tripartite windows on the first and second floors, with the exception being that the center bay features a single entry door with sidelights and a transom window on the first floor. The third floor of each bay on the façade features a Romanesque arched tripartite window. The upper portion of the façade shows evidence that an original cornice existed, as it currently has a noticeable amount of damaged brickwork and stucco infill. The façade features intricate brickwork including corbeling, arched surrounds, inverted triangular shapes, and basket weave patterns between the second and third floors. The façade is the most elaborate part of the building, as it utilizes a different color brick and has more detailing than the rest of the building. This can easily be seen as the façade design and materials wrap around the corners of the building. One additional Romanesque arch is repeated on the third floor of the left and right sides. The walls then transition into a different brick color with a modest fenestration pattern of single segmentally arched windows. A simple corbeled cornice further bridges the transition from the façade, and continues around the building to the other side. The rear of the building features a symmetrical fenestration pattern with a combination of standard and segmentally arched single windows. There are also three large bays within the inset portion of the rear that have been altered, so the original window configuration is unknown. The third floor of each of these bays features a segmentally arched opening.

#### **HISTORIC:**

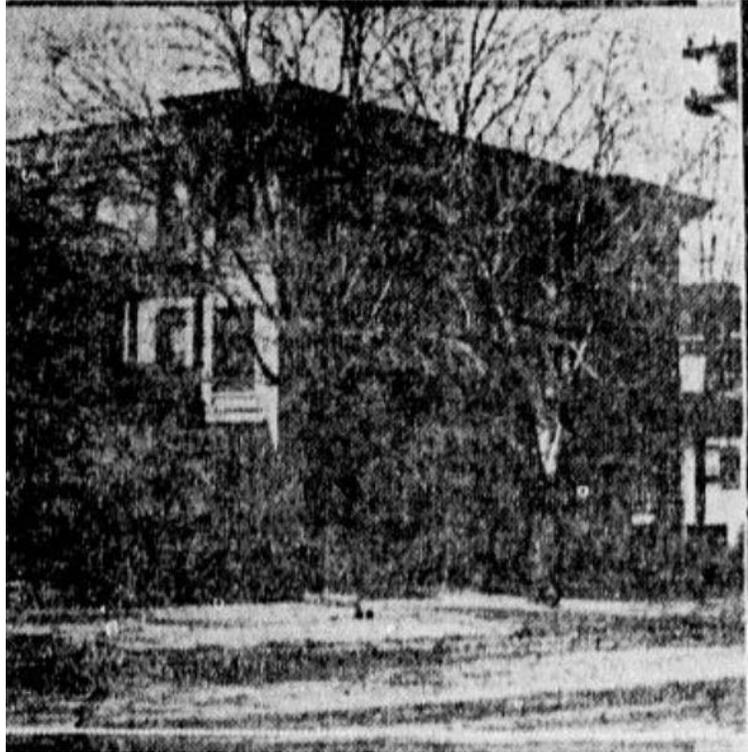
The building was constructed in 1912 for Dr. O.E. Thomas, well-known local druggist who owned a business on Main Street and served as President of the South Carolina Pharmaceutical Association. It is currently the second oldest named apartment building in the city, as it was built one year later than the Marlboro Apartments on Blanding Street.

**PROPOSED DESIGN GUIDELINES:**

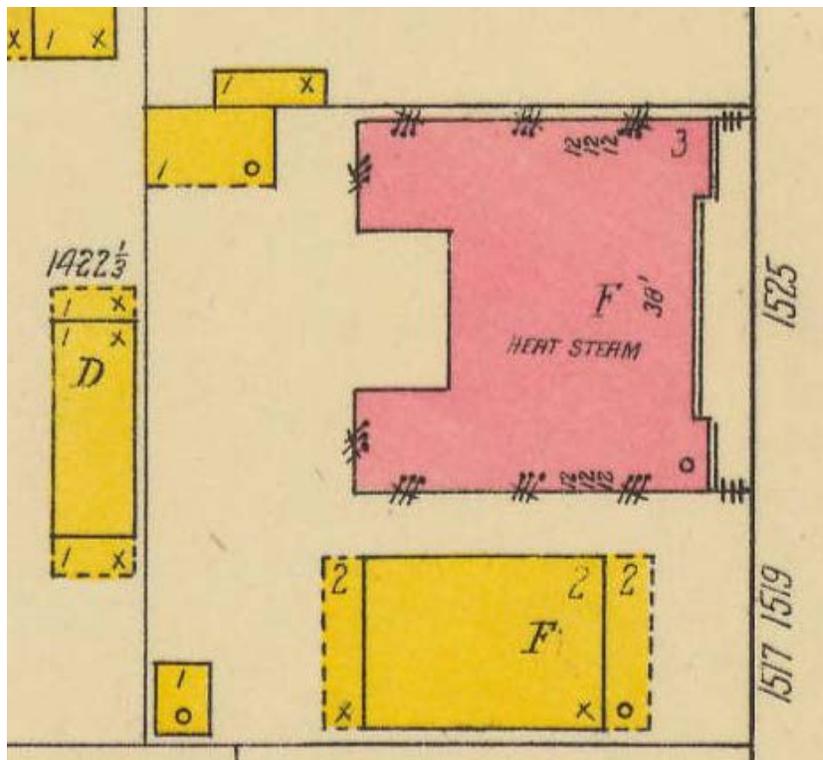
It is recommended that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation as amended in Sec. 17-674 of the Columbia City Code serve as the design guidelines for this property.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Commission recommend to City Council the approval of the application of the –Design Preservation overlay to designate 1525 Bull Street (Beverly Apartments) as a Group II Landmark, using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation as amended in Sec. 17-674 of the Columbia City Code as design guidelines.



Early photograph showing the original cornice  
*The State Newspaper – March 22, 1914*



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the footprint  
 of the Beverly Apartments – June 1919  
*USC Digital Collections*



1525 Bull Street – Beverly Apartments – February 1993



1525 Bull Street – Beverly Apartments – March 2015



Existing conditions showing brick detailing





Existing conditions – Left side (above) and right side (below)





Existing conditions – Rear of building





