



# Edanside Apartments

## 3131 W. Wells Street

PERMANENT HISTORIC DESIGNATION REPORT

CCF 250830

OCTOBER 2025

# EDANSIDE APARTMENTS HISTORIC DESIGNATION REPORT AND PRESERVATION GUIDELINES OCTOBER 2025

## PROPERTY NAME

Historic: Edanside Apartments  
Common Name: Charles Danielson Apartment Building; Edanside Apartments

## LOCATION

Address: 3131 West Wells Street (3127 Wells Street, old)  
Legal Description: ASSESSMENT SUBD NO 50 ETC IN NE 1/4 SEC 25-7-21 BLOCK 1 LOT 5 & W 43' OF N 75' OF LOT 4 & PERMANENT 10' DRIVEWAY EASEMENT PAR & AGL N 75' OF E LI OF W 43' LOT 4 BID #10  
Classification: Site

## NOMINATION DETAILS

Owners: Berrada Properties 24 LLC  
Nominator: Laura Sue Mosier  
Aldersperson: Ald. Robert Bauman, 4<sup>th</sup> District

## BUILDING DATA

YEAR BUILT 1924  
ARCHITECT Rosman & Wierdsma  
STYLE Colonial Revival

## DESCRIPTION

The Edanside Apartments sits on a rectangular parcel that is 110' wide along West Wells Street and 75' deep running south from West Wells Street along North 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. The apartment building is set back from the sidewalk along West Wells Street approximately twenty-eight feet on a flat yard that pitches to the west. A concrete driveway runs south from West Wells Street along the east property line and a concrete walkway with two

steps leads to the entry porch. The apartment building is built to the right-of-way along North 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. A small alley leading to a small one-story cream brick garage is located behind the apartment building. The property is located in the southwestern portion of the Concordia neighborhood, roughly two-and-a-half miles from the Central Business District. The neighborhood consists primarily of residential and institutional properties constructed between the 1850s-1930s. There are examples of Italianate, Queen Anne, German Renaissance Revival, Shingle, Gothic Revival, and Arts & Crafts styles in the immediate area, along with early twentieth century Neoclassical and Collegiate Gothic style buildings on the former Concordia College campus.

The Edanside Apartments is a two-and-one-half story Colonial Revival-style apartment building with a symmetrical front façade. The apartment building is located on the southeast corner of the West Wells Street and North 32<sup>nd</sup> Street intersection. The building faces north toward West Wells Street and is clad with variegated brick set in an eight-course common bond. The building sits on a raised brick foundation with a row of soldier and rowlock bricks separating the basement and first floor. A band of vertical-lined metal coping separates the second floor from the roof. The hipped Mansard roof is clad with asphalt shingles. A small brick chimney protrudes from the southeast of the roof behind the roof peak.

The symmetrical front façade is six-bays wide, with the center two bays projecting slightly from the primary plain of the building. The basement level has four-light windows with stone sills located below the outer four bays of the façade. A front porch projects from the center two bays and sits on a brick foundation with a poured concrete floor. The porch is accessed via five concrete steps with plain two-by-four rails. The porch is enclosed by a simple metal picket balustrade. The porch has a flat roof with a second floor balcony. The balcony is enclosed with a metal balustrade similar to the porch below. Each corner of the porch roof is supported by three square columns with Tuscan square capitals. The entrance has a centered door flanked by sidelights. Paired eight-light casement windows are located to the right of the front door on the stoop. The porch is flanked by bays containing a three-part window with an eight-over-one window flanked by four-over-one windows and an outer bay with a single eight-over-one double hung window. The windows and door on the first floor each have a brick flat arch with limestone keystone. The second story has a multi-light door that opens to the deck and a partially infilled window bay to the right of the door. The outer bays contain paired six-over-one windows and a single eight-over-one window in the outermost bay, each with concrete sills. The third floor contains a centered flat-roof dormer bay with four windows, one of which is infilled with replacement vinyl siding, one that has been partially infilled with glass block and replacement vinyl siding, and the remaining two having four-over-four wood windows. Square posts with replacement siding project from the roofline on either side of the center dormer. A balustrade with turned wood balusters was originally present

between the posts but was removed sometime after 1987. The outer four dormers each contain paired four-over-four windows. Unless otherwise noted, all windows on the front façade appear to be original wood double-hung windows.

The east façade is three bays wide with an asymmetrical window arrangement. The basement level contains four-light windows in the outer two bays. The first floor contains a center six-over-one bay flanked eight-over-one windows. The second floor contains a center bay with paired six-over-one windows with an eight-over-one window in the northern bay and a bay with paired smaller square windows on the southern bay. The third floor has two six-over-one windows.

The west façade faces North 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. Like the east façade, the west façade is also three bays wide. Due to the sloping topography, more of the basement level is exposed on this façade. The basement has two four-light windows in the outer bays with a bank of gas meters on the exterior of the building in the center. The first floor contains an eight-over-one window, a partially infilled center window, and a paired six-over-one bay. These windows have limestone sills and brick flat arches with a limestone keystone. The second floor contains a center bay with paired eight-light casement windows flanked by paired six-over-one windows. The third level has two six-over-one windows.

The south (rear) façade is clad with common cream brick and is more utilitarian than the other three elevations. An alley entrance is present towards the rear of the elevation adjacent to the small one-story garage. The first and second floors have a mix of single and paired multi-light windows. The third floor contains a continuous flat-roof dormer with six-over-one windows. The dormer is clad with replacement vinyl siding.

## HISTORY

While not located within the National Register of Historic Places or locally designated Concordia historic districts, Edanside Apartments is located within the Concordia neighborhood on the near west side of Milwaukee. The development of the apartment building shares the development pattern of the surrounding historic neighborhood. The following detailed history of the Concordia neighborhood was written by HPC staff for the Concordia Historic District study report:

The Concordia Historic District is a residential neighborhood that includes most of the area between North 27th Street and North 35th Streets, and West Highland Boulevard and West Wells Street. Within the district's boundaries is a diverse array of residences that represent a range of development patterns from the pioneer period of settlement to the pre-World War I streetcar suburb. At the geographical center of the district is the former campus of Concordia College,

encompassing over forty-three acres and including all of the historic buildings still extant.

In its platting, the district is a series of irregular blocks of varying sizes that do not always conform to the surrounding street grid. This was a result of various land uses that became established in the area before the city's subdivision code had a chance to influence the development of the area. In the eastern part of the district, a vestige of the Watertown Plank Road, a pioneer era highway, remains as West Richardson Place between North 27th and North 29th Streets. The plank road originally coursed an angular path across the district to the point where State Street now intersects North 35th Street. The blocks formed along Richardson Place are multi-sided polygons of different shapes and sizes. In the north part of the district, State Street borders exceptionally long blocks with few cross streets. This occurred because the tract to the north of State Street was laid out as an upper-class subdivision, Highland Boulevard, and the developers purposely omitted cross streets, except for North 29th and North 33rd Streets, to enhance its exclusive, self-contained quality. This also made it possible to plat estate size lots for the wealthy residents who built mansions along Highland Boulevard. In the center of the district is the former residence of Dr. Robert Faries. His estate was established in the 1850's and originally covered almost all of the block between North 29th and North 31st Streets, and Kilbourn Avenue and West State Street.

When the fringes of the estate were subdivided for residential development in the 1880's, a large part of the original estate was left intact with a "super block" created in this part of the district. Adjacent to the Faries House to the west is the Concordia College campus site, which originally occupied six acres between Kilbourn, State, 31st and 32nd Streets. As the campus expanded, portions of both 32nd Street and Kilbourn Avenue were abandoned, and the land was added to the campus, further disrupting the street pattern. The western part of the district reflects the traditional street grid and block formation that was associated with most of the West Side. Platted in 1885 as Edgewood" subdivision, the area between 32nd and 35th, Wells and State Streets followed the standards of the city's early subdivision code...

The district varies in density. The areas in the east and west parts of the district are the most densely built with fairly consistent lot sizes, setbacks and spacing between the houses. The structures are large and tend to cover most of their lots with only small front yards and usually little or no side yard. Landscaping is at a minimum and is usually limited to foundation plantings, hedges and trees. In many cases at the rear of the lot is a garage, sometimes a carriage barn that is accessible from an alley. The former Concordia College campus and the old Faries

Estate offer great expanses of open space, creating a park like setting in the midst of the district. This is the least dense part of the district.

The architectural character of the district is largely determined by the broad range of residential forms and styles that were popular from the mid-nineteenth century to the early 1920's. Because the district's primary period of development lasted almost 75 years, the styles represented are quite diverse. The period of most intensive development was from 1890 to 1915. During this time, a substantial number of Queen Anne style residences were built along with examples of the Colonial Revival, German Renaissance Revival, Shingle, and Arts and Crafts styles. A large number of the residences were designed by well-known Milwaukee architects whose expertise is exhibited in the high quality of the craftsmanship and materials. This resulted in a neighborhood of architecturally distinctive residences that were occupied by business executives, professionals, and the civic leaders of their day. The exception to the residential development in the district is the Concordia College Campus. By far the largest buildings in the district, they are examples of early twentieth century school design that relied heavily on the Neoclassical and Collegiate Gothic styles.

Prior to its intensive period of development in the 1880's and 1890's, the district was occupied by several pioneer country estates built between 1850 and 1870. The Dr. Robert S. Faries House (c.1850, 1863) at 3011 West State Street is an Italianate villa of load bearing cream brick construction. It is believed that Faries purchased an existing Greek Revival farmhouse about 1850. The third owner, Philetus Yale, built the five-story tower and added the west wing and dormers in 1863. A later residence from this period is the Colonel Theodore Yates House (1868) at 2710 West State Street. It was designed in the Gothic Revival style with steeply pitched roofs and pointed-arched windows and label moldings. These are the only two suburban residences from the initial period of settlement that remain in the district. Another pioneer era house stands today at 2841 W. Richardson Place. The vernacular Greek Revival building was occupied later in its history by Dr. Timothy Wadsworth.

In the later 1880's, following the city's annexation of land west of 27th Street in 1883, intensive residential development began and, with the exception of a few nondescript cottages, all of the new dwellings were substantial, frame, Queen Anne style houses. Their asymmetrical forms are highly decorated with fish scale shingles and embossed panels...

During the 1890's, almost half of the residences in the district were built. Residential design was in transition at this period with a greater emphasis on

dramatic massing and less decorated wall surfaces, and an infusion of Colonial Revival details was applied to traditional Queen Anne house forms of the 1880's. Examples of this are the Emil Schucht House (1891) at 851 North 29th Street, the Charles T. Wettstein House (1892) at 836 North 34th Street, and the Albert Bublitz House (1894) at 3019 West Kilbourn Avenue. In the second half of the decade, wall surfaces became simplified and porches with classical order columns and pedimented window caps began to appear, along with increasing emphasis on the corner turret. Examples of this include the Emil Juergens House (1894) at 2801 West State Street, the George Poppert House (1897) at 2723 West State Street, and the Martin L. Schultz House (1897) at 937 North 33rd Street.

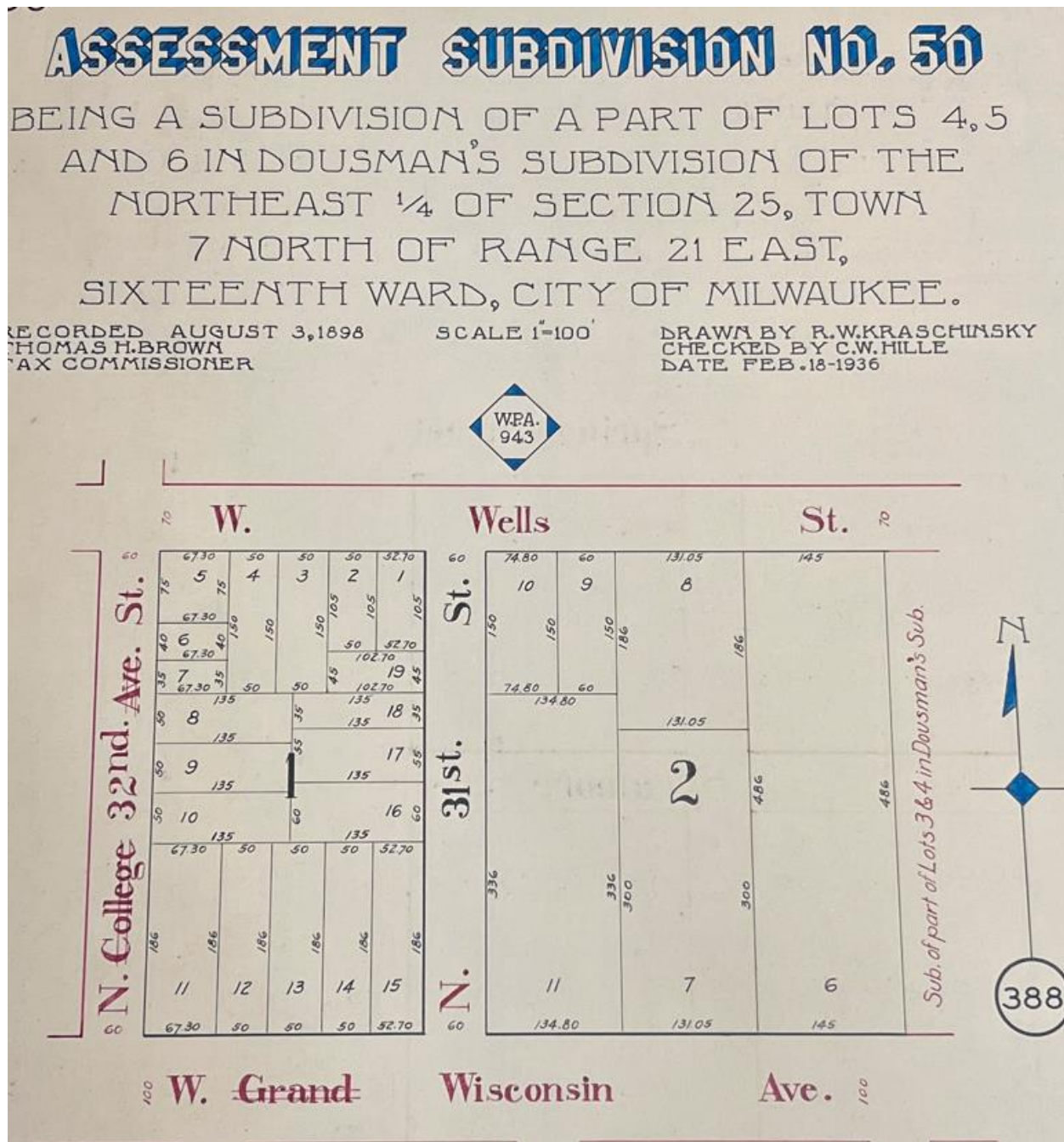
Also beginning in the 1890's, the Colonial Revival style emerged as a style of its own. The style is represented by the Fred Hunt House (1895) at 953 North 33rd Street and the Edward Niedecken House (1905) at 2930 West State Street. As a sub-style of the Colonial Revival, the Shingle Style is also represented in the district by the Abram Bancker House (c.1894) at 936 North 31st Street. An exception to the general norm is the eclectic German Renaissance Revival Ernst Pommer House (1895) at 3035 West Kilbourn Avenue, a highly decorated residence with Flemish gables trimmed in terra cotta.

In the last significant period of residential development from 1900 to 1920, the houses built in the district exemplified the Prairie and Arts and Crafts styles. Those residences influenced by the Prairie Style have hipped roofs with broad overhanging eaves, banded windows and full porches across the front. The style is represented in the district by such residences as 2928 West State Street (1910). Arts and Crafts style influenced houses in the district have little or no adornment on their facades, which are often covered with a combination of two materials including masonry, stucco and wood. Examples include the M. A. Kleinsteuber House (1910) at 2920 West State Street, the Dr. Phillip Rogers House (1908) at 825 North 33rd Street, and the Dr. M. A. Barndt House (1905) at 831 North 33rd Street.

The architecture of Concordia College reflects the influence of the Collegiate Gothic and the Neoclassical styles. These styles were extremely popular and were used extensively on college campuses from about 1900 until after World War II. Those buildings at Concordia in the Collegiate Gothic style are simplified versions of the style, constructed of dark red brick and trimmed with Indiana limestone. These included the Refectory (1925), Wundar Dormitory (1925), and the Gymnasium (1930). Another campus building, the Library (1941) is a red brick structure designed in the Neoclassical style with limestone trim and colossal pilasters that carry a full entablature and pediment on the facade. The oldest campus building is the Concordia College Classroom Building (1900), a two-story,



rectangular, brick structure with a large central block flanked by two smaller wings. It was built in 1900 and was designed by Milwaukee architect Eugene R. Liebert.<sup>1</sup>



The Edanside Apartments were once part of a large west side estate owned by Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad manager, Sherburn S. Merrill. The land was subdivided

<sup>1</sup> City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report Final, Concordia Historic District." 2009.



as Dousman's Subdivision, recorded December 16, 1848. At the time only Spring Street (later known as Grand/Wisconsin Avenue) and Watertown Plank Road were present. The lands containing the subdivision were annexed by the City of Milwaukee when the city expanded west to 35<sup>th</sup> Street in 1888. The 1894 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows both the George Schuster Mansion present to the west of the subject property and a large Queen Anne house adjacent to the east at 3125 Wells Street. Most of the lots on the north side of Wells Street had also been developed by 1894.

The two blocks located between 30<sup>th</sup> Street, 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Wells Street, and Grand Avenue (Wisconsin Avenue) were further subdivided from Dousman's Subdivision and recorded as Assessment Subdivision No. 50 on August 3, 1898. The 1910 Sanborn Map shows a frame dwelling present to the south of the subject parcel at 190 32<sup>nd</sup> Street (now 752 N. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street) but the subject parcel, Lot 5, still vacant. Lot 5 was sold by David G. and Ella Owen to Fred A. and Edna Parsons in March 1924. Mr. Parsons worked as a patent attorney and mechanical engineer.

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## Wells-st Gets Apartment

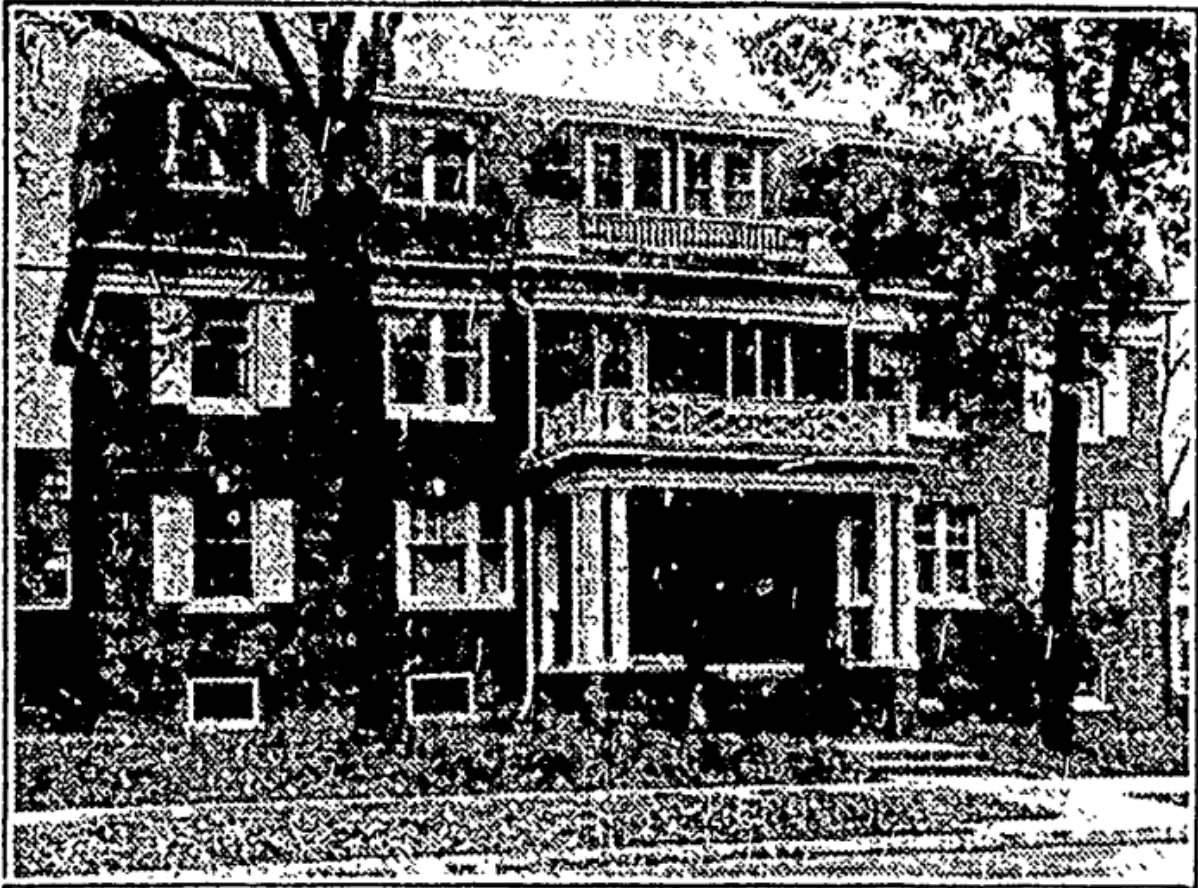
**A permit was issued Thursday to Charles B. Danielson for the erection of a \$21,000 six-apartment building at 3128 Wells-st.**

*Milwaukee Journal, April 17, 1924*

Charles B. Danielson received a permit to construct a \$21,000, six-unit apartment building on April 17, 1924. The permit indicated the size of the building to be 62 ½ feet wide by 35 feet deep and a height of two-and-one-half stories. The apartment was designed by the architectural firm of Rosman & Wierdsma, a firm that Danielson had used on other developments, including the Franklin Arms Apartments (1924, 3120-3128 W. Wisconsin Avenue), Jean Ann Apartments (1928, 617 N. 23<sup>RD</sup> Street) and a cluster of cottages he developed in the 2100 blocks of North 53<sup>rd</sup> and North 54<sup>th</sup> Streets.

City directories show Fred and Edna Parsons residing at the Edanside in Apartment 4, along with other residents starting in 1925. Among the residents that year are Roger and Agnes Kirchhoff. Kirchhoff was an architect with his late-father's firm, Kirchhoff & Rose. The Parsons sold the building to Edwin W. Gutenkunst in 1931 for \$40,000, as noted in the

*Milwaukee Journal* on November 1, 1931.<sup>2</sup> The property changed hands numerous times in the mid-1940s, including at a Sheriff's sale, before being purchased by Frank A. and Jennie Hamerski in 1946. The couple also resided in Apartment 4.



—Journal Staff Photo

## *Apartment Is Sold*

One of the largest real estate deals closed last week was the sale of the apartment building at 3131 Wells st. (shown above), which was sold to E. W. Gutenkunst for Fred A. Parsons, the consideration being \$40,000.

*Milwaukee Journal*, November 1, 1931

The Hamerskis sold the apartment to Gordon and Florence Forbes in 1950 and the Forbes sold to Gustav Schueltzer in July 1954. A building inspection that year found an illegal seventh dwelling unit in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the apartment and a notice was sent to remove the stove and sink and discontinue the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor occupation. In 1959, Schueltzer received

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<sup>2</sup> "Apartment on Wells St. Sold," *Milwaukee Journal*, November 1, 1931.

permission to turn the third floor into a rooming house, with three sleeping rooms and a communal kitchen. Arno and Ester Meyer purchased the property in 1963. The Meyers sold to Floyd Rozga in April 1972. Permits for siding were issued Floyd Rozga, who resided at 3218 W. Cameron Ave., in 1983. The property was purchased by Marvin and Viola Krueger, Krueger Properties, in 1986. The Kruegers continued receiving annual rooming house licenses through the 1990s. Following the demolition of the Queen Anne house just to the east at 3125 West Wells Street, a portion of that property, Lot 4, was joined with the apartment parcel, Lot 5, in 1997. The Krueger's sold the property to Ralph Heineck in 1998 and he sold the property to Matric, Inc. in 2000. The property was briefly owned by Lakeside Effect, LLC from 2014 to 2018 when it was sold to the present owner, Berrada Properties 24, LLC. In July 2025, one of the apartment building suffered a fire, which tragically took the life a young girl.



*Fox6 News Milwaukee Report, July 14, 2025*

## COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE

The following portion of this report is taken from the City of Milwaukee's rehabilitation guide, *As Good As New*, which described Milwaukee's architectural styles, including the Colonial Revival:

Although for most of our young country's history American's had looked to Europe as a source for architectural style, in the 1880s America's tastemakers developed an interest in the stylistic possibilities of our own Colonial heritage. This interest was heightened by the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 which helped to foster an awareness of American history. Seventeenth and eighteenth century housing types, particularly Georgian examples, were viewed as distinctly American and complemented the country's renewed patriotic fervor and nostalgia for



simpler times. Part of this interest contributed to the development of the Queen Anne style, while another aesthetic track evolved into what is termed the Colonial Revival. Rather than directly copying actual eighteenth century buildings, architects working in the Colonial Revival style freely adapted decorative elements and general characteristics of Colonial buildings to suit the expansive Victorian lifestyle. Like elsewhere in the country, this style was popular in Milwaukee from the mid-1890s through World War I. An increasing interest in more accurate copies of early American buildings lead to the emergence of the Georgian Revival style just before World War I.

Colonial Revival houses were most frequently constructed of wood, but they could also be built of brick. When brick was used, it was frequently imported red brick from out-of-state manufacturers rather than the local, cream color variety. Colonial Revival houses were often much larger in scale than real eighteenth century houses. The houses were generally rectangular in shape with a hip, gable, or gambrel roof and large dormers. Bay windows are common. Large front porches, or verandahs, retained their popularity, even though they were not found on real Colonial residences. Classical, two-story porticos were used on large, expensive houses while one-story porches with Classical columns, either plain or fluted, were used on more modest houses. Six-, nine- or twelve-over-one double-hung sash windows were common. Classical eighteenth century features such as Palladian windows, cameo windows, traceried fan lights, side lights, pilasters, quoins, broken pediments, dentils, modillions, and swags were all used to create the desired decorative effect. Examples of Colonial Revival houses can be found in the Upper East Side, West Side, Near South Side, and Bay View neighborhoods.<sup>3</sup>



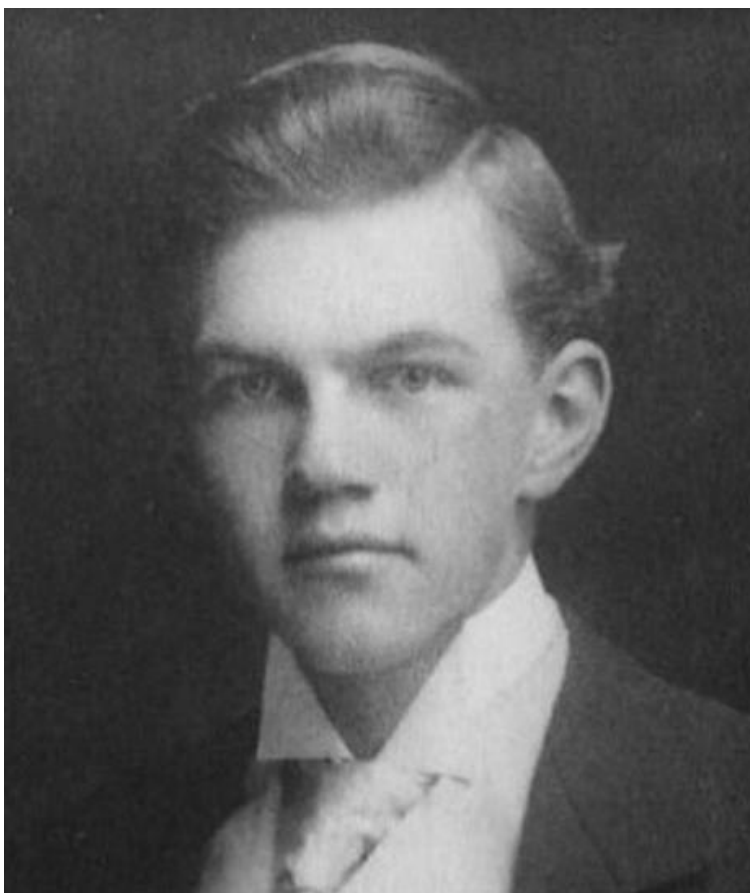
*Colonial Revival style applied to apartments in Milwaukee*

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Jakubovich with Carlen Hatala and Les Vollmert, *As Good As New, Milwaukee: The Department of City Development City of Milwaukee*, 1993, page 20

## DEVELOPER/BUILDER

The Edanside Apartments were developed and constructed by Charles B. Danielson. Charles Bernhard Julius Danielson was born in Milwaukee on May 13, 1885, to Norwegian-born parents Bernhard Julius and Caroline Danielson. Bernhard and Caroline were married and immigrated to the United States in 1872. The family briefly lived in Chicago before moving to Milwaukee around 1875. The family lived at 638 Mineral Street in Walker's Point. Bernhard was listed in city directories and census records as a carpenter-contractor. Sanford Fire Insurance maps show a large fireproof carpenter shop located at the rear of their home. Charles B. Danielson completed two years of public high school and is listed as living at home and working as a book keeper in the 1905 state census. He briefly lived in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he worked as a clerk and where he married Elizabeth Storr in 1906. He appears back in Milwaukee directories as of 1907, where he is listed as being a carpenter, contractor, or builder in subsequent directories. It is likely he learned carpentry and contracting from his father. Charles B., Elizabeth, and their five children continued living in the family home in Walker's Point following the death of Charles' mother and father in 1918 and 1921, respectively. City directories show him as a contractor working for himself through the 1920s.



*Undated photo of Charles B. Danielson*

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s newspapers reported on developments built by Danielson. A 1921 report described a development in the 5300 block of W. Lloyd Street that utilized smart building placement to maximize shared courtyard space between the homes built on tiny lots.<sup>4</sup> A 1928 story described the newly built Jean Ann Apartments, 617 N. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, as being “in the class of the most modern artistic and comfortable apartments to be found,” yet with rents affordable to those of modest means.<sup>5</sup> Both projects were also designed by Rosman & Wierdsma, the firm that designed the Edanside Apartments. By 1930, the family had relocated to 286 Mountain Avenue in the exclusive Washington Highlands neighborhood in Wauwatosa. Charles Danielson was sued for divorce by his wife in 1931, with charges of cruelty and nonsupport and claims that Mr. Danielson had been “associated with another woman for two years.”<sup>6</sup> The divorce was granted on February 4, 1932, but census records show the divorced couple both living with son, Jule, on N. 88<sup>th</sup> Street in 1940. Danielson was still listed as a builder in 1940 but a World War II draft registration card from 1942 lists his employer as Chain Belt Co. Charles B. Danielson died at the home of his daughter on November 17, 1947.<sup>7</sup> Danielson is interred at Forest Home Cemetery, where Elizabeth would join him in 1975.

## ARCHITECTS

Rosman and Wierdsma designed the Edanside Apartments in 1924. Miner R. Rosman (1884-1940) and Oliver W. Wierdsma (1893-1978) operated in partnership from 1919 through 1930. Miner Rosman was born in Whitewater and graduated from Beloit College before relocating to Milwaukee in 1904. He worked as a draftsman for the local firm of Leenhouts and Guthrie early in his career. Oliver Wierdsma was a Milwaukee native who also worked as a draftsman for Leenhouts and Guthrie in his early architectural career. The pair left their employer and established their own firm in 1919. The firm “played a significant role in the development of large, period revival style apartment buildings, a building type that reached its apogee in Milwaukee during the 1920's.”<sup>8</sup> Among their other notable works are Franklin Arms Apartments (1923, 3120-3128 W. Wisconsin Ave.), Roosevelt Arms Apartments (1924, 2324 W. Wisconsin Ave.), Jean Ann Apartments (1928, 617 N. 23<sup>rd</sup> Street), Underwriter’s Exchange Building (1923, 828 N. Broadway), the Knickerbocker Hotel (1929, 1028 E. Juneau Ave.), Biltmore Apartment Hotel (demolished), and Marquette Apartments (1926, 1628 W. Wisconsin Ave.). The loss of

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<sup>4</sup> “Three Houses of Unique Development,” *Milwaukee Journal*, May 1, 1921.

<sup>5</sup> “Jean Ann Apartments Are Open,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 18, 1928.

<sup>6</sup> “Building Contractor Is Sued for Divorce,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, September 12, 1931; “Another Woman Alleged in Suit,” *Milwaukee Journal*, September 12, 1931.

<sup>7</sup> “Death, Funeral Notices,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 19, 1947.

<sup>8</sup> City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. “Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, Biltmore Apartment Hotel,” 6.



commissions after the onset of the Great Depression led to the dissolution of the firm in 1930. Rosman subsequently worked out of small offices and briefly formed a new partnership with Robert H. Smith in 1939 as Rosman and Smith, before his death in 1940. Wierdsma relocated to Oconomowoc and founded Oliver Construction Company, a firm responsible for the construction of the Waukesha County Courthouse and Waukesha County Technical Institute. Wierdsma died at age 84 in 1978.<sup>9</sup>



*Underwriter's Exchange Building (1923, 828 N. Broadway)*



*Franklin Arms Apartments (1923), 3120-3128 W. Wisconsin Avenue*

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Edanside Apartments, 3131 West Wells Street, and its attached land be given historic designation as a City of Milwaukee Historic Site as a result of its fulfillment of criteria f-5 and f-6 of Section 320-21(3) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

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<sup>9</sup> City of Milwaukee, Historic Preservation Commission. "Permanent Historic Designation Study Report, Grand Avenue Apartments Historic District," 7.

- f-5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

The Edanside Apartments is a great example of the Colonial Revival style applied to a small-scale apartment building. The Colonial Revival style, popular from the late-1880s through 1920s, was most often found on single and two-family residential structures. The Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory identifies 431 such structures within the city but only 32 Colonial Revival style apartment buildings. Like the Edanside Apartments, a number of these Colonial Revival style apartment buildings were designed by prestigious Milwaukee architecture firms such as Martin Tullgren & Sons, Tullgren & Hood, Henry C. Koch, and Eschweiler and Eschweiler. The Edanside Apartments' modestly applied Colonial Revival style is evident with its symmetrical façade, red brick cladding, six and eight-over-one windows, brick flat arches with limestone keystones, decorative entrance with columns, etc. Prior to the recent fire, the exterior retained remarkable integrity, with the only changes evident in the removal of the third floor balustrade, replacement siding on the dormers, and a few infilled window openings.

- f-6. Its identification as the work of an artist, architect, craftsman or master builder whose individual works have influenced the development of the city.

The Edanside Apartments were designed by the firm of Rosman & Wierdsma. Miner R. Rosman and Oliver W. Wierdsma's partnership lasted eleven years and resulted in a number of period revival apartments. In addition to the Colonial Revival Edanside Apartments, the firm designed apartment buildings in the Mediterranean Revival (1920, 719 E. Knapp Street; Lakeside Apartments, 1922, 829 N. Cass Street), Tudor Revival (Roosevelt Arms Apartment Building, 1925, 2234 W. Wisconsin Avenue), Neoclassical (Marquette Apartments, 1926, 1628 W. Wisconsin Avenue), and Art Deco (LaSalle Hotel, 1927, 721-729 N. 11<sup>th</sup> Street; Franklin Arms Apartments, 1924, 3120-3128 W. Wisconsin Avenue) architectural styles. The Edanside is the only Colonial Revival style building designed by the firm that is identified in the Wisconsin Architecture and History Inventory. The firm may have designed other buildings in the style but they have not yet been identified or surveyed. A number of the firm's designs are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, amongst them the Knickerbocker Hotel (929, 1028 E. Juneau Avenue), Underwriter's Exchange Building (1924, 828 N. Broadway), and J. William V. Hatch House (1920, 2524 N. Grant Boulevard).

## MAJOR SOURCES

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## PRESERVATION GUIDELINES FOR THE EDANSIDE APARTMENTS

The following preservation guidelines represent the principal concerns of the Historic Preservation Commission regarding this historic designation. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon design submissions. Building maintenance and restoration must follow accepted preservation practices as outlined below. The intent of the guidelines is to preserve the buildings as closely as possible to their original form and details. Nothing in these guidelines shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or restoration and/or replacement of documented original elements.

Any exterior alteration, exclusive of painting of non-masonry surfaces, will require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Any existing exterior features can remain for their lifespan. The historic designation does not mean that owners are required to restore their buildings to original condition, but that changes are subject to review so that they are compatible with the historic character of the building.

These guidelines are based upon those contained in MCO 320-21-11 & 12 of the historic preservation ordinance. These guidelines serve as a guide for making changes that will be sensitive to the architectural integrity of the structure and appropriate to the overall character of the building.

### I. Roofs

- A. Retain the original roof shape. Dormers, skylights and solar collector panels may be added to roof surfaces if they do not visually intrude upon those elevations visible from the public right-of-way. Avoid making changes to the roof shape that would alter the building height, roofline, pitch, or gable orientation.
- B. Retain the original roofing materials wherever possible. Avoid using new roofing materials that are inappropriate to the style and period of the building and neighborhood.
- C. Replace deteriorated roof coverings with new materials that match the old in size, shape, color and texture. Avoid replacing deteriorated roof covering with new materials that differ to such an extent from the old in size, shape, color and texture so that the appearance of the building is altered.

### II. Masonry, Stone, & Terra Cotta

- A. Unpainted brick or stone or terra cotta must not be painted or covered. Painting masonry is historically incorrect and could cause irreversible

damage if it was decided to remove the paint at a later date. Covering masonry with other materials (wood, sheet metal, vinyl siding, etc.) is not allowed.

- B. Re-point defective mortar by duplicating the original in color, hardness, texture, joint finish and joint width. See the masonry chapter in the book *Good for Business* for explanations on why the use of a proper mortar mix is crucial to making lasting repairs that will not contribute to new deterioration of the masonry. Using much harder, contemporary Portland cement mortar will not make a lasting repair and can damage the historic brick and stone and terra cotta. Replaced mortar joints should be tooled to match the style of the original. Do not use mortar colors and pointing styles that were unavailable or were not used when the building was constructed. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before starting any re-pointing.
- C. In the future should masonry cleaning be necessary it should be done only with the gentlest method possible. Sandblasting or high-pressure water blasting or the use of other abrasive materials (baking soda, nut shells, dry ice, etc.) on limestone, terra cotta, pressed brick or cream brick surfaces is prohibited. This method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration. The use of accepted chemical products to clean masonry is allowed and a test panel is required before general commencement of the work. Work should be done by experienced individuals as the chemical cleaning process can have a negative impact on the masonry. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before any cleaning would begin.
- D. Repair or replace deteriorated masonry with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. The use of EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems) which is synthetic stucco is not permitted. Neither is fake brick veneer. Consultation with historic preservation staff and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required before attempting work on the masonry.

### III. Wood/Metal

- A. Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid the indiscriminate removal of architectural features that are in most cases an essential part of the building's character and appearance.
- B. Retain or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Covering wood or metal with aluminum, artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, or vinyl, aluminum or other substitute material is not permitted. Spot replacement or spot repair of any deteriorated elements is encouraged rather than complete removal and replication. Structural wood epoxies are suggested for the lasting repair of damaged or decayed areas of wood trim.

Any new elements must replicate the pattern, dimension, spacing and material of the originals.

#### IV. Windows and Doors

- A. Retain existing window and door openings. Retain the present configuration of panes, sash, lintels, keystones, sills, architraves, pediments, hoods, doors, shutters, and hardware except for the restoration to the original condition.
- B. Do not make additional openings or changes in the fenestration by enlarging or reducing window or door sizes to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes. Avoid changing the size or configuration of windowpanes or sash.
- C. Avoid discarding original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired or reused. Use storm windows or protective glazing which have glazing configurations similar to the prime windows and which obscure the prime windows as little as possible.
- D. The use of structural wood epoxies is strongly encouraged to repair and minor damage or decay to windows.
- E. Respect the stylistic period or periods the building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the appearance and design of the original window sash or door.
- F. Avoid using inappropriate sash and door replacements such as unpainted galvanized aluminum storm and screen window combinations. Avoid the filling in or covering of openings with materials like glass-block or the installation of plastic or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that are not in proportion to the openings or that are historically out of the character with the building.
- G. Avoid using modern style window units such as horizontal sliding sash in place of double-hung sash or the substitution of units with glazing configurations not appropriate to the style of the building. In the event and windows need to be replaced, however, consultation with Historic preservation is required to determine appropriate glazing patterns.
- H. Tinted low-e glass is not acceptable unless meeting NPS standards, at the time of this writing that standard is .72VLT.
- I. Vinyl and vinyl clad prime window units are not permitted. Other non-wood materials may be considered based on their ability to match the historic window details with the most accuracy.
- J. Steel security doors and windows guards are generally not allowed where they are visible from the street. If permitted, the doors or grates must be of the simplest design and installed to be as unobtrusive as possible.



## V. Porches, Trim and Ornamentation

- A. Retain porches and steps visible from the public right-of-way that are historically and architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architectural features, such as handrails, balusters, columns or brackets.
- B. Retain trim and decorative ornamentation including copper downspouts and guttering, copings, cornices, cresting, finials, railings, balconies, oriel, pilasters, columns, chimneys, bargeboards or decorative panels. Avoid the removal of trim and decorative ornamentation that is essential to the maintenance of the building's historic character and appearance.
- C. Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using replacement materials that do not accurately reproduce the appearance of the original material.

## VI. Additions

Make additions that harmonize with the existing building architecturally and are located so as not visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible. Avoid making additions that are unsympathetic to the original structure and visually intrude upon the principal elevations.

## VII. Guidelines for Streetscapes

The streetscape on the 3100 block of West Wells is consistent as existing in 2025. There are few prominent inappropriate additions to historic structures. The traditional landscape treatment of the building lots and the period streetlights contribute to the maintenance of this property's traditional residential character.

- A. Maintain the height, scale, mass and materials established by the buildings on the block and the traditional setback and density of the block faces. Avoid introducing elements that are incompatible in terms of siting, materials, height or scale.
- B. Use traditional landscaping, fencing, signage and street lighting that is compatible with the character and period of the property. Avoid introducing landscape features, fencing, street lighting or signage that are inappropriate to the character of the block.

VIII. Signs/Exterior Lighting

Should there be an application for signage, plastic internally illuminated box signs with a completely acrylic face are not permitted. Approval will be based on the sign's compatibility with the architectural character of the historic building.

IX. Guidelines for New Construction

It is important that new construction be designed to be as sympathetic as possible with the character of the structure. These guidelines are included, however, to be consistent with the guidelines for all locally designated historic properties. Small-scale accessory structures, like a gazebo, garage/parking pad or fountain, may be permitted depending on their size, scale and form and the property's ability to accommodate such a structure. Any request to construct a new garage/parking pad would be subject to review for code compliance and appropriate design and would require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- A. Siting. New construction must reflect the traditional siting of the building. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and accessory buildings.
- B. Scale. Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and individual building components such as porches, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surrounding structures.
- C. Form. The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surrounding buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.
- D. Materials. The building materials that are visible from the public right-of-way should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used in the Grand Avenue Apartments Historic District. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.

X. Guidelines for Demolition

Although demolition is not encouraged and is generally not permissible, there may be instances when demolition may be acceptable if approved by the Historic Preservation Commission. The following guidelines, with those found in subsection 9(h) of the ordinance, shall be taken into consideration by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests.

- A. Condition. Demolition requests may be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the condition of a building or a portion thereof is such that it constitutes an immediate threat to health and safety.
- B. Importance. Consideration will be given to whether or not the building is of historical or architectural significance or displays a quality of material and craftsmanship that does not exist in other structures in the area.
- C. Location. Consideration will be given to whether the building contributes to the neighborhood and the general street appearance and has a positive effect on other buildings in the area.
- D. Potential for Restoration. Consideration will be given to whether the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.
- E. Additions. Consideration will be given to whether or not the proposed demolition is a later addition that is not in keeping with the original design of the structure or does not contribute to its character.

## IMAGES



**Figure 1.** 3133 West Wells Street, 1984 survey photo. Wisconsin Historical Society #113697.



**Figure 2.** West Wells Street, 1987 survey photo. Wisconsin Historical Society #113697.





**Figure 3** 3131 West Wells Street, 2023.





**Figure 4** 3131 West Wells Street, 2023.



**Figure 5.** 3131 West Wells Street, 2023.





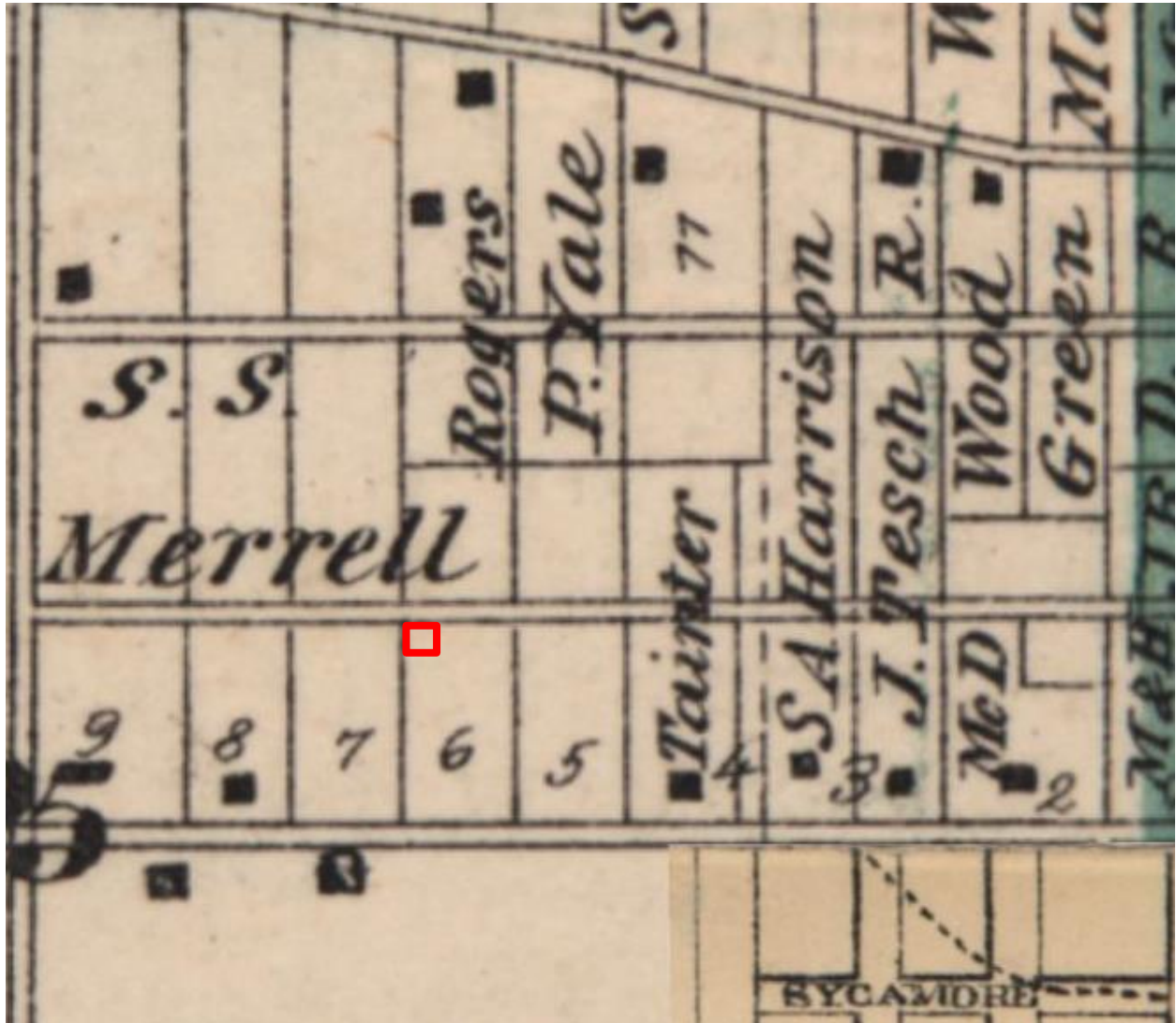
**Figure 6.** 3131 West Wells Street following the July 2025 fire.



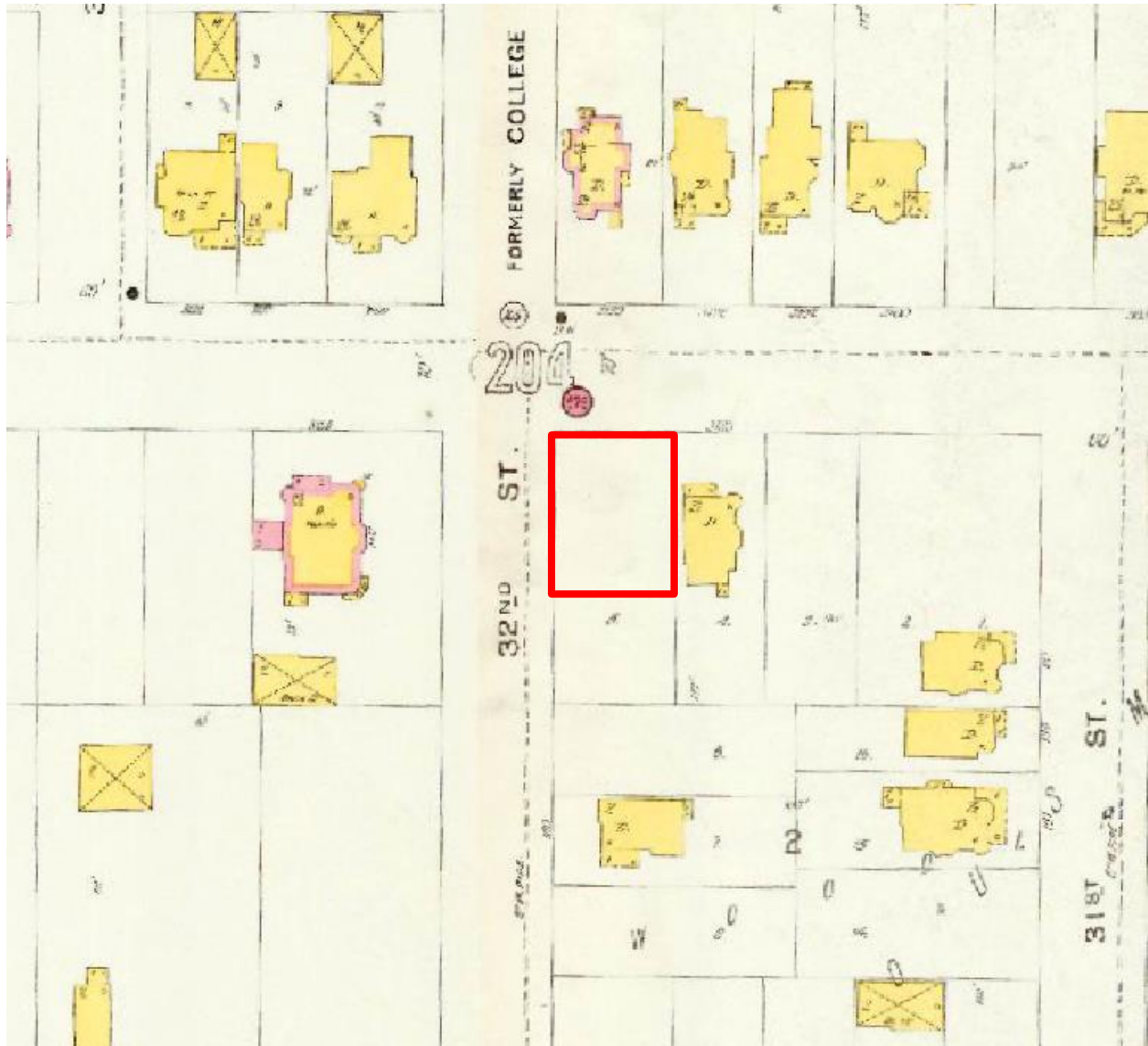
**Figure 7** 3131 West Wells Street following the July 2025 fire



## MAPS



**Map 1.** 1876 plat map showing the location of 3131 West Wells Street marked on property owned by Sherburn S. Merrill.



**Map 2.** Digital Sanborn Maps of Milwaukee, 1894. Subject parcel undeveloped. Recently completed George Schuster House located just to the west of the subject property. New York : Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Limited, 1894. American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries.



