

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
DESIGNATION REPORT**

**Kimberlee Apartments
1300 Reece Road
Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina**



**Prepared for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission
by Heather Fearnbach, Fearnbach History Services, Inc.
3334 Nottingham Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27104**

April 2021

- 1. Name and location of property:** Kimberlee Apartments is located at 1300 Reece Road in Charlotte, North Carolina, 28209
- 2. Name and address of the current owner of the property:**
The Kimberlee, Inc., c/o Hunt Allen, 1300 Reece Road, Charlotte, North Carolina, 28209
- 3. Representative photographs of the property:** This report contains representative photographs of the property.
- 4. A map depicting the location of the property:** This report contains an aerial view of the 4.61-acre tax parcel.
- 5. Current tax parcel reference and deed to the property:** Mecklenburg County tax parcel #17518102; Deed Book 2459, page 1
- 6. A brief historical sketch of the property:** This report contains a history of the property written by Heather Fearnbach.
- 7. A brief architectural description of the property:** This report contains an architectural description of the property written by Heather Fearnbach.
- 8. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets the criteria for designation set forth in N. C. Gen. Stat. 160A-400.5:**
 - a. Special significance in terms of its history, architecture, and/or cultural importance:**

Kimberlee Apartments possesses special architectural significance in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County based upon the following consideration:

 1. The building, one of Charlotte’s most distinctive and intact mid-twentieth-century Modernist apartment towers, is distinguished by its six-story height, massing, architectural style, high level of integrity, location, and ownership structure. Area housing demand following the adjacent Park Road Shopping Center’s 1956 completion inspired Godley Construction Company to plan and erect Kimberlee Apartments per the design of the prolific Charlotte architecture firm Charles Morrison Grier and Associates. The substantial and stylish apartment tower manifests Charlotte’s rapid mid-twentieth century growth.
 - b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and/or association:**

The architectural description in this report illustrates that the building meets this criterion.
- 9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal:** Designation would allow the owner to apply for an automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property which becomes a designated “historic landmark.” The current appraised value of the property is \$16,197,400.
- 10. Portion of the property recommended for designation:** The interior and exterior of the building as well as the associated original auxiliary structures and landscape and hardscape elements on the approximately 4.61-acre parcel as shown on the boundary map.
- 11. Submittal date of this report:** April 2021

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North elevation, looking southeast
(all photographs taken by Heather Fearnbach on February 25, 2021)

Statement of Significance

Kimberlee Apartments possesses special local architectural significance as one of Charlotte's most distinctive and intact mid-twentieth-century Modernist apartment towers. The building is distinguished by its height, massing, architectural style, high level of integrity, location, and ownership structure. Planned and erected by Godley Construction Company per the design of the architecture firm Charles Morrison Grier and Associates, the substantial and stylish six-story building completed in 1965 has a long, flat-roofed form. The two-wing brick, steel, and concrete structure features a central lobby accessed via a portico with a distinctive concrete sawtooth canopy and Japanese rock garden. Running-bond wire-cut brown-brick walls contrast with smooth-finish ivory-painted-concrete balcony cornices, canopies, and balcony balustrades. A Modernist influence is apparent in the connectivity between inside and outside spaces perpetuated by expansive aluminum-frame windows, curtain walls, and sliding-glass doors. Each efficiency, one-, two-, or three-bedroom unit has a balcony. Public spaces maintain original volumes and features. The entrance lobby is characterized by polished terrazzo floors and baseboards in high-traffic areas, painted-panel walls, textured ceilings, and a Modernist mezzanine railing with narrow metal balusters and a flat wood handrail. Original auxiliary structures including four long flat-roofed carports; the flat-roofed, steel, elevated walkway; three geometric-pattern concrete-block walls; running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick retaining walls; a brick grill; concrete benches; three tubular steel-frame benches; and the kidney-shaped pool and concrete patio contribute to the site's Modernist aesthetic.

The aforementioned resources and the apartment building retain significantly greater integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship than other extant mid-twentieth-century suburban Charlotte apartment buildings. Additionally, the elevated walkway, which provides access to the adjacent 1956 Park Road Shopping Center, Charlotte's first "open-air" retail plaza, is an amenity unique to Kimberlee Apartments. The mixed-use shopping center, by far the largest in Charlotte at that time, drew consumers from throughout the region and escalated demand for neighboring housing. The shopping center's proximity inspired Fred Godley to investigate potential land acquisitions in the area, resulting in Godley Construction Company's construction of Kimberlee Apartments, which was the only apartment tower erected by the prolific developer.

Although cooperative apartments, where individuals purchase shares in a corporation that owns and manages the building rather than real estate, were common in large urban centers, Kimberlee Apartments and Tropicana Apartments, both Charlotte projects initiated in 1963, are said to be the first two such endeavors in North Carolina. Shareholders elect a board of directors and collaboratively subsidize mortgage payments, building and landscape maintenance, utilities other than electricity, staff salaries, insurance, and real estate taxes.¹ Kimberlee Apartments, Inc. was headed by the property’s developers Fred, M. R., Robert, and William Godley, until all units were sold, when shareholders assumed management. In February 2001, shareholders changed the company’s name to The Kimberlee, Inc. The period of significance is 1965, the construction completion date.



Location Map, 2020 aerial from Mecklenburg County GIS <https://polaris3g.mecklenburgcountync.gov>

1" = 100' scale 

¹ Emery Wister, “Co-op Apartments to be First in North Carolina,” *CN*, January 11, 1963, p. 1; Emery Wister, “Cooperative Apartments Blossoming,” *CN*, September 18, 1964, p. 15A.

Setting

Kimberlee Apartments occupies a 4.61-acre lot at 1300 Reece Road approximately three miles south of Charlotte's central business district. The area immediately outside of the parcel boundary is characterized by commercial and residential development. Commercial buildings front Woodlawn and Park Roads, while the surrounding area is otherwise predominantly residential.

The long, flat-roofed, six-story, Modernist apartment building differs in architectural character and scale from the traditionally styled, one-story, hip- and gable-roofed, single-family homes to the north on Reece Road and Arbor Lane, most of which were erected in the 1950s and 1960s. These residences stand closer to the street than their rear lot lines, contributing to a regular façade rhythm and allowing for large back yards. Infill three-story brick townhouse construction is underway on several parcels.

Near the center of the apartments' south parking lot, a straight run of steel stairs rises to the elevated covered steel walkway that spans the service road north of the adjacent Park Road Shopping Center, a popular "open-air" retail plaza that opened in November 1956 with thirty-two stores and a parking lot with a 2,400-vehicle capacity on a forty-acre site. The completion of the Modernist one-story steel-and-concrete complex designed by the architecture firm Holroyd, Folk, and Gray with a variety of storefronts stimulated neighboring development. The mixed-use shopping center, by far the largest in Charlotte at that time, drew consumers from throughout the region.²

East of Kimberlee Apartments, segments of Little Sugar Creek Greenway, a linear park adjacent to the stream of the same name, currently extend from Cordelia Park to Twelfth Street, from East Seventh Street to Brandywine Road east of Park Road Shopping Center, and then from Tyvola Road to I-485. Little Sugar Creek Greenway is an element of Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation's thirty-five-mile trail system. East of the greenway, the Myers Park neighborhood surrounds Myers Park Country Club and Queens University to the north. The Interstate 77 corridor is about 2.5 miles to the west.

Landscape and Hardscape Overview

Kimberlee Apartments faces north in the central portion of a lot that gradually declines in elevation to the east. A narrow front lawn, C-shaped concrete entrance drive, concrete municipal sidewalk, and grass median fill the area between the building and Reece Road. Deciduous and evergreen trees and landscaped beds containing woody shrubs including roses, Japanese hollies, and Gold Dust acuba as well as perennials such as vinca punctuate the front and side yards. Mature juniper shrubs line the north elevation. On the central entrance portico, raised beds with running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick walls contain original Japanese rock garden elements.³ The dawn redwoods near the front lawn's east and west ends are also original landscape features.

West of the building, a short concrete-paved drive flanked by painted-brick square posts and low walls provides egress from Reece Road to the asphalt-paved parking lot that extends south and east of the building. A black-finished-aluminum fence spans the west parking lot's north end. West of the fence,

² "Opens Tomorrow!" and "Park Road Shopping Center Set to Open," *Charlotte News* (hereafter abbreviated *CN*), November 14, 1956, p. 3C; Thomas W. Hanchett, *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 243-244.

³ Kendrick Brick and Tile Company, based in Monroe, North Carolina, supplied the brick used through the complex. William C. Godley, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach on March 2, 2021.

a low running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick retaining wall surrounds a landscaped area featuring perimeter plantings including azaleas and Japanese hollies. A north-south row of tall willow oak trees borders the intersecting north-south and east-west concrete walks. Original amenities include three tubular-steel-frame benches with unpainted-three-board seats and backs situated along the walks and the running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick grill with three charcoal grates at the walk's south end. The aluminum picnic table with four integral backless benches in the grass lawn's northeast corner is a recent addition.



West garden, looking north (above) and carports and south wall, looking southeast (below)

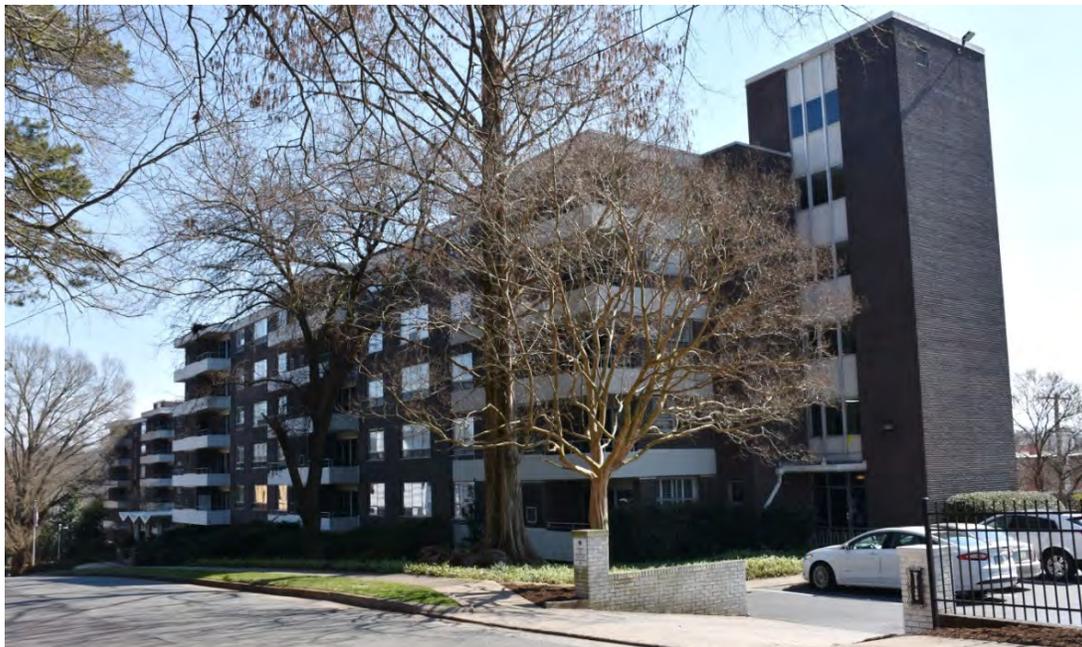


In the parcel's westernmost section, a dense boxwood hedge borders the lawn's north and west edges, screening the kidney-shaped pool and concrete patio. Sweet gum trees shade lawn's west section. A black-chain-link fence and gate secures the pool area's east end. Along most of the parcel's south edge, a painted concrete-block wall topped with geometric-pattern concrete-block spanning concrete-capped brick posts provides privacy. A matching wall borders the recycling area at the building's southeast corner. East of the pool enclosure, four long flat-roofed carports line the parking lot's south edge.

Resource List

Kimberlee Apartments, 1965
Japanese Rock Garden, 1965
Carports, 1965
Elevated Walkway, 1965
Concrete-block Walls, 1965
Pool, 1965
Brick Grill, 1965

Kimberlee Apartments, 1965



Northwest oblique (above) and north elevation, looking northwest (below)



Exterior

The expansive two-wing, flat-roofed, six-story, brick, steel, and concrete structure was erected in two phases beginning in October 1963. The west wing was completed in 1964, followed by the east wing in 1965. Large, multi-section, aluminum-frame windows, curtain walls, and sliding-glass balcony doors pierce running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick walls. Fenestration reflects room function. Original six- and four-section windows with tall fixed panes and short tilt-in lower sash illuminate bedrooms. Replacement aluminum-frame curtain walls with sliding-glass doors light living rooms and provide balcony access. Brick lattice walls enclose small utility rooms at each balcony's center. Slender aluminum railings top smooth-finish ivory-painted-concrete balcony balustrades. Tall ivory-painted-concrete cornices also add aesthetic interest. A large stylized aluminum "K" for Kimberlee is mounted on the east blind portion of the central hyphen's north wall.

A concrete sawtooth canopy with tapered concrete posts shelters the entrance to the two-story lobby at the north elevation's center. Full-height aluminum-frame curtain walls comprising large fixed panes separated by ivory-painted porcelain-enameled panels illuminate the lobby, the adjacent six-story hyphen to the south, the penthouse lounge atop the east wing, and the stair and elevator towers that extend from the building's east and west ends. The panels, originally bright yellow, were painted in the 1980s.⁴ A shallow vestibule with two double-leaf aluminum-frame glazed doors projects from the center of the lobby's north wall. Rectangular blue slate sheathes the portico floor and two straight runs of steps with central and perimeter tubular aluminum railings. Brick-walled planting beds containing original Japanese rock garden elements flank the lobby entrance and steps.



North elevation, lobby and hyphen (left) and northwest entrance (right)

⁴ Murlene Boliek, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach on March 18, 2021.

On the east and west stair and elevator towers' north elevations, flat concrete canopies surmount aluminum-frame curtain walls with central single-leaf doors. Metal railings with a Modernist zig-zag motif border concrete sidewalks between the parking lot and entrances. The west walk is flat. The east walk gradually steps down to the east due to the sloping grade, which also necessitates concrete steps and a concrete landing at the northeast entrance. Rectangular blue slate sheathes both entrance floors. Single-leaf steel doors on the stair towers' south elevations provide egress. A straight-slope aluminum canopy covers the southeast entrance. Original backless concrete two-leg benches with chamfered edges remain at the northwest and southeast entrances.

Double-leaf steel doors on the south elevation provide access to ground-level storage rooms. A one-story flat-roofed loading dock projects from the south elevation's center. A double-leaf steel door secures the dock entrance. East of the dock, concrete steps rise to a concrete landing with brick walls adjacent to a single-leaf steel corridor door recessed in a shallow opening. The corridor extends to the lobby. West of the dock on the main block's south wall, a single-leaf steel door supplies central stair tower and lobby egress.



South elevation, looking northeast (above) and southeast oblique (below)



Interior

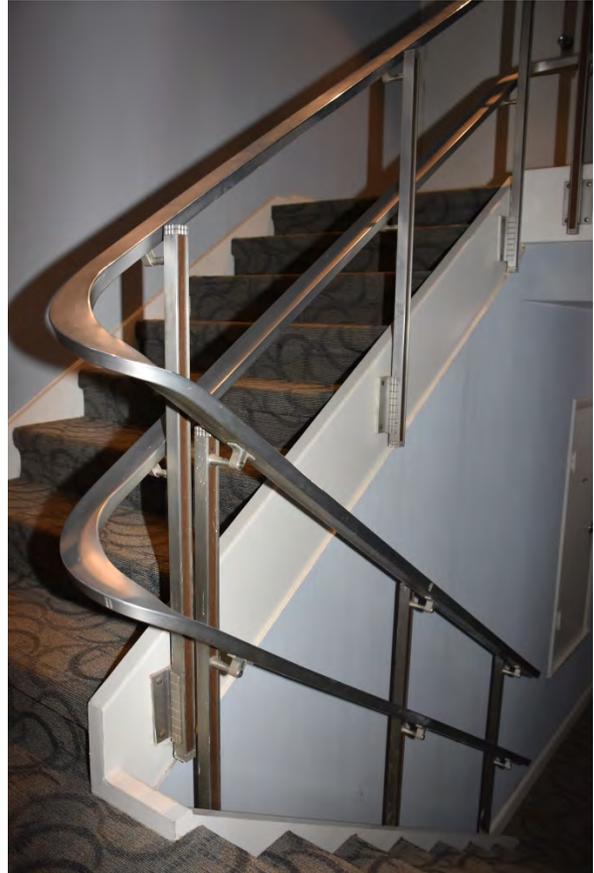
Kimberlee Apartments encompasses two expansive six-story wings flanking a central full-height hyphen and two-story entrance lobby. Public spaces maintain original volumes and features. The entrance lobby is characterized by polished terrazzo floors and baseboards in high-traffic areas, painted-panel walls, textured ceilings, and a Modernist mezzanine railing with narrow metal balusters and a flat wood handrail. The dark wood paneling was painted in the 1980s. The pendant chandelier and light fixtures were installed around 2012. The northeast seating and northwest reception areas and the southwest office and conference room are carpeted. The building directory and original brass tenant mailboxes and USPS collection box are mounted on walls at the lobby's south end. The office and conference room have suspended acoustical-tile ceilings with fluorescent light panels. An original freestanding steel vault remains in the office. The east and north walls of the conference room, initially an open reception area, are frosted glass installed in the 1980s above the original built-in wood reception desk at its east end and matching wood-paneled north counter.⁵



Entrance lobby, looking northwest

At the entrance lobby's south end, an elevator and enclosed stair provide access to lobbies on each floor. Aluminum elevator door surrounds, call button plates, and floor location indicators contribute to the Modernist aesthetic. Concrete and steel stairs have painted-tubular-steel railings. Corridors and lobbies have suspended acoustical-tile ceilings with fluorescent light panels and circa 2012 carpeting and wallpaper. Laundry rooms are immediately east of the elevator shaft on each floor. Concrete-block walls and textured ceilings are painted in laundry rooms and stair towers. Original enameled porcelain laundry sinks remain. Elevator and stair towers are also located at the building's east and west ends. Small rooms adjacent to the east and west elevator and stair lobbies house trash chutes that empty at ground level. On the first floor, at the east wing's southwest corner, a carpeted concrete and steel stair with a Modernist aluminum railing supplies ground-level apartment egress. Two restrooms are on the west side of the short north-south corridor at the ground floor's west end.

⁵ Remodeling dates supplied by Murlene Boliek, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach on March 18, 2021.



Entrance lobby, looking south (left) and stair between lobby and east wing's ground level (right)
Second-floor lobby, looking west (below)





Fifth-floor lobby, looking west (above) and Skyview Lounge, looking south (below)



Above the east wing, the penthouse, known as the Skyview Lounge, encompasses an expansive open room, kitchen, and two restrooms. The kitchen and the south half of the lounge have vinyl-composition-tile floors. The lounge's north half is carpeted. Both rooms have suspended acoustical-tile ceilings with fluorescent light panels. The completely intact restrooms retain single-leaf flat blonde-wood doors; built-in, slant-front, two-door vanities with aluminum trim and tapered feet; laminate counters; drop-in, turquoise-porcelain, oval sinks; steel stall walls and doors; turquoise-porcelain toilets; patterned mosaic-ceramic-tile floors; and ceramic-tile baseboards. Frameless mirrors and fluorescent strip lights surmount the vanities



Skyview Lounge women's restroom (left) and Fifth floor corridor (right)
Unit G15 living room, looking north (below)



Efficiency, one, two, and three-bedroom units ranging in size from 450 to 1,110 square feet flank the east-west corridors extending from the lobbies. The apartments were state-of-the-art in the 1960s, as they contained individually controlled heating and air conditioning units and a full complement of electric appliances. Other original features included custom kitchens with birch cabinets, laminate counters, square-ceramic-tile backsplashes and vinyl-composition-tile floors; short wood baseboards; simple narrow wood door surrounds; single-leaf flat-panel wood doors; neutral carpeting; textured ceilings; and bathrooms with built-in vanities, porcelain American Standard fixtures in colors including white and turquoise, square-ceramic-tile tub/shower surrounds, and patterned mosaic-ceramic-tile floors. Original folding wood closet doors have patterned raised panels or louvers above smooth raised panels. Although most units have been updated, floor plans are substantially intact. Exceptions include several instances where bathrooms have been enlarged or adjacent units have been combined. Original carpeting has gradually been replaced with new carpeting, stained concrete, engineered wood, or ceramic tile. Kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities have been painted or replaced.



Unit G15 central bedroom, looking south (above)

The building's structural system—unpainted concrete-block walls, concrete floors and ceilings, and square reinforced-concrete posts—is exposed in the one-story mechanical room and loading dock that projects from the central hyphen's south wall and the ground-level storage area beneath the west wing. Equipment fills the mechanical room's east section, while the west section provides temporary storage. The central elevator's rear door is on the mechanical room's north wall. The central stair tower, accessed from the short corridor at the entrance lobby's southwest corner, provides egress to the south parking lot and the west wing's ground level, where frame-and-wire-mesh walls enclose tenant storage areas.

Landscape and Hardscape Features



North entrance portico, looking east (above) and looking west (below)



Japanese Rock Garden, 1965

At the original Japanese Rock garden on the primary entrance portico, stones of myriad sizes, small bonsai maple trees, and ferns fill raised beds with running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick walls. Lighting is mounted on posts and concealed in below-grade concrete canisters at the brick-bordered inner corners of the two largest beds flanking the entrance vestibule.



West garden and carports, looking east (above) and elevated walkway and carports, looking south (below)



Carports (four), 1965

Four long carports with flat corrugated-metal roofs supported by canted tubular-steel posts line the asphalt-paved parking lot's south edge. The west carport entrances are angled, creating a zig-zag roof edge.

Elevated Walkway, 1965

Near the center of the apartments' south parking lot, a straight run of steel stairs rises to the long, elevated, flat-roofed, steel walkway that rises above the south wall and service road north of the adjacent Park Road Shopping Center. Tubular-steel railings flank the steps and breezeway. A matching gate secures the breezeway's north end. Canted tubular-steel posts support the corrugated-metal roof. Most of the walkway is outside of the Local Historic Landmark boundary.



South and pool service area walls, looking south (above) and recycling area wall (below)



Concrete-block Walls (three), 1965

A wall comprised of geometric-pattern concrete-block spanning concrete-capped brick posts extends along most of the parcel's south edge. Matching walls conceal the service area south of the pool and border the recycling area at the building's southeast corner. Due to the decline in elevation between the apartment lot and the service road, the south wall has a painted concrete-block foundation.



Pool and west lawn, looking west (above) and brick grill, looking southeast (below)



Pool, 1965

A grass lawn surrounds the kidney-shaped pool and concrete patio in the lot's west section. The pool shape was an internationally popular characteristic of many Modernist landscapes during the mid-twentieth century.

Brick Grill, 1965

The running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick grill with three charcoal grates at the west garden walk's south end is no longer in use. The grill's angled outer sections resulted in projecting brick ends at its southwest corner.

Integrity Statement

Kimberlee Apartments possesses the seven qualities of historic integrity—location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship—required for local historic landmark designation. The building maintains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association as it stands on its original site in an area that remains residential and commercial. The 4.61-acre lot provides appropriate surroundings with deciduous and evergreen trees and landscaped beds containing woody shrubs and perennials. An original Japanese rock garden fills raised beds on the central entrance portico. Original auxiliary structures including four long flat-roofed carports; the flat-roofed, steel, elevated walkway; three geometric-pattern concrete-block walls; running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick retaining walls; a brick grill; concrete benches; three tubular steel-frame benches; and the kidney-shaped pool and concrete patio all contribute to the site’s Modernist aesthetic.

The aforementioned resources and the apartment building retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The substantial and stylish building completed in 1965 has a long, flat-roofed form comprising two expansive six-story wings flanking a central full-height hyphen and two-story entrance lobby with a distinctive sawtooth portico canopy. Running-bond wire-cut brown-brick walls contrast with smooth-finish ivory-painted-concrete cornices, canopies, and balcony balustrades. A Modernist influence is apparent in the connectivity between inside and outside spaces perpetuated by expansive aluminum-frame windows, curtain walls, and sliding-glass doors. Public spaces maintain original volumes and features. The entrance lobby is characterized by polished terrazzo floors and baseboards in high-traffic areas, painted-panel walls, textured ceilings, and a Modernist mezzanine railing with narrow metal balusters and a flat wood handrail.

Historical Background

Charlotte’s mid-twentieth-century industrial growth fueled a building boom that lasted from the mid-1940s through the 1960s and included all property types. Residential construction burgeoned as the population climbed from 100,899 in 1940 to 201,564 by 1960 and 241,178 in 1970.⁶ Private-sector investment escalated as businesses followed city residents to the suburbs, where convenient banks, churches, offices, schools, and stores were an important draw for prospective homeowners. Shopping center development contributed to a steady transfer of retail concerns from downtown to outlying areas. Buildings often exhibited a Modernist stylistic influence, manifesting the mid-twentieth-century’s progressive spirit.

Apartment complexes proliferated in order to ameliorate housing demand. Developers commissioned the construction of 882 apartment units in 1963, a dramatic increase from 180 units in 1960. In response to the need for high-density housing, Godley Construction Company in January 1963 announced its intention to erect a Modernist six-story ninety-three-unit cooperative apartment building on Reece Road just north of Park Road Shopping Center at a cost of approximately two million dollars. Fred Godley discovered the undeveloped site, which had been platted in 1924 as small residential lots, while investigating potential land acquisitions in the area. He named the building “Kimberlee” in honor of his granddaughters Kim (Robert’s daughter) and Lisa Lee (William’s daughter). Construction

⁶ U. S. Bureau of the Census, *U. S. Census of Population: 1960, Volume I, Characteristics of the Population, Part A, Number of Inhabitants* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1961), 35-18; U. S. Department of Commerce, *1970 Census of Population, Volume I, Characteristics of the Population, Part 35, North Carolina, Number of Inhabitants* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 35-11.

commenced in October 1963. The west wing was substantially complete in 1964, followed by the east wing in 1965. Two apartments were occupied in April 1965.⁷

Kimberlee Apartments is distinguished by its size, Modernist style, and ownership structure. Although cooperative apartments, where individuals purchase shares in a corporation that owns and manages the building rather than real estate, were common in large urban centers, Kimberlee Apartments and Tropicana Apartments, both Charlotte projects initiated in 1963, are thought to be the first two such endeavors in North Carolina. Shareholders elect a board of directors and collaboratively subsidize mortgage payments, building and landscape maintenance, utilities other than electricity, staff salaries, insurance, and real estate taxes. Sixty-five of the Kimberlee's units were sold by March 1966. Estimated Kimberlee stock acquisition cost in 1964 was \$11,800 to \$31,600, based upon unit size. A one-third down-payment was required and tenants were assessed a \$25 monthly maintenance fee. Creel Realty and Mortgage Company, headed by developer Luther Creel, built and operated the two-story, low-gable-roofed, U-shaped, twenty-two-unit Tropicana Apartments at 3010 Crosby Road that abuts Providence Shopping Center. Sales were brisk. All of the Tropicana's units had been purchased and most were occupied by summer 1964.⁸

Godley Construction Company was headed by president Fred O. Godley and two of his sons—treasurer and general manager William C. Godley and secretary Robert T. Godley—both of whom were U. S. military veterans. Fred and his brother M. R. Godley, Texas natives who grew up in Colorado, had moved their families to Charlotte in January 1936 and established Godley Brothers Livestock Company, which conducted public auctions. They began selling farm equipment in 1941, and in 1946 sold their livestock auction business to focus on farm machinery sales and develop a two-hundred-acre industrial park on Mt. Holly Road. Fred, M. R., William, and Robert organized Godley Construction Company in 1956. The concern offered planning, site selection, design, financing, and construction services.⁹

Godley Construction Company had three architects on staff, but collaborated with the local architecture firms including Charles Morrison Grier and Associates on projects such as Kimberlee Apartments, which was the only apartment tower Godley Construction Company erected.¹⁰ The building's design reflects the mid-twentieth-century popularity of Modernist architecture. Promotional materials touted a variety of floor plans—efficiency, one, two, and three-bedroom units ranging in size from 450 to 1,110 square feet—and amenities such as custom kitchens with birch cabinets and a full complement of electric appliances, central heat and air-conditioning, large windows, and private balconies accessed via sliding-glass doors.¹¹

⁷ Mecklenburg County Plat Book 3, p. 124; Emery Wister, "Co-op Apartments to be First in North Carolina," *CN*, January 11, 1963, p. 1; Emery Wister, "Cooperative Apartments Blossoming," *CN*, September 18, 1964, p. 15A; "Kimberlee [sic] Apartments Will Open Doors in July," *CN*, April 2, 1964, p. 10; Roy Covington, "The Kimberlee is Getting Tenants," *CO*, April 18, 1965, p. 16A; William C. Godley, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach on March 2, 2021.

⁸ Emery Wister, "Co-op Apartments to be First in North Carolina," *CN*, January 11, 1963, p. 1; Harry Snook, "Building Due Within 90 Days," *Charlotte Observer* (hereafter abbreviated *CO*), May 15, 1963, p. 12A; "Co-Op Apartment," *CO*, October 8, 1963, p. 7; Emery Wister, "Cooperative Apartments Blossoming," *CN*, September 18, 1964, p. 15A; William Mitchell, "Cooperative Apartment Notion Spreads To Charlotte After Many Years," *CO*, September 19, 1964, p. 13C; Roy Covington, "Year May Set Record for Apartment Building," *CO*, September 11, 1965, p. 5C; Emery Wister, "'Co-op Success Upsets Forecast,'" *CN*, March 21, 1966, p. 6B.

⁹ "Operation Turn-Key '64," *CO*, pp. 1 and 3-C.

¹⁰ William C. Godley, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach on March 2, 2021.

¹¹ Emery Wister, "Co-op Apartments to be First in North Carolina," *CN*, January 11, 1963, p. 1.

Building occupants actively participate in its management by voting on operational and maintenance matters and electing a board of directors with nine members who serve three-year terms. Many residents attend social functions organized by the hospitality committee including movie nights, poolside summer picnics, pot-luck Thanksgiving dinners, and Christmas socials. Indoor events are held in the penthouse, known as the Skyview Lounge, which has a kitchen. Residents also rent the penthouse for private meetings and celebrations and may reserve a furnished studio apartment on the fourth floor for guests.¹² The management entity was known as Kimberlee Apartments, Inc. until February 23, 2001, when the corporation amended its charter to change the name to The Kimberlee, Inc.¹³

Modern Architecture Context

Modern architecture, in addition to being a predominant mid-twentieth-century design aesthetic, proved to be an affordable option in many contexts. Modernist principles such as simplicity, efficiency, affordability, and intrinsic material expression were inherently applicable to buildings that display a functionalist approach in their form, horizontal massing, articulated structures, spare detailing, and fenestration that is dictated by spatial use rather than symmetry. The availability of new building materials and technology allowed for structures that employ concrete, steel, and glass in innovative ways. Curtain walls containing large steel- or aluminum-frame windows replaced traditional load-bearing walls and facilitated visual connectivity between interior and exterior spaces. Such design provides large, well-ventilated, and amply lit rooms. Steel and precast-, formed-, and slab-concrete structural systems, often exposed on the exterior and interior, allow for expansive, open spaces. Concrete, terrazzo, and ceramic-tile floor and wall surfaces in a wide variety of colors, textures, patterns, and finishes are pragmatic and durable. Concrete block was often a less expensive alternative for structural walls than brick. Decorative concrete block serves myriad functions including indoor and outdoor screens and open walls.

Such elements were well-represented in the contemporary architecture exhibit in 1932 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which exposed the American public to Modernist architectural tenets. The exhibit catalog, authored by art historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock Jr. and architect Philip Johnson, identified principles of modern architecture that were henceforth used to describe buildings constructed in what was called the International Style given its European genesis and subsequent diffusion throughout the world. They profiled the movement's leading architects Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe of Germany, Le Corbusier of France, and J. J. P. Oud of Holland, and explored the characteristics of their work.¹⁴

Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe were among the European architects and designers who emigrated to the United States beginning in the late 1930s and espoused Modernist principles to a new audience. Gropius, the highly influential founder of the German design school known as the Bauhaus, began teaching at Harvard's Graduate School of Design and used his personal residence in Lincoln, Massachusetts, erected in 1937, to promote the central tenets of Bauhaus philosophy—maximum

¹² Sandra Rothan, Nancy Short, and Wolfe White, telephone conversations with Heather Fearnbach on February 24, 2021; Murlene Boliek, telephone conversation with Heather Fearnbach on February 26, 2021.

¹³ Mecklenburg County Deed Book 2459, page 1; North Carolina Secretary of State, "Articles of Amendment to the Charter of Kimberlee Apartments, Inc.," March 19, 2001.

¹⁴ Henry-Russell Hitchcock Jr. and Philip Johnson, *The International Style: Architecture since 1922* (New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1932), 20.

efficiency and simplicity of design. The house was revolutionary at the time, as it combined traditional building materials including wood, brick, and fieldstone with streamlined modern elements rarely employed in residential construction such as glass block, acoustical plaster, and chrome banisters. Gropius employed long rectangular forms, horizontal massing, flat roofs, and sleek surfaces to create a streamlined modern aesthetic in commissions such as his 1949 design for the Harvard Graduate Center, undertaken with The Architects' Collaborative. Eight multi-story, flat-roofed, concrete and steel residential buildings exhibit modern materials such as concrete sheathing panels, taupe brick veneer, aluminum-frame curtain walls, and bands of aluminum-frame windows as central design components. Inset entrances and cantilevered upper stories add visual interest and shelter entrances.¹⁵ Despite the efforts of Gropius and others to “soften” the International Style through the use of natural materials, it proved more popular in commercial, institutional, and educational rather than residential applications in the United States, as flat roofs, sleek surfaces, and angular lines were often perceived as being impersonal and harsh.

Near Asheville, North Carolina, Bauhaus painter Josef Albers's experimental Black Mountain College also promoted Modernist concepts during the 1930s and 1940s. Walter Gropius, R. Buckminster Fuller, and other influential architects and artists provided instruction at the secluded institution. Gropius and Marcel Breuer's 1939 design for the campus encompassed a series of white concrete International Style buildings arranged on the banks of Lake Eden. Although the master plan proved to be too expensive to execute, architect A. Lawrence Kocher incorporated elements of the concept into the 1941 Studies Building, which featured a central lobby and four radiating wings of various sizes. Only one two-story, flat-roofed, rectangular wing was executed, however.¹⁶

It was not until 1948 that a public North Carolina institution of higher learning fully embraced Modernist teachings. That year, North Carolina State College (NCSC) in Raleigh hired architecture professor Henry Kamphoefner, who recruited George Matsumoto, James Walter Fitzgibbon, Edward W. Waugh, and other University of Oklahoma faculty to help him establish the NCSC School of Design. The men, all strong proponents of Modernism, employed the style in commercial, educational, industrial, religious, and residential commissions throughout the state. The design school's collaboration included a partnership with North Carolina's Office of School Construction that involved developing design standards and advocating contemporary architecture at workshops for local officials and architects in 1949 and 1950. School of Design professors and visiting lecturers including Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe had a significant impact on North Carolina's mid-century built environment, both through the buildings they designed and the students they trained.¹⁷

It was in this context that the Charlotte Community College System engaged Charlotte architecture firm A. G. Odell Jr. and Associates to prepare plans for a new campus to house Charlotte College, established in 1946 as a two-year institution to offer evening classes to World War II veterans and

¹⁵ Gropius designed his house in collaboration with Marcel Breuer, his former student and Harvard School of Design colleague. Historic New England, “Gropius House,” <https://www.historicnewengland.org/property/gropius-house/> (accessed in February 2020).

¹⁶ Page Pless, “Black Mountain College Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1982; Paul Venable Turner, *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), 257.

¹⁷ Edward Waugh and Elizabeth Waugh, *The South Builds: New Architecture in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), preface, 8; David R. Black, “Early Modern Architecture in Raleigh Associated with the Faculty of the North Carolina State University School of Design, Raleigh, North Carolina,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1994, E15-16.

recent high school graduates. The firm's designs for UNCC's early campus architecture embodies the era's Modernist proclivity. In 1961, contractors finished the Kennedy and Macy buildings on a site nine miles northeast of downtown Charlotte. Those buildings, Atkins Library (1963), and the Winningham (1965), Garinger (1965), and Barnard (1969) buildings are characterized by rectangular forms, horizontal massing, and flat roofs. Key design elements include exposed concrete structure, red-brick veneer, and tall, narrow, aluminum-frame windows. The Kennedy Building features a distinctive entrance canopy comprising multiple slender mushroom columns. The Denny Building (1965) differs dramatically in color and texture as concrete-aggregate panels sheathe its walls. The North Carolina legislature afforded Charlotte College four-year, publically-funded status in 1964 and named it University of North Carolina at Charlotte the following year.¹⁸

Charles Morrison Grier and Associates

The prolific Charlotte firm Charles Morrison Grier and Associates was also notable for its promotion of Modernist architecture during the mid-twentieth century. Charlotte native Charles Morrison Grier (1922-1995) studied engineering at Clemson College from 1941 until 1943, when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Following World War II service in the Pacific Theater, he returned to Charlotte in 1946 and gained experience as a draftsman in the Charlotte offices of architects Charles W. Connelly (1947-1950), and Sloan and Wheatley (1950-1956). He was licensed to practice architecture in North Carolina in August 1955 and established an independent Charlotte practice, Charles Morrison Grier and Associates, architects and engineers, in May 1956. Grier was granted membership in the American Institute of Architects in 1956.¹⁹

The prolific firm designed myriad civic, commercial, educational, industrial, institutional, residential, and religious buildings throughout North and South Carolina. Early Charlotte commercial commissions include the Park-N-Shop grocery store (1957) at 2938 Wilkinson Boulevard; United Insurance Company's North Carolina headquarters (1957) at 301 East Boulevard; Kingsmore Building (1958; offices) at 1416 East Morehead Street; Miller Clinic (1958) at 1822 Brunswick Avenue; Lowe's hardware store (1959) on Walnut Avenue; Bealer Wholesale, Inc. warehouse (1960) at Thrift Road; Employment Security Commission office building (1959) at 122 West First Street; Morehead Building at 1301 East Morehead Street (1961; four-story offices); office building (1962) at 904 South Kings Drive; Seven-Up Bottling Company building (1962) in Oakhurst Industrial Park; three-story 118-room Howard Johnson Motor Lodge and adjacent restaurant (1964) on Wilkinson Boulevard; and Kings Drive complex encompassing a twelve-story office building, four-story 103-room King's Inn, and a restaurant (1965).²⁰ Civic projects range from three fire stations (1961) to a Freedom Park picnic

¹⁸ Mary Carolyn Dominick, "The original concept and design of Charlotte College: 1957-1965," M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2013, 12, 42-43, 50.

¹⁹ Charles Morrison Grier, "Application for Membership" and associated correspondence, AIA Archives, Washington, D. C.; "Architect Opens Office," *CN*, May 14, 1956, p. 5; George S. Koyl, ed., *American Architects Directory, Second Edition* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1962), 267.

²⁰ "Park-N-Shop," *CO*, September 27, 1957, p. 13C; "Insurance Firm to Enter Building June 1," *CO*, April 7, 1957, p. 21; "Firm Erecting New Building," *CN*, April 6, 1957, p. 8; "Miller Clinic Work Begins," *CN*, March 22, 1958, p. 8B; Emery Wister, "Big Office Building Slated on Morehead," *CN*, May 9, 1958, p. 1B; Rolfe Neill, "Lowe [sic] Store Construction Started Here," *CO*, December 20, 1958, p. 9-A; "Employment Bureau Plans New Office," *CO*, May 8, 1959, p. 13C; "Wholesaler Plans Building," *CN*, November 12, 1959, p. 16A; Emery Wister, "4-Story Building Pushes Charlotte Skyline Up, Up," *CN*, January 15, 1960, p. 1B; Emery Wister, "Industrialist Plans \$2.5-Million Facility," *CN*, February 24, 1962, p. 1B; Emery Wister, "118-Unit Motor Lodge Coming," *CN*, February 9, 1963, p. 1B; Emery Wister, "Twelve-Story Building to Rise Here," *CN*, November 18, 1963, p. 1A; Koyl, ed., *American Architects Directory*, 1962, 267.

shelter (1961) and an upper seating tier addition at Charlotte Memorial Stadium (1960).²¹ Modernist sanctuaries were rendered for Matthews Methodist Church (1957), Augustana Lutheran Church in Hickory (1957), Bethany Presbyterian Church near Monroe (1963), Forest Hills Presbyterian Church (1963) at 1040 Woodlawn Road in Charlotte, Newell Presbyterian Church (1963) on Old Concord Road, and First Presbyterian Church in Monroe (1969).²²

In addition to Kimberlee Apartments (1965), the firm's multi-unit residential commissions include the three-story, flat-roofed, beige-brick Tower Garden Apartments (1962) at 725 Providence Road, which encompasses first-floor stores and offices in addition to twenty-two one-bedroom apartments on the upper floors. The building is now part of Villa Square Shopping Center.²³ The firm also designed numerous traditional and Modernist single-family dwellings including Read Tull's home in Carmel Park, which was featured in the Mint Museum's October 1957 house tour; S. W. Westerfield's dwelling (1958) on Sharon Lane; Sam F. Blythe's residence (1959) at 4032 Arbor Way; the house (1959) at 3027 Cottage Way; H. B. Crother's residence (1959) at 3401 Seward Park Lane; and Wilbert E. and Viola Rankin's house (1961) at 3111 Spring Valley Road.²⁴ The firm rendered plans for developer C. D. Spangler Construction Company including model homes in the Lansdowne subdivision such as the Colonial Revival-style "Rhapsody," and the split-level "Allegro" at 6400 Morven Lane, both erected in 1960, as well as the Modernist "Echo" at 6827 Folger Drive (1961).²⁵

Commissions proliferated in the late 1960s, when Charles Morrison Grier and Associates designed edifices including the two-story Allen Building (1966; offices) and Howard Johnson Motor Lodge and restaurant (1967), both on Independence Boulevard in Charlotte; S & D Coffee Manufacturing Company plant and office (1969) in Concord; and Burris Industries' plant and office in Lincolnton (1969). The aforementioned projects, and institutional buildings such as the Union County Public Library (1966) in Monroe, Davie County Public Library (1966) in Mocksville, sixteen-story Western Correctional Center (1971; demolished July 11, 2020) in Morganton, five-story Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Education Center (1969) at 701 East Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Charlotte, and Spruce Pine Public Library (1970), were Modernist in style. Firm principals included William E. Fripp Jr. (1923-2011), who joined in February 1963, and W. Randall Harris, employed by 1970.²⁶

²¹ "Drawing Shows How Memorial Stadium Will Look," *CO*, 1C; "Architect Hired for Fire Stations," *CN*, October 31, 1961, p. 4A; "Park Shelter is Approved," *CN*, September 20, 1961, p. 4B.

²² "Ceremony Set for Building," *CN*, October 9, 1957, p. 11B; "Forest Hills Presbyterian To Build a New Sanctuary," *CN*, February 23, 1963, p. 3B; Sue Titcomb, "Lofty Visions," *CN*, November 26, 1963, p. 10A; Sue Titcomb, "Newell Presbyterian Plans First Phase of New Plant," *CN*, October 9, 1963, p. 6B.

²³ Emery Wister, "Apartments to Rise on Providence Road," *CN*, October 5, 1961, p. 16A.

²⁴ Jackie Bayer, "The Light is Right If It's Overhead," *CN*, October 4, 1957, p. 3B; "Building Permits," *CN*, August 5, 1958, p. 7B; Elizabeth Prince, "Crothers' Home Follows Curve," *CN*, March 19, 1960, pp. 1 and 5B; "Public Record," *CN*, September 25, 1959, p. 5A.

²⁵ "Model Home Open in Lansdowne," *CN*, May 7, 1960, pp. 1 and 10B; John Borchert, "He Discovered a Career While Serving in Marines," *CN*, October 13, 1960, p. 14D; "Public Record," *CN*, May 11, 1960, p. 15A; "Lansdowne," *CO*, October 8, 1960, p. 3B; Porter Munn, "Echo Home to Open," *CO*, July 7, 1961, p. 9A; Barbara McAden, "Echo Home Fills Her Majesty's Dreams," *CO*, July 15, 1961, p. 6C; p. 6C; "Lot, View Architect's Inspiration," *CO*, July 15, 1961, p. 8C.

²⁶ "New Library Sets Record for Low Construction Cost," *CO*, April 24, 1966, p. 10A; "Work to Begin Soon on Allen Building," *CN*, November 22, 1966, p. 5B; Roy Covington, "Firm Plans Big Motel Across From Mall," *CO*, June 26, 1966, p. 6D; Jay Jenkins, "Freedom in New N. C. Prison," *CO*, March 4, 1968, p. 1B; David Gelsanlitter, "Firm That Designs Churches Makes Its Mark on Prisons," *CO*, March 4, 1968, p. 4B; George S. Koyl, ed., *American Architects Directory, Third Edition* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1970), 350;

Fripp, a Sumter, South Carolina native, had studied at the Citadel and earned a B. S. in architectural engineering from Clemson College in 1950. He served United States Marine Corps fighter pilot in the Pacific Theater during World War II and the Korean War, after which he was employed as a draftsman in the Charlotte offices of Vannort Engineers (August 1956-March 1958), Marsh and Hawkins (March 1958-May 1959), and J. H. Benton (May 1959-July 1960). Fripp was licensed to practice architecture in North Carolina in July 1960 and subsequently worked in the firms of Benton and Boyte (July 1960-May 1962) and Hunter, Highsmith, and Lakin (May 1962-January 1963). He was granted membership in the American Institute of Architects in 1963 and was elevated to full partnership in Charles Morrison Grier and Associates in 1964. The firm's name became Grier-Fripp and Associates in June 1973. The firm merged with Freeman White and Associates before Grier retired in 1992.²⁷

Charlotte's Mid-Twentieth-Century Apartment Buildings

In 2000, architectural historians Sarah A. Woodard and Sherry Joines Wyatt completed a survey of Charlotte's Modernist buildings erected between 1945 and 1965. The report provides historic contexts, National Register registration requirements, and significant examples of postwar commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential buildings, as well as subdivisions. Kimberlee Apartments and Queens Tower Apartments were among the twenty-six resources added to the North Carolina Study List in 2001 as a result of the survey.²⁸ Architectural historian Susan V. Mayer's 2019 reconnaissance-level Modernist architecture survey update extended the evaluation period to 1980. She identified eighty-three properties that appear to possess the requisite historical and architectural significance and integrity for National Register listing, including Darby Terrace Apartments and Green Oaks Garden Apartments, as well as 261 resources worthy of further study.²⁹

Early- to mid-twentieth-century neighborhoods near Kimberlee Apartments display a wide variety of nationally popular architectural styles ranging from bungalows to Period Revival, Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Modernist residences. Many subdivisions platted immediately after World War II manifest Federal Housing Administration design guidelines and contain modest, traditionally-styled dwellings. By the 1950s, Ranch houses, sometimes incorporating Modernist features such as high horizontal windows and deep eaves, enjoyed widespread popularity. Speculative developers built and sold hundreds of almost identical residences in tract subdivisions, while contractors supplied stock plans to potential owner-occupants in custom subdivisions. Popular magazines and catalogs also sold floor plans and elevations that property owners and contractors frequently modified. Residences designed by architects for specific clients represent a very small percentage of the total built environment.

Apartment complexes proliferated in order to ameliorate housing demand. Only a small number of mid-twentieth-century suburban Charlotte apartment buildings are truly Modernist in design, and each stands out in neighborhoods of more traditional houses. Creel Realty and Mortgage Company, headed by developer Luther Creel, built and operated the Tropicana Apartments, completed in early 1964, which was the first cooperatively owned North Carolina apartment building to be placed into service.

²⁷ "Grier-Fripp Is New Name," *CO*, June 2, 1973, p. 6B; "Charles Morrison Grier," *CO*, August 4, 1995, p. 16A; "William E. Fripp Jr.," *CO*, October 28, 2011, p. B4; William Edwards Fripp Jr., "Application for Membership" and associated correspondence, AIA Archives, Washington, D. C..

²⁸ Sarah A. Woodard and Sherry Joines Wyatt. "Motorized Landscape: The Development of Modernism in Charlotte, 1945-1965," report prepared for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission and the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, September 2000.

²⁹ SVM Historical Consulting, "Modernist Architecture in Charlotte, North Carolina," report prepared for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, June 5, 2019.

Located at 3010 Crosby Road northeast of Providence Shopping Center, the two-story, low-gable-roofed, U-shaped, beige-brick building encompasses twenty-two one- to three-bedroom units and a recreation room surrounding a central swimming pool and lawn. Deep roof overhangs shelter large multi-section aluminum-frame windows and walkways leading to single-leaf apartment entrances. Ornamental railings secure second-story walkways. Full-height pierced-brick walls screen central and gable-end stairs. A matching wall and a twenty-first-century black-finished metal fence surround the pool. Upon opening, the complex also featured a putting green, shuffleboard court, picnic tables, and garden plots, but none of those resources survive.³⁰

Queens Tower Apartments, now Queens Tower Condominiums (SL), at 1300 Queens Road in the Myers Park neighborhood, is distinctive in that the three-story, flat-roofed running-bond red-brick, F-shaped, 1961 building is elevated above a ground-level parking garage and driveways to the rear parking lot. Louis Asbury and Son designed the building erected by contractor Blythe and Isenhour for the Queens Tower and Land Development Company. Many of the fifty-six two- to four-bedroom apartments have been renovated, but some retain original parquet floors and built-in cabinetry. The lobby has a terrazzo floor. Modernist characteristics include deep roof overhangs, aluminum-frame sliding-glass doors, aluminum-frame multi-section windows with scored concrete spandrels, concrete balconies with slender metal railings, and pierced-brick walls enclosing the courtyard pool and patio. A long flat-roofed carport is centrally located in the rear parking lot and two shorter carports line the lot's south end.³¹

Darby Terrace Apartments at 4501 Central Avenue, designed by the architecture firm Benton and Boyte and erected by T. R. Burroughs Construction Company for developer D. E. Allen, encompasses two L-shaped, two-story, flat-roofed, brick, 1962 buildings surrounding a central courtyard. Deep roof overhangs shelter full-length walkways secured by painted tubular-steel railings with central wire-mesh panels on the second story. Full-height decorative concrete-block walls screen corner stairs. Large multi-section aluminum-frame windows, double-hung two-over-two-horizontal sash, single-leaf steel doors, and aluminum-frame sliding-glass doors pierce the running-bond variegated-pink-brick walls. Sixty-two one- and two-bedroom units retain original parquet floors, but have otherwise been remodeled. The courtyard initially contained no-longer-extant recreational amenities including a swimming pool and badminton and shuffleboard courts.³²

Green Oaks Garden Apartments, now Aurora Apartments, at 1400-1525 Eastcrest Drive two miles southeast of downtown Charlotte in the Commonwealth Park neighborhood, was also completed in 1962. The complex comprises four three-story, flat-roofed, red-brick buildings containing 276 efficiency, one-, and two-bedroom apartments. On primary elevations, flat metal canopies and decorative concrete-block screens surmount recessed single-leaf entrances flanked by columns of horizontally-sliding sash separated by vinyl-sheathed spandrels beneath deep eaves. On secondary elevations, steel balconies with simple steel railings span the distance between projecting brick bays with decorative concrete-block end walls. Full-height curtain walls include sliding-glass doors that

³⁰ Emery Wister, "Cooperative Apartments Blossoming," *CN*, September 18, 1964, p. 15A.

³¹ "Work Begins on Apartments," *CN*, February 18, 1960, p. 13A.

³² Emery Wister, "Developers Seek Bids On Two Big Apartments," *CN*, October 13, 1961, p. 1B; "Apartment Job Contract Let," *CN*, November 18, 1961, p. 12A.

open onto balconies or patios. Recreational facilities include a pool, fitness center, outdoor kitchen, playground, and community garden. The complex initially had a putting green and tennis courts.³³

The aforementioned buildings and Kimberlee Apartments all exemplify the Modernist aesthetic. Kimberlee Apartments is unique in that its long, flat-roofed form comprises two expansive six-story wings flanking a central full-height hyphen and two-story entrance lobby with a distinctive sawtooth portico canopy. Running-bond wire-cut brown-brick walls contrast with smooth-finish ivory-painted-concrete cornices, canopies, and balcony balustrades. As with the other examples, a Modernist influence is apparent in the connectivity between inside and outside spaces perpetuated by expansive aluminum-frame windows, curtain walls, and sliding-glass doors. Public spaces maintain original volumes and features. The entrance lobby is characterized by polished terrazzo floors and baseboards in high-traffic areas, painted-panel walls, textured ceilings, and a Modernist mezzanine railing with narrow metal balusters and a flat wood handrail.

³³ Emery Wister, “Developers Seek Bids On Two Big Apartments,” *CN*, October 13, 1961, p. 1-B; “Green Oaks Garden Apartments,” *CO*, September 8, 1961, p. 7-B, and January 30, 1963, p. 16-A; “Modern Living and Traditional Grace,” *CO*, February 17, 1963, p. 5-A

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Designation Parameters

Property owner The Kimberlee, Inc. is seeking local historic landmark designation for the building's entire exterior and interior as well as auxiliary structures, landscape, and hardscape elements in order to recognize the property's architectural significance. Character-defining features are enumerated below.

Kimberlee Apartments

Exterior

Running-bond wire-cut brown-brick walls

Concrete sawtooth primary entrance canopy with tapered concrete posts

Smooth-finish ivory-painted-concrete cornices, secondary entrance canopies, and balcony balustrades

Brick lattice walls that enclose small utility rooms at each balcony's center

Slender aluminum balcony railings

Six- and four-section aluminum-frame windows with tall fixed panes and short tilt-in lower sash

Aluminum-frame curtain walls with sliding-glass balcony doors

Full-height aluminum-frame curtain walls comprising large fixed panes separated by ivory-painted porcelain-enameled panels that illuminate the lobby, the adjacent six-story hyphen to the south, the penthouse lounge atop the east wing, and the stair and elevator towers that extend from the building's east and west ends. The panels, originally bright yellow, were painted in the 1980s.

Large stylized aluminum "K" for Kimberlee mounted on the east blind portion of the central hyphen's north wall

Metal railings with a Modernist zig-zag motif that border concrete sidewalks between the parking lot and stair and elevator tower entrances

Original backless concrete two-leg benches at secondary entrances

Rectangular blue slate primary and secondary entrance floors

Interior

Entrance lobby polished terrazzo floors and baseboards in high-traffic areas, painted-panel walls, textured ceilings, and Modernist mezzanine railing with narrow metal balusters and a flat wood handrail

Original brass tenant mailboxes and USPS collection box mounted on walls at the lobby's south end

Original aluminum elevator door surrounds, call button plates, and floor location indicators

On the first floor, at the east wing's southwest corner, a carpeted concrete and steel stair with a Modernist aluminum railing

Penthouse restrooms with single-leaf flat blonde-wood doors; built-in, slant-front, two-door vanities with aluminum trim and tapered feet; laminate counters; drop-in, turquoise-porcelain, oval sinks; steel stall walls and doors; turquoise-porcelain toilets; patterned mosaic-ceramic-tile floors; and ceramic-tile baseboards

Japanese Rock Garden

Running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick walls

Lighting in below-grade concrete canisters at the brick-bordered inner corners of the two largest beds

flanking the entrance vestibule

Carports

Four long carports with flat corrugated-metal roofs supported by canted tubular-steel posts at the asphalt-paved parking lot's south edge

Elevated Walkway

Elevated, flat-roofed, steel walkway that rises above the south wall and service road north of the adjacent Park Road Shopping Center (most of the walkway is outside of the local historic landmark boundary)

Concrete-block Walls (three)

Wall comprised of geometric-pattern concrete-block spanning concrete-capped brick posts along most of the parcel's south edge
Matching walls that conceal the service area south of the pool and border the recycling area at the building's southeast corner

Pool

Kidney-shaped pool and concrete patio in the lot's west section

West Garden

Three tubular steel-frame benches

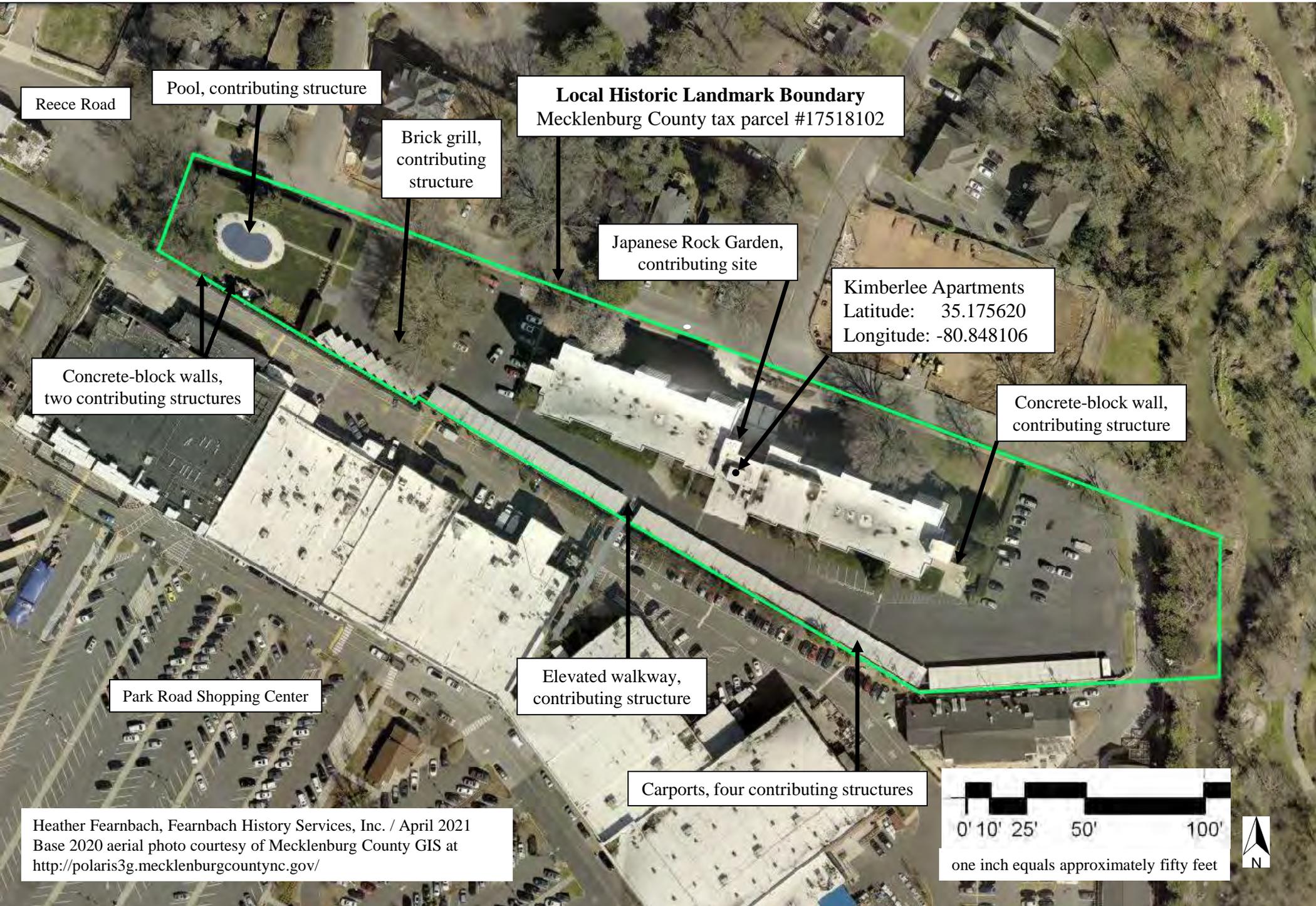
Brick Grill

Running-bond, wire-cut, brown-brick grill with three charcoal grates at the west garden walk's south end

Local Historic Landmark Boundary Description and Justification

The local historic landmark boundary encompasses 4.61--acre Mecklenburg County tax parcel #17518102, as indicated by the green line on the map on the following page. The nominated tract is the property historically associated with the Kimberlee Apartments and provides an appropriate setting including original auxiliary structures, landscape, and hardscape elements.

Kimberlee Apartments, 1300 Reece Road, Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
Local Historic Landmark Boundary Map



Reece Road

Pool, contributing structure

Local Historic Landmark Boundary
Mecklenburg County tax parcel #17518102

Brick grill, contributing structure

Japanese Rock Garden, contributing site

Kimberlee Apartments
Latitude: 35.175620
Longitude: -80.848106

Concrete-block walls, two contributing structures

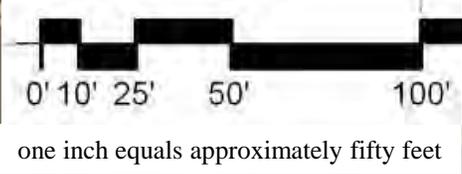
Concrete-block wall, contributing structure

Park Road Shopping Center

Elevated walkway, contributing structure

Carports, four contributing structures

Heather Fearnbach, Fearnbach History Services, Inc. / April 2021
Base 2020 aerial photo courtesy of Mecklenburg County GIS at <http://polaris3g.mecklenburgcountync.gov/>



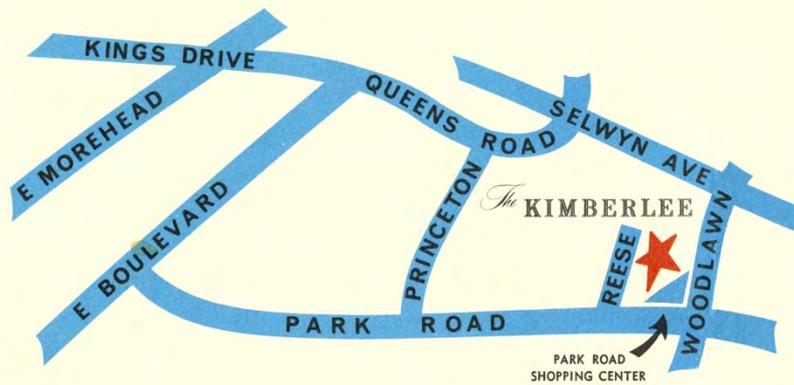


The KIMBERLEE

EXCLUSIVE APARTMENT HOMES
Deluxe Apartment Living... With the Advantages of Home Ownership



Kimberlee Apartment promotional brochure, circa 1963, in the possession of The Kimberlee, Inc.



The **KIMBERLEE** Corporation

Deluxe Apartment Living... With the Advantages of Home Ownership

1220 REESE ROAD
CHARLOTTE 5, NORTH CAROLINA

PHONE 523-5262
 AFTER 6:00 P.M.—596-0265

MODEL APARTMENTS
 SHOWN DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS

A GOLD MEDALLION APARTMENT
 Flameless Electric Heating and Air Conditioning

OUTSTANDING FEATURES

- Sound insulated apartments.
- Individual heating and air conditioning.
- Wall-to-wall 100% wool carpet in each apartment.
- Kitchens are completely electric and in color.
- Closet space for over 300 garments.
- Individual bulk storage space on main floor.
- Bathrooms have ceramic tile and color fixtures.
- Private balcony for each apartment.
- Laundry facilities on each floor.
- Conveniently located trash chutes on each floor.
- Completely furnished lounge and game room.
- Large lobby completely furnished.
- Three elevators.
- Private park and recreational facilities at each end of the building.
- Paved parking area.
- Shops, churches, restaurants and transportation facilities within walking distance.
- Very liberal tax savings as compared to home ownership.

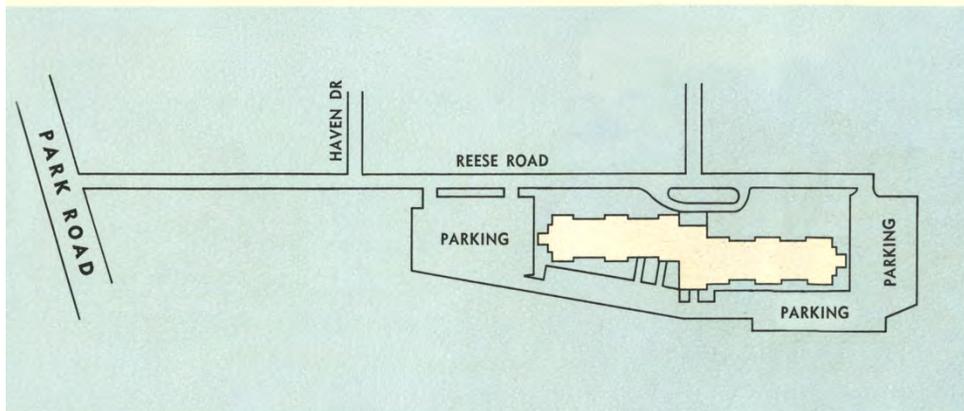


DIAGRAM SHOWING PARKING AREA AND GROUNDS OF KIMBERLEE

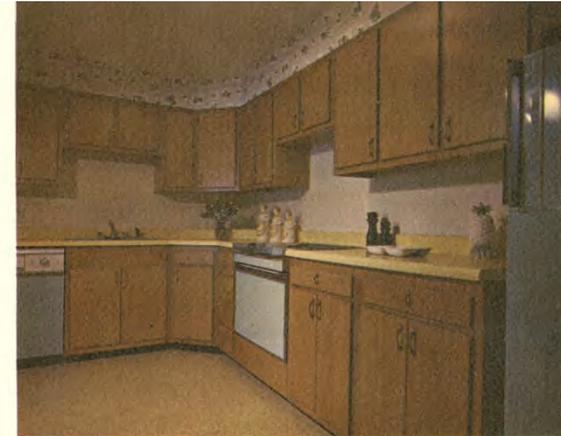


BEAUTY... ELEGANCE... CONVENIENCE... These are the qualities you will find woven into the Kimberlee way of life . . . plus all the colorful extras to make living more enjoyable and rewarding.

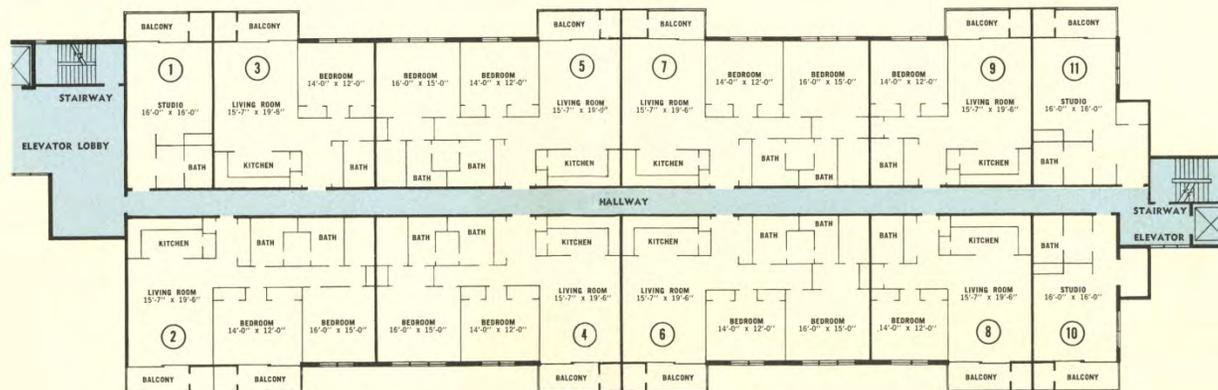
The unsurpassable Kimberlee is a five story masterpiece of structural simplicity located in the truly fashionable area of Charlotte . . . magnificently situated in the artistically-planned garden splendor which surrounds it. The Kimberlee greets those who appreciate the charm of in-town-living and enjoy the proximity to social and shopping activity . . . but who, at the same time, wish to retain the quiet privacy and dignity of a country estate. Here life is peaceful, unhurried, and supremely well-ordered and casual.

The Kimberlee offers individually owned apartment homes with mansion-like oversize rooms, walk-in closets, large kitchens . . . and many more features surpassing those in most lavish homes. Sliding glass doors invite you onto your own private sun terrace with beautiful panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. You will experience a sense of quiet pride as you enter the stately lobby . . . tastefully decorated and exquisitely furnished. It is warmly inviting to you, your friends, and guests.

No single collection of descriptive phrases, no gallery of pictures could ever portray the beauty and casual elegance of the Kimberlee. The Kimberlee **exclusively** offers the ultimate in deluxe apartment living with all the superlative advantages of home ownership.



Functional design, along with beauty of craftsmanship, blend together to make "her" kitchen the most important room of your home. Exquisite birch cabinets and rolled edge counter tops . . . all designed for usefulness as well as beauty. For your enjoyment, the kitchen is completely electric . . . including a built-in range, oven, dishwasher, garbage disposal, range-hood fan, and a self-defrosting refrigerator. Tastefully furnished with color appliances and fixtures, your food preparation center will be an area you'll enter with pride . . . and in which you will prepare your meals with ease.



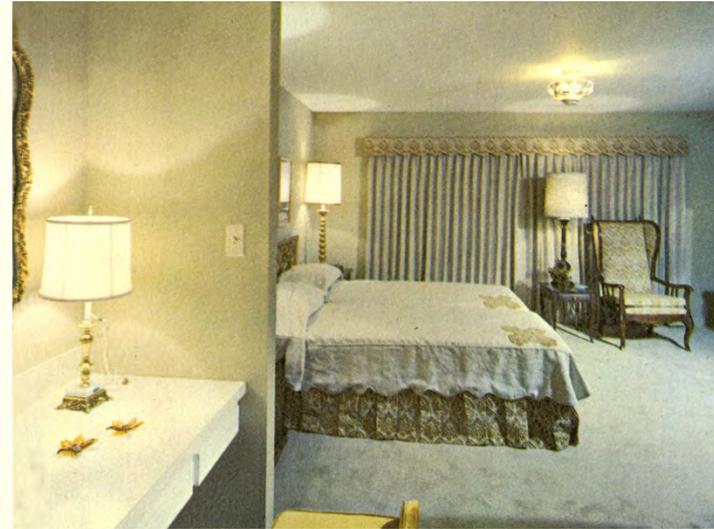
**TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN
SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH & FIFTH FLOORS**

MODEL APARTMENT FURNISHED BY IVEY'S OF CHARLOTTE

Here is where you will cast aside the worries of the world and enjoy the deep, relaxing comfort of true luxury. The extra large bedrooms in the Kimberlee apartments have spacious closets featuring bifold shutter doors. A wonderful convenience is the large dressing area with a built-in vanity and a walk-in closet. Adjacent to the bedroom is the lovely ceramic tile bath featuring color-coordinating fixtures . . . complementing the tasteful vinyl wall covering. A bedroom lovely to look at . . . a delight to relax in.

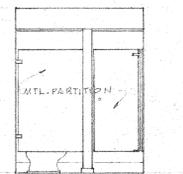
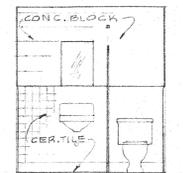
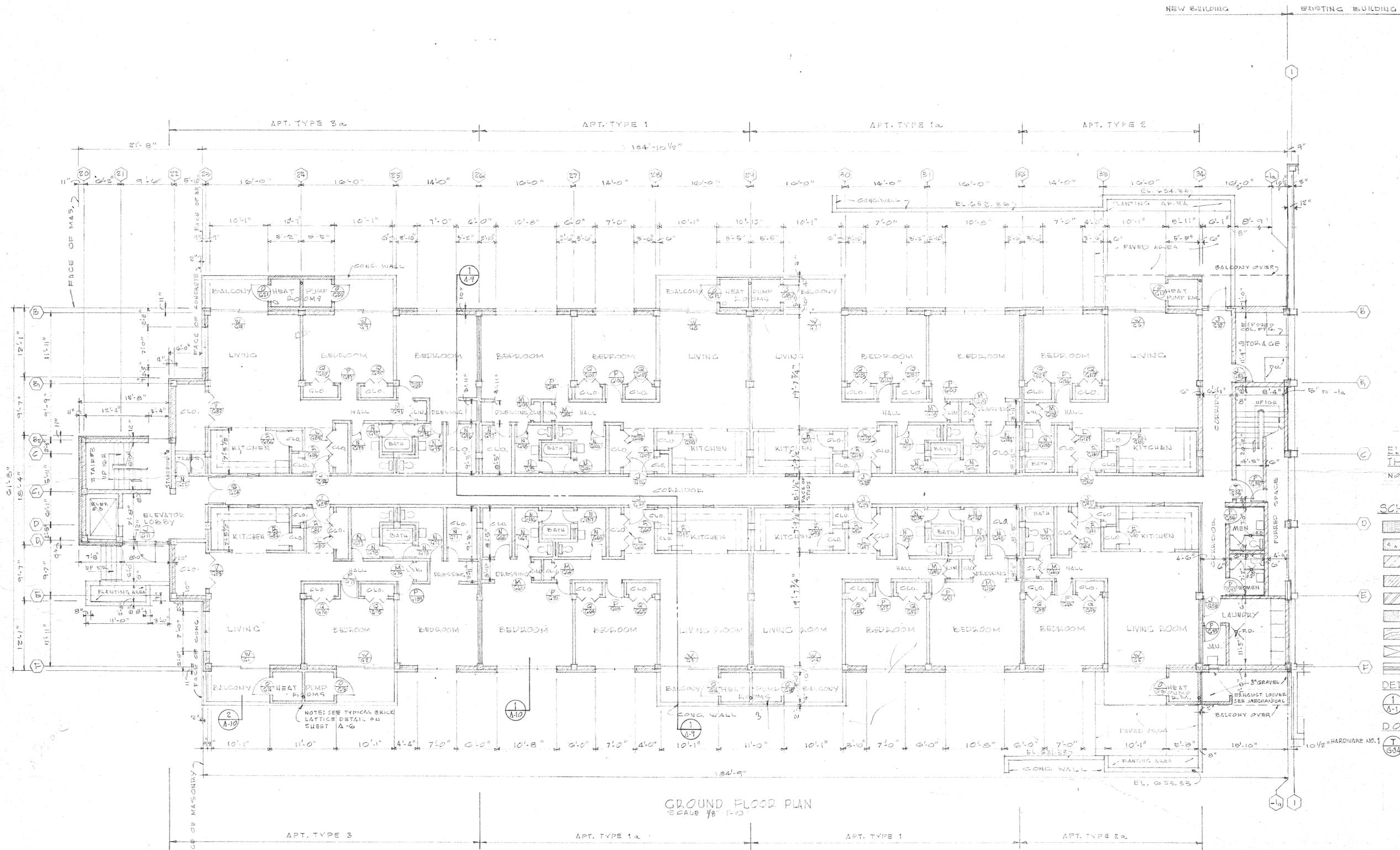
Deluxe Apartment Living . . . With the Advantages of Home Ownership

The living room in your Kimberlee apartment is spacious and gives a feeling of graciousness and warmth. Here is where subtle influences mold four walls into a pattern that speaks of elegance and distinguished taste. Featuring wall-to-wall carpeting, artistically designed sliding glass doors, and your very own balcony . . . indeed a blending of true simplicity, in luxury and design, for the ultimate in enjoyable living.



Here, in an atmosphere of congeniality and warmth, you will meet old friends as well as greet the new. A spacious area lending itself to almost any activity . . . whether it be a spirited round of table tennis . . . a leisurely game of bridge . . . or just plain relaxation . . . the comfort and enjoyment of every detail has been considered for you, your friends and your family. Tastefully designed, superbly decorated, and exquisitely furnished . . . you will be more-than-proud to have this as a part of your Kimberlee apartment home.





ELEVATIONS MENS TOILET
THIS SHEET 1/4" = 1'-0"
NOTE: WOMENS TOILET STAIRS
OPPOSITE HAND.

SCHEDULE OF MATERIALS

- EARTH
- CONCRETE
- CONCRETE BLOCK
- BRICK
- STEEL
- METAL IN ELEVATION
- FINISH LUMBER
- ROUGH LUMBER
- STUD PARTITIONS

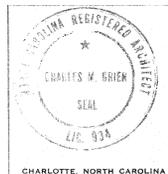
DETAIL SYMBOL

- 1 - DETAIL NUMBER
- A-1 - SHEET ON WHICH DETAIL IS DRAWN

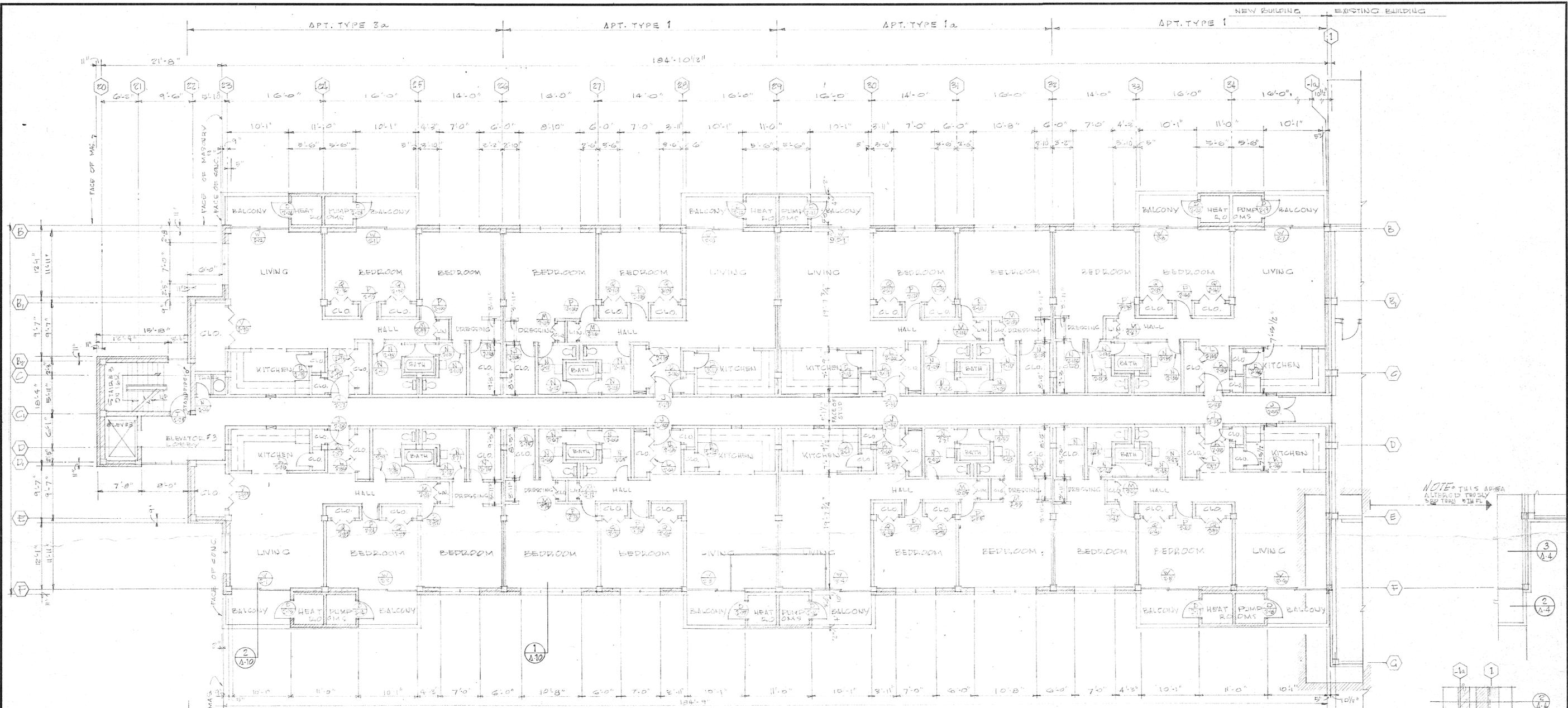
DOOR SYMBOL

- T - DOOR TYPE
- 334 - FLOOR & DOOR NUMBER

GROUND FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



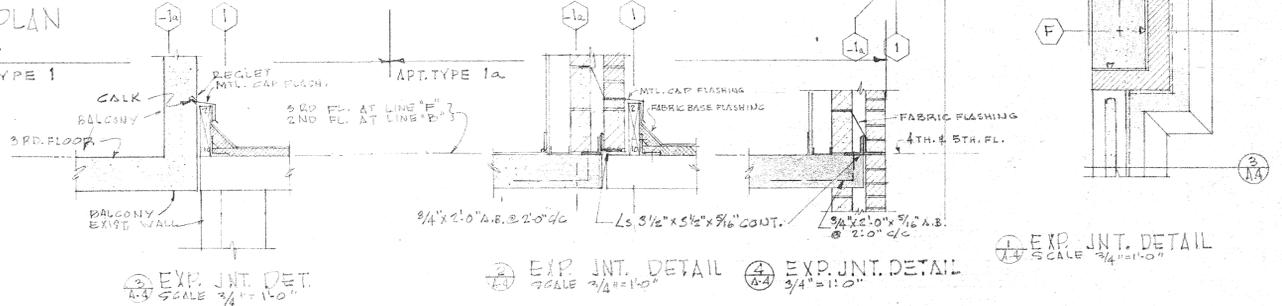
CHAS. MORRISON GRIER ARCHITECT & ASSOCIATES		GODLEY APARTMENTS CHARLOTTE, N.C. EAST WING	
		DRAWN BY W.B.T.	REVISION
CHECKED BY 		GROUND FLOOR PLAN	SHEET NO. A2 OF 3 SHEETS
DATE JULY 17, 1944			



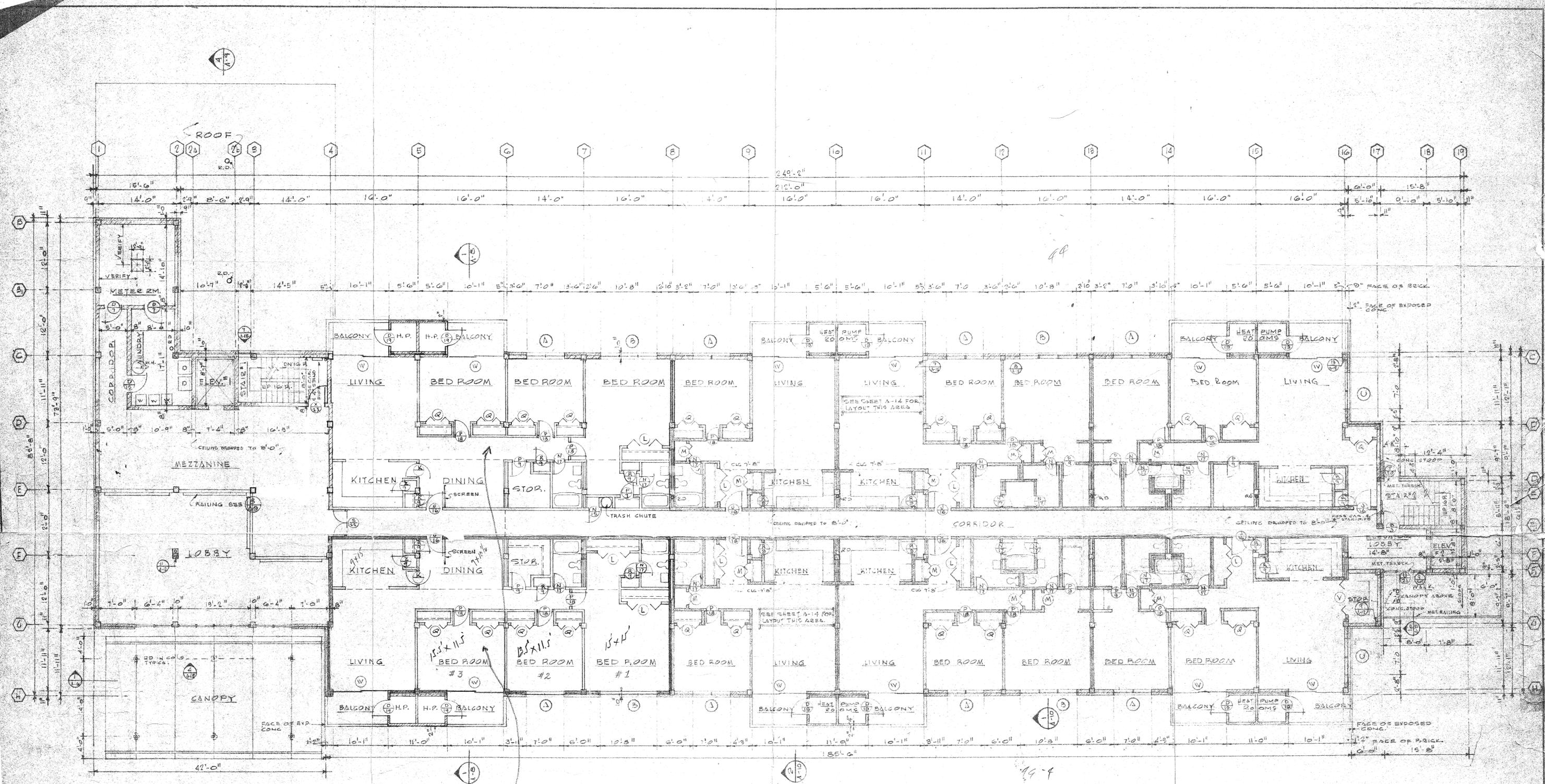
SECOND THRU FIFTH FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

NOTE: THIS AREA ALTERED TWICE SEP. 1941 5TH FL.



	CHAS. MORRISON GRIER		GODLEY APARTMENTS CHARLOTTE, N.C. EAST WING	
	ARCHITECT & ASSOCIATES	REVISION	COMM. NO. 198-62	A4 9 SHEETS
	DRAWN BY W.B.T.	CHECKED BY	SHEET NO.	
	DATE JULY 17, 1940			



2/3 Bedroom Apts. being added, per Corres. Letter of 12/13/63 are

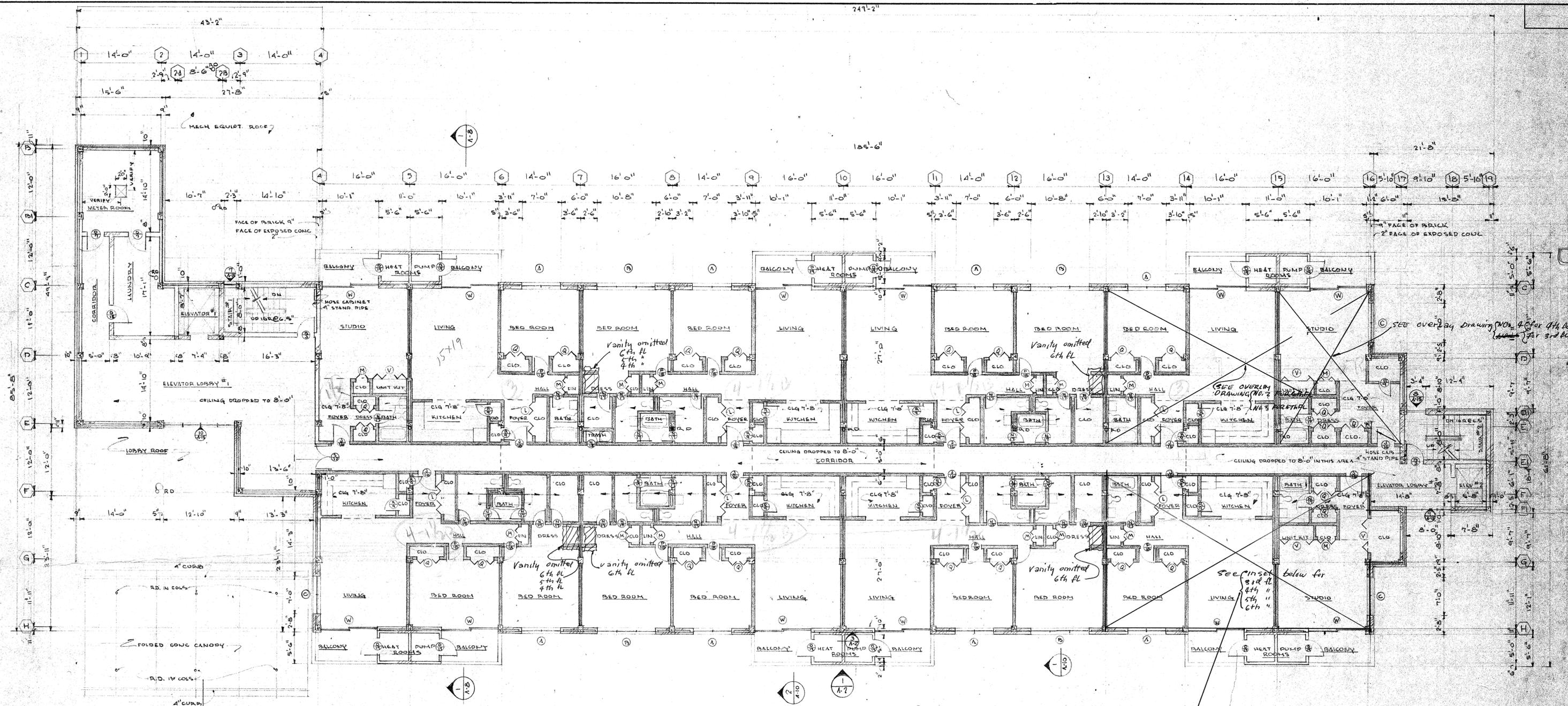
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"

NOTES: 1. SEE SHEET A-14 FOR CHANGES IN KITCHEN ARRANGEMENT.

63-428-REVISED 1ST FLR.

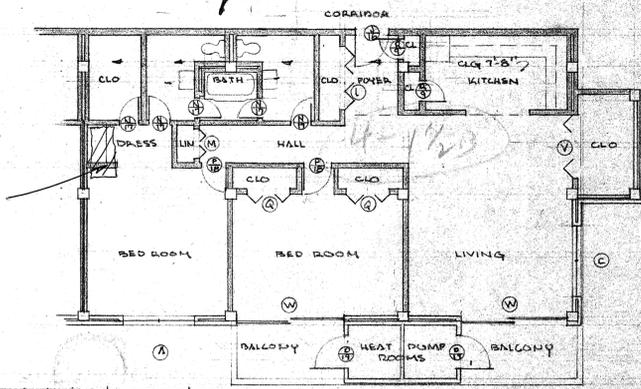
A3

<p>GODLEY APARTMENTS CHARLOTTE, N.C.</p>	
<p>SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0" DATE: FEB. 1966</p>	<p>APPROVED BY: DRAWN BY: G.E.D. REVISED: 4-12-63</p>
<p>CHAS. MORRISON GRIER-ARCHITECT & ASSOCIATES, A.I.A. CHARLOTTE, N.C.</p>	
<p>FIRST FLOOR PLAN</p>	
<p>DRAWING NUMBER: 198-63</p>	



1/8" = 1'-0" FLOOR PLAN

3rd
4th
5th
6th



1/8" = 1'-0" CONDITION 2 FLOOR PLAN

3rd
4th
5th
6th

GODLEY APARTMENTS CHARLOTTE, N.C.		
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"	APPROVED BY	DRAWN BY
DATE:	CHAS. MORRISON GRIER ARCHITECT & ASSOCIATES AIA CHARLOTTE, N.C.	DRAWING NUMBER
FLOOR PLAN		198-62