



DENVER LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION INDIVIDUAL STRUCTURE LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

02.09.2021

This form is for use in nominating individual structures and districts in the City and County of Denver. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." Questions about the application or designation process can be directed to Denver Landmark Preservation staff at landmark@denvergov.org or (303) 865-2709.

Property Address: 3001 S. Federal Blvd, Building 7, Denver, CO 80236

New Address forthcoming: 3144 W. Frances Walsh Place, Denver CO 80236

The following are required for the application to be considered complete:

- Property Information
- Applicant Information and Signatures
- Criteria for Significance
- Statement of Significance
- Period of Significance
- Property Description
- Statement of Integrity
- Historic Context
- Bibliography
- Photographs
- Boundary Map
- Application Fee



1. Property Information

Name of Property

Historic Name: Pancratia Hall

Other or Current Name: Pancratia Hall Lofts

Current Address: 3001 S. Federal Blvd., Building 7, Denver, CO 80236

New Address: 3144 W. Frances Walsh Place, Denver CO 80236

Legal Description:

Lot 3, Block 3, Loretto Heights Filing NO. 1, City and County of Denver, State of Colorado.

Number of resources: One

# Contributing	# Non-Contributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Primary Structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Accessory Structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Features

Contributing and Noncontributing Features or Resources

Describe below how contributing and non-contributing features were determined.

N/A - Pancratia Hall, a singular primary structure, is the only resource comprising this designation. Its character-defining features are included in the architectural description.

General Property Data

Date of construction: 1930 —

Architect (if known): Harry W.J. Edbrooke

Builder (if known): Unknown

Original Use: Education

Current Use: Multi-family Affordable Housing

Source(s) of information for above:

Square Moon Consultants, LLC, Loretto Heights Academy and College, 1891-1988, Inventory of Historic Resources and Survey Report, March 2019.



Previous documentation

List previous historic survey and/or if property is listed or eligible for listing in the State or National Register of Historic Places.

Pancratia Hall and the entire Loretto Heights Academy and College campus were surveyed as part of the *Loretto Heights Academy and College, 1891-1988, Inventory of Historic Resources and Survey Report* completed by Square Moon Consultants, LLC in March 2019. The report determined Pancratia Hall to be individually eligible for listing as a Denver Landmark and in the Colorado Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places.

The Square Moon report is the main bibliographical source used to prepare this application. In some cases, sections are copied and pasted verbatim from the report, as indicated in parenthetical references.

2. Owner/Applicant Information

An application for designation may be submitted by:

- Owner(s) of the property or properties, or
- Member(s) of city council, or
- Manager of Community Planning and Development, or
- Three residents of Denver, if they are not owners of the property or properties

Owner Information

Name: Pancratia Hall Partners

Address: 2120 Bluebell Avenue, Boulder CO 80302

Phone: 720-333-0110

Email: jim@hartmanelyinvestments.com

Prepared by

Name: Jim Hartman

Address: 2120 Bluebell Avenue, Boulder CO 80302

Phone: 720-333-0110

Email: jim@hartmanelyinvestments.com



Owner Applicant:

I / We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of the property described in this application for landmark designation do, hereby, give my consent to the designation of this structure as a structure for preservation.

I understand that this designation transfers with the title of the property should the property be sold, or if legal or beneficial title is otherwise transferred.

Owner(s): Jim Hartman Date: October 21, 2021
(please print)

Owner(s) Signature: 

For individual designations, if the owner does not support the designation, the applicants must conduct outreach to the owner. Describe below the efforts to contact the owner to discuss designation and other possible preservation alternatives. Please provide dates and details of any communications or meetings with the property owner, or the property owner's representatives.

3. Significance

Criteria for Significance

To qualify as a Landmark, a property must meet at least three significance criteria. Check the applicable criteria from the following list.

- A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;
- B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;
- C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;
- D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;
- E. It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;
- F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;
- G. It promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;
- H. It represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations;
- I. It is a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural understanding;
- J. It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

Statement of Significance

B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;

Pankratia Hall has a direct and substantial association with the Sisters of Loretto and Mother Mary Pankratia, born Mary Lucinda Bonfils (1851-1915), for whom the building was named in memoriam. Both the group and person had influence on society as an arm of the Roman Catholic Church focused on education, in this case, women's education specifically. While Mother Pankratia died before construction of Pankratia Hall in 1930, her individual contributions are worth noting as part of the larger legacy left by the Sisters of Loretto in Denver. Mother Pankratia was one of the most important members of the Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross (original and full name of the organization) based in Denver, Colorado.

The Sisters of Loretto were a North American educational order established in 1812 by a Catholic priest from Belgium and missionary to early rural Kentucky named Father Charles Nerinckx. His mission and that of the Sisters was to educate children of pioneers on the frontier. An older English, and now worldwide, Catholic group of teachers, Sisters of Loreto (spelled with one 't'), inspired Father Nerinckx. The two groups, and all the far-flung places and institutions named for them, honor the town of Loreto, Italy, host of the Basilica of the Holy House and its Marian shrine said to contain the humble brick residence of Mary, mother of Jesus, relocated from Nazareth by Crusaders in 1294, via Croatia (Catholic Culture 2018) (Square Moon Report p. 9).

The Sisters' presence in Denver prior to the establishment of Loretto Heights Academy spanned at least two decades. In 1864 a Bishop that had been dispatched to Denver, Father Joseph P. Machebeuf, asked the Loretto Sisters in Santa Fe to send three teachers to Denver for the purpose of establishing a school for young women: St. Mary's Academy in downtown Denver at 14th and California Streets. The young, 16 year old Sister Pancratia was among the three selected to move to the 30-year-old mining settlement of Denver, Colorado.

Sister Pancratia was born into a Protestant family in 1852 in St Louis, Missouri. Her parents sent her to Loretto Academy in Florissant near St. Louis where, by age 14, she converted to Catholicism. Continuing her education at the Kentucky motherhouse for the Loretto Sisters, she quickly found her calling as a Sister and educator. Two years later, at the age of 16, she was sent to Denver to fulfill the roles of teacher and administrator at St. Mary's Academy. By age 30, her title changed to Mother Pancratia: Director of St. Mary's Academy (Square Moon Report p. 10).

Father Machebeuf's support for Catholic-based education, including his 1864 assignment of the Sisters of Loretto to St. Mary's and then in 1888 to Loretto Heights, followed a commitment of the Roman Catholic Church everywhere to provide schooling for its children and thus proliferation of the church itself. As a part of that schooling by 1900, wrote church historian Timothy Walch, "sister-teachers were the single most important element in the Catholic educational establishment," with more than 40,000 religious sisters assigned to parish schools in the U.S. (Walch 1996, quoted in Maloney 2015) (Square Moon Report, pg. 10).

The United States, following independence from Great Britain, began recognizing the importance of educating young women when few schools for women existed. The Sisters of Loretto's mission to educate women followed national trends of the time that began in the eastern United States and travelled west with settlement of the frontier. The early and continued education of young girls and women in Denver led to some early progressive movements and policies of women's rights, such as Colorado's pioneering statewide vote of 1893 to approve woman suffrage through a state constitutional amendment some 27 years before the national approval of women voting in all elections (Square Moon Report, pg. 11-12).

Sister Pancratia was related to the influential Bonfils family, that included cousins Helen and May Bonfils, who made many notable contributions to Colorado society. Although noncommunicative due to religious and lifestyle differences, the sisters Helen and May used their inherited wealth wisely by investing and donating, through their respective foundations, back to the Denver community for the construction of educational and cultural places. Such places include financial support for the Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and the Central City Opera. May Bonfils Stanton took specific interest in the Loretto Heights Academy and donated in the early 1960's in support of the dramatic and musical arts, which led to the construction and

opening of the May Bonfils Stanton Theater and Library on the Loretto Heights campus in 1962 (Square Moon Report, pg. 30).

Following the incredible success of St. Mary's Academy and increased population of Denver, Mother Pancratia set out to establish another academy in the outskirts of Denver in 1888: Loretto Heights Academy. Loretto Heights Academy, a Catholic boarding school for elementary and high school girls, is the original entity that started the Loretto Heights campus with the initial purchase of 40 acres atop the then titled Mt. Sheridan. The hill was renamed Mt. Loretto and by 1891 the Administration Building had been constructed and the Academy opened to its first students.

Mother Pancratia's vision, alongside Bishop Machebeuf and the Sisters of Loretto, is generally accredited for the success of St. Mary's Academy and Loretto Heights Academy. They are responsible for the education of thousands of women and their later positive contributions to Colorado, specifically Denver, politics and culture. Although Mother Pancratia was not alive when Pancratia Hall was built, it was named in her honor as one of the most significant visionaries and administrators of the Sisters of Loretto. It was the first major campus expansion and was precipitated by the accreditation of a 4-year college curriculum at Loretto Heights in 1926. Pancratia Hall absorbed the Administration Building's high school curriculum and dormitory functions until the Academy closed in 1941, which was in alignment with the goal of the Sisters of Loretto's educational purpose and ultimately, further fulfilling Mother Pancratia's vision of the Academy (Square Moon Report, pg. 21).

Mother Pancratia passed away in 1915 and is buried at the cemetery on the now former Loretto Heights campus. The Sisters of Loretto ran the Loretto Heights College until 1988, one hundred years after Mother Pancratia purchased the hilltop property and established Loretto Heights Academy. St. Mary's Academy eventually moved to the Denver suburb of Cherry Hills Village and continues to be operated by the Sisters of Loretto.

C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;

Pancratia Hall embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of the Collegiate Gothic Style through various architectural and decorative features such as arched entrances and windows, tall and dense massing, the use of stone and brick, and multi-light windows. According to History Colorado's architectural style guide, Collegiate Gothic style combines elements of the Gothic Revival style with the Jacobean/Elizabethan style, and elements of both are found on the building.

The most visible characteristics of Gothic Revival style on Pancratia Hall are the five bays of 4th floor pointed-arch chapel windows and 3rd floor cast-stone spandrel panels on the main east façade. The six piers that frame those windows and panels and their accompanying six ornamental finials at the top of that brick façade also contribute to the overall Gothic Revival style. Other features on Pancratia Hall that embody the Gothic Revival style are the two arched and recessed entrances of the main façade and the four cast-stone Celtic crosses that crown each of the main gables. Most elevations on the building utilize multi-light window openings to accentuate and light the interior spaces.

Characteristics of the building from the Jacobean/Elizabethan style include the steeply pitched roofs, the front façade chimney (that interestingly was never operational as the lounge fireplace flu was routed to the courtyard roof of the building through a metal vent), and the arched front entrances.

D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;

Pancratia Hall was designed in 1928 by Harry W. J. Edbrooke, a prominent architect in Denver in the early 1900s. Harry, Chicago born, studied at the University of Illinois for two years then transferred to the Armour institute of Technology to complete his architectural education. He graduated in 1898 and began to practice for local firms and architects until 1904 when he opened his own practice.

Harry was the son of Willoughby J. Edbrooke, a very famous and established architect in Denver, that designed significant monumental buildings across the United States such as the Old United States Post Office in Washington, D.C. Harry was also the nephew of the famous Denver architect Frank E. Edbrooke, who invited Harry to move to Denver in 1908 to work for him. Frank, who had moved to Denver in 1879 following his brother's footsteps, gained incredible and immediate recognition by winning major commissions such as the Tabor Grand Opera House, Denver Dry Goods Company Building, and Brown Palace Hotel. In 1894, he was the supervising Architect for the Colorado State Capitol (Square Moon Report, pg. 13). Frank designed the Loretto Heights Academy Administration Building in 1891 and Chapel in 1909. Harry's presence in Frank's firm undoubtedly allowed him to be involved in the design of the Loretto Heights campus and gained him invaluable education and possibly a positive reputation with the Sisters.

Ultimately, Harry took over Frank's architectural business after Frank retired in 1913. Harry maintained the reputation of his father and uncle, gaining confidence in the Denver market as a trusted local architect. Some of Harry's other buildings noted in "Denver the City Beautiful" by Thomas J. Noel and Barbara S. Norgren, 1987 for their significant communal and cultural importance include:

- W. H. Kistler Stationary Store Building (1916), 1636 Champa [Late Gothic Revival]
- The addition to the A.T. Lewis Dry Goods Company (1917), 1531 Stout St. [Chicago School Style]
- Ogden Theater (1917), 935 East Colfax Ave. [Mediterranean Revival]
- Adams Street School (1921), 3230 38th Ave. [Pueblo Revival]
- Valverde Elementary School (1923), 2030 W. Alameda Ave. [Late Gothic Revival with hints of Venetian Palace]
- Fifth Church of Christ Scientist (1929), 1477 Columbine St. [Italian Renaissance]
- Rexall Drug Store (1929), 2226-2260 E. Colfax Ave. [Mediterranean Revival]

As the first major expansion of the Loretto Heights campus, Pancratia Hall was commissioned in 1928 and is a significant example of Harry Edbrooke's work since it is a departure from his more common Mediterranean influenced designs. Harry's Collegiate Gothic Style design for Pancratia Hall signaled a stylistic shift on the Loretto Heights campus which had been up to this point Richardsonian Romanesque. The design maintains a visible relationship with the older buildings on campus, however, by adding some of the decorative elements of the Administration Building and Chapel that were designed by his uncle Frank (Square Moon Report, pg. 20). It is the only Collegiate Gothic Style building on the campus. Harry Edbrooke continued to practice architecture until his death in 1946.

F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;

Located on the 71-acre lot of Loretto Heights Academy, Pancratia Hall is the only Collegiate Gothic style building at Loretto Heights, thus giving it unique and prominent physical characteristics. A five-story building built of red brick and accented with cast-stone lintels, the building is easily recognizable with Celtic crosses on the front gables, ornamental finials and pointed-arch chapel windows on its front façade. Located northwest of the original Administration Building atop the hill close to 300 feet away from the main road, Pancratia Hall has maintained its location and structural integrity over the years, making it a visible stable staple of the Academy's long architectural history.

Pancratia Hall is oriented on the same axis as the Administration Building towards the mountain and land views, and the building is prominently featured near the crest of the hill, including the tall massing of the front façade that faces toward and is clearly visible from the now heavily used Federal Blvd. As the surrounding land was developed over the years, the Sisters of Loretto continued to buy land and make careful decisions on landscape design in order to maintain the original beauty and significance of the placement of the Administration Building and Pancratia Hall. Although the campus was eventually surrounded with housing, retail and restaurants, the campus maintained its integrity as a carefully preserved place for education and appreciation of the natural environment (Square Moon Report, pg. 43).

J. It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

The following passages describe how the Loretto Heights Academy was an important institution for the Sisters of Loretto and the Catholic Church in the Denver area, with references from the Square Moon Report, specifically in relation to Pancratia Hall.

Loretto Heights Academy was an important institution for the Sisters of Loretto and the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church appreciated the national Progressive Movement of the time, which was to provide institutions of education and opportunity for young women, labeling the Sister-Teachers as the most significant element (Square Moon Report, pg 10). The growing desire to educate girls and women was very popular in Denver at the elementary and collegiate levels alike; the St. Mary's Academy in central Denver was flourishing and inspired the development of another school in a more natural environment.

The Sisters of Loretto, led by Mother Mary Pancratia Bonfils, intended for the campus to be as far from the young settlement of Denver as possible, following the roots of their pioneering ancestors and motto of, "Fides, Mores, Cultura" (Faith, Culture and Tradition) (Square Moon report, PDF pg 9). Their desire to enrich young minds with both beauty and God was believed to be better received atop the views of the renamed Mt. Loretto (Square Moon Report, pg 12).

The Loretto Heights Academy was an important campus for women's education for many decades. Pancratia Hall played a key role at the Academy, providing classrooms, dormitory rooms, a gymnasium and chapel. For a century, generations of women were educated into wise graduates and contributed to society as women of intelligence, faith, culture, arts, and commerce (Square Moon Report, pg 13).

Pancratia Hall was the first major building added to the Loretto Heights Academy (in 1930), after the Academy received its accreditation in 1926 for its 4-year college curriculum. Previously, the Academy consisted of only the Administration Building (completed in 1891), the Our Lady of Loretto Chapel (1911) and the Priest's House (1916). Following the Academy's college accreditation, the Sister's expanded the campus in a (successful) attempt to respond to the increased popularity of the Academy and Denver's growing population. The development of Pancratia Hall was carefully calculated and, upon completion, allowed the functional program of the Administration Building to be transferred to the hall. This expansion allowed the Administration Building to offer more courses and services to the collegiate level students. Pancratia Hall's construction allowed the Academy to compete with other local academies that were also responding to the mission of educating young women with the knowledge and skills that would allow them to further contribute to their community's workforce, culture and of course their own homes and children (Square Moon Report, pg. 13).

Period of Significance

Period of Significance: 1930-1988

The 58-year range includes the year construction of Pancratia Hall was completed up to the year that Loretto Heights College closed. Throughout that time period, Pancratia Hall served an educational purpose as connected to Loretto Heights College.

4. Property Description

Describe the current physical appearance of the property, providing a statement for each of the following:

- a. **Summary Paragraph** - Briefly describe the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, materials, setting, size, and significant features.

Pancratia Hall is a concrete-frame building of five stories in Collegiate Gothic style with red brick exterior of common bond with Flemish headers, over two partial basement areas. Located and oriented strategically on campus by the architect and Sisters of Loretto, near the Administration Building, Pancratia Hall is approximately 63,500 SF on a site of 1.09 acres with an H-shaped plan that is oriented north-south along the bar (main hallways), with the two stems (wings) oriented east-west, and a steep cross-gabled roof. Some significant and recognizable features include the main façade arched stained glass windows and parapet finials, as well as the arched main entry portals and a Celtic cross at the peak of each main gable. The site setting is in the process of changing from the original campus layout to instead Pancratia Hall becoming a key piece of the new Loretto Heights mixed-use community that is currently under construction.

- b. **Architectural Description** – Describe the architectural features of the structure(s) (i.e. building) in a logical sequence, from the ground up or façade by façade. Identify the key visual aspects or character-defining features of the structure.

Pancratia Hall is a 5-story building composed of red brick with cast stone details. The

main east façade is the most ornamental with arched entry portals with an ornamental light fixture and a “Pancratia Hall” cast stone panel above each portal, arched stained glass windows, an ornamental chimney, two original 4th floor dormer windows in the large sloped roof, cast stone finials and Celtic crosses. An extended elevator hoistway has been inserted behind the chimney but is not immediately identifiable as an addition because of the efforts to blend as much as possible into the surrounding roof materials. A terra cotta brick identifying the original architect, Harry W. J. Edbrooke is at the south end of this façade.

The south façade faces the Loretto Heights Quad. The 1929 cornerstone is at the east end of this façade. It bears an inscription of OSJ OSM, standing for the Loretto Sisters abbreviated prayer, “O Suffering Jesus, O Sorrowful Mary”. Three roof skylights and three patios with new windows and doors have been added to bring additional natural light and air into the previously unoccupied attic and previous basement areas that had minimal original windows.

The north façade faces the new street, W. Frances Walsh Place. It features three roof skylights and four window wells with new windows that have been added to bring additional natural light and air into the previously unoccupied attic and previous basement areas that had no original windows. The added windows contribute to the original design in a way that does not disturb rhythm nor balance of the elevation.

The west façade embraces a courtyard with new landscaping for the residents, three new patios, the accessible entrance ramp, an exit stair and two below-grade mechanical equipment areas. Key features of this façade are the two original bay window areas, a second chimney and seven original 4th floor dormer windows in the large sloped roof. Sixteen additional dormers have been added at the 5th floor to bring additional natural light and air into the previously unoccupied attic.

c. Major Alterations - Describe changes or alterations to the exterior of the structure and dates of major alterations, if known.

There have been a few alterations to the building beginning in 1957 with the non-contributing addition at the northwest corner of Marian Hall. In late 2020, Marian Hall was removed. In 1991, the original third floor metal exit balconies and ladders on the west facade were replaced with exterior exit stairs. In 1994, the building was made more accessible by replacing an original exit stair at the north side of the courtyard with an accessibility ramp. An exterior cooling tower and brick enclosure was constructed at the northwest corner of the site in 2004. That enclosure was converted in 2021 to instead house a trash and emergency generator. Most recently, the alterations in 2020 / 2021 to the building include new dormers, skylights, elevator enclosure, patios, window wells and courtyard construction noted previously as well as the new roads, sidewalks and parking areas that serve Pancratia Hall. All modifications and alterations prior to 2020 were done by the previous ownership group.

5. Integrity

Describe the structure's integrity, using the seven qualities that define integrity: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

Pancratia Hall retains a high degree of integrity in location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The building is in its original location. Most of the original Pancratia Hall exterior materials and design have stood the test of time with minimal repairs or alterations. Most alterations occurred in the interior; thus, the exterior design, materials and workmanship retain high integrity. Furthermore, the design of the 2020/2021 rehabilitation follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and was approved by the National Park Service, and is therefore sensitive to and compatible with the structure's overall integrity.

The removal of Marian Hall affects the setting that existed during the latter part of the 1930-1988 period of significance (1957-1988 while Marian Hall existed). However, the Marian Hall removal restores the original site setting, feeling and association and the northwest corner architectural detailing that existed from 1930-1957, before Marian Hall was added. The Marian Hall removal does not negatively impact the essential physical features that provide Pancratia Hall with its architectural significance. Because the building is being sensitively rehabilitated and adaptively reused as affordable housing, the overall feeling of the structure and its site and historical association is maintained.

6. Historic Context

Describe the history of the structure, including events, activities and associations that relate the structure to its historic, architectural, geographic, or cultural significance. Examine how patterns, themes, or trends in history affected the property and how it relates to the surrounding community, neighborhood, city, and/or nation.

The part of this section in *italics* is from pages 11 and 12 of the 2019 Square Moon Consultants report:

The Loretto Heights Academy was part of the growing national trend of additional educational opportunities for women in the late 1800s and early 1900s, particularly as part of the Catholic Church. Loretto Heights was the first expansion of the Sisters of Loretto's educational movement outside the downtown Denver area, after their initial St. Mary's Academy was founded in 1864.

St. Mary's Academy of Denver fit into this growing national trend of dedicated female schools. Founded in 1864, it "flourished from the beginning, and within a few years the entire half-block was acquired [in downtown Denver] and large additions...were erected" (Smiley 1901:762). Denver's appetite for educational offerings grew as the city rapidly expanded. While in 1870 the city's population was around 5,000, it had increased to 35,000 by 1880. By the time Mother Pancratia initiated the Catholic boarding academy on Mt. Loretto in 1888, Denver offered several academies for girls, as well as advanced degrees for women at the Methodist-affiliated University of Denver (1864–present) and the Baptist-affiliated Colorado Women's College (1888–1982) (University of Denver 2019).

The success at St. Mary's and the growing Catholic population in and around Denver led the Sisters of Loretto to pursue the second school location several miles south of Denver in

1888, far removed from the “turmoil and noise” of the city (Smiley 1901:761). With late 19th century advancements for Catholic and women’s education prominent in Denver’s maturity, the symbolism of Mt. Loretto’s lofty location with mountain views was not lost on the local Catholic community. A Denver Diocese newspaper article from about 1890 proclaimed, “the views were so beautiful from the new Loretto Heights Academy site that children would certainly learn to love both beauty and God as they received their educations there” (Colorado Catholic, c. 1890 clipping, Denver Public Library).

Pancratia Hall was a key element of that trend, being the first major academic building expansion at Loretto Heights after the initial Administration Building was completed in 1891. Pancratia Hall’s commission and construction symbolized the growth of the Catholic Church’s mission there in Denver, so encouraged by the Sisters of Loretto. The popularity of the Loretto Heights Academy and its various levels of education, ranging from elementary to collegiate, grew with the population of Denver and surrounding regions. The Academy commissioned Pancratia Hall to absorb the current building program of the Administration Building so that it may expand its collegiate course offerings and services. This decision and action is significant to the Academy’s history as a whole because it served to further educate and care for the women and children who attended the Academy by giving them more options for their future education and careers.

The Loretto Heights site was selected by Mother Pancratia for its prominent location on a hill, proximity to the army’s Ft. Logan and its distance from the congested downtown Denver area. That area surrounding Denver was relatively native and undeveloped at that point in Denver’s history. Site selection search, spearheaded by Mother Mary Pancratia, was inspired by the Sisters of Loretto’s connection to nature and desire to be in a space where education and faith were priority. Though they were located some distance from Denver, they were not separated from world events and, in some instances, dedicated themselves to serving the Nation and society in any matter they could, specifically during the World Wars. They adjusted curriculum and modified living quarters for the U.S. Army Signal Corps journalists and nursing assistants (Square Moon Report, pg 22).

The progressive movement of education for young girls and women also triggered social and political movements at the local level in Denver. Most notably, in 1893 Colorado as a state voted to approve woman suffrage through a state constitutional amendment. The advanced nature of the statewide vote in the historic timeline of the United States as a whole suggests that the initiative of educating young girls and women by the Sisters of Loretto and other organizations were successful in their goal to allow women the opportunity to contribute further to their community and society as a whole (Square Moon Report, pg. 12).

In 1892, only a couple years after opening, the Denver economy crashed along with the National economy due to the loss of status for silver prices. This caused the mortgages for both St. Mary’s and Loretto Heights to drop significantly in value. Mother Pancratia had been reassigned elsewhere (she was reinstated as superior of Loretto Heights by 1912), the Irish born and accomplished Mother Praxedes Carty became the face of the Sisters of Loretto in Denver. She personally sought an audience with the mortgage company out of state and convinced them to allow the Sisters more time to pay the note. She went on to be promoted to Superior General of the Loretto order by 1896. Under her leadership, the Sisters and Academy weathered and recovered from the depression into their more successful years atop Mt. Loretto.

The campus was further developed and adapted over the years as college curriculum gained accreditation in 1926 and diversified to respond to cultural and societal interests. General Academy enrollment increased and further inspired expansion until its closure in 1941; the College continued until 1988, accepting males on a full-time basis starting in 1979. The Sisters and the design professionals they hired designed the campus to have as much open land as possible and oriented buildings towards the Rocky Mountains. The Sisters of Loretto hired accomplished local architects and landscape architects like John Monroe, Musick & Musick, and Saco Rank DeBoer that respected the land and history of the design intent of the original Administration Building and campus, while creating an architecturally diverse campus including Richardsonian Romanesque, Collegiate Gothic, Craftsman and New Formalism styles. Beautiful and uninterrupted views of the Rocky Mountains and a seemingly spiritual connection to nature were always priority when they discussed the development of the campus (Square Moon Report, pg 39).

Sister Patricia Jean Manion became president of Loretto Heights College in 1967. She was known as Sister P.J. during her innovative leadership as both a secular dresser and advocate for change in tradition when it came to enrollment, sponsors and off-campus programs. Sister P.J. not only allowed men to enroll in the College, sowing tolerance and acceptance to the idea that everyone deserves an opportunity towards higher education, she also approached non-religious sponsors and formed the secular board of trustees in 1968. This was a pivotal time for the College and her leadership was the breath of fresh air it needed to continue operation for another two decades (Square Moon Report, pg 33).

An alarming enrollment drop in the fall of 1987 caused a layoff of several Loretto Heights College faculty and staff, and a reduction in salaries for those remaining. A well-attended student protest, as the spring semester began in January 1988, pressed for new leadership at the college so that it might continue independently (Rocky Mountain News, January 16, 1988). Instead, the Loretto Heights Board of Trustees reached out to the University of Denver (DU), Loretto's longtime friendly competitor in south Denver founded by Methodists in 1864, and by 1988 a relatively large secular university with an enrollment of more than 10,000 (Misch 1988). After a DU merger failed, the Loretto board turned to the Catholic/Jesuit-managed Regis College in Denver for a "transfer of operating assets." Regis, started in 1887 in northwest Denver as a Catholic men's academy and college, growing in a century to a coeducational institution of some 15,000 students, accepted the Loretto Heights deal in March 1988 (Square Moon Report, pg. 35).

Despite the closure, the Loretto Heights Academy and College, and the Sister Teachers of Loretto, remain an essential and significant part of the history of women's education, societal integration, and a great example of the capacity of the Catholic Church in Denver and Colorado.

7. Additional Information

Bibliography

Square Moon Consultants, LLC, *Loretto Heights Academy and College, 1891-1988, Inventory of Historic Resources and Survey Report*, March 2019.

"Denver the City Beautiful" by Thomas J. Noel and Barbara S. Norgren, 1987



Information on Willoughby J Edbrooke: <https://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000069>

Stationary Store: <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/badf3a15-5696-4e41-887b-64116a97df61>

A.T.: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/84125746>

Odgen: https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARApodstorage/lz/electronic-records/rg-079/NPS_CO/95001055.pdf

Adams & Valverde: <https://skyscraperpage.com/forum/showthread.php?t=197208>

5th church of
Christ: https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMGR3G_Fifth_Church_of_Christ_Scientist_Denver_CO

Rexall: <https://denverite.com/2018/03/28/former-gallery-space-at-colfax-and-york-will-become-a-bakery-ice-cream-shop-and-exercise-studio/>

Photographs

Attach at least four digital photographs showing the views of the property from the public right of way and any important features or details. If available, include historic photographs of the structure.

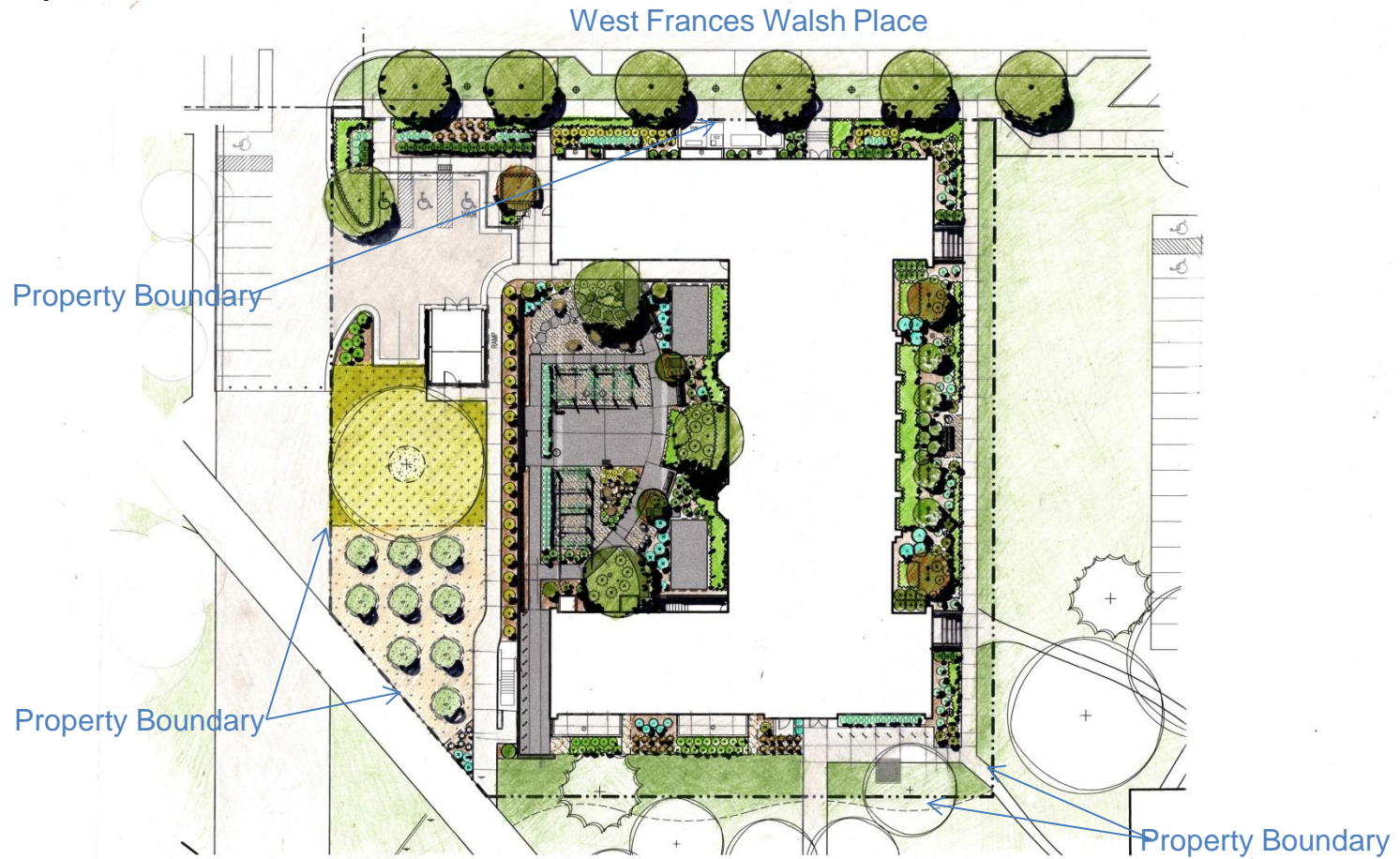
See photos included at the end of this application

Boundary Map

Attach a map that graphically depicts the structure, the location of other significant features, and the boundaries of the designation.

See map included at the end of this application

Pancratia Hall Lofts
Denver Landmark Preservation Commission
Site Plan and Photographs
3144 W. Frances Walsh Place, Denver, Colorado
Pancratia Hall Partners LLC
October 5, 2021



PANCRATIA HALL LOFTS
ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE PLAN

October 2020





Photo 1: East Elevation



Photo 2-Historic Exterior, 1930 (courtesy of Sisters of Loretto Heritage Center Archives)



Photo 3-South Elevation



Photo 4-Historic Exterior-1930 (courtesy of Sisters of Loretto Heritage Center

Archives)

Pancratia Hall Lofts



Photo 5-North Elevation



Photo 6-West Elevation



Photo 7-Historic Exterior-1950s (courtesy of Sisters of Loretto Heritage Center Archives)



Photo 8-Aerial From Above



Photo 9-Courtyard



Photo 10-East Facade Detail



Photo 11-West Facade Detail



Photo 12-Aerial From East-1945 (courtesy of Sisters of Loretto Heritage Center Archives)



Photo 13-Aerial From East



Photo 14-Mother Pancratia Bonfils-Late 1880s

(courtesy of Sisters of Loretto Heritage Center Archives)



Photo 15-Harry W. J. Edbrooke-1930s (Courtesy of Ken Fuller Collection)