



1. **Name of Property**

Historic Name: Peet House

Current Name: Peet-Abman House

2. **Location**

Address: 1717 East Arizona Avenue, Denver, CO 80210

Legal Description: L 21 TO 24 INC BLK 5 WASHINGTON PARK PLACE

3. **Owner Information**

Name: Abman Family Trust

Address: 1717 E. Arizona Ave. Denver, CO 80210

Phone: Carolyn Abman, (303) 748-9746

Email: carolynabman@hotmail.com

4. **Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner)**

N/A

5. **General Data**

Date of construction and major additions/alterations: Construction – 1915-1916 (permit lists address as 1711); Major Additions/Alterations – One-story brick addition on east elevation (1982/1983), construction of retaining wall with wrought iron fence (1983)

Source of Information: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1903-1951; City and County of Denver Building Permit Records

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Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings: One brick garage, built c.1916

Approximate lot size and acreage: 0.289 acre

Source of Information: Denver Property Taxation and Assessment System

(<https://www.denvergov.org/property/realproperty/summary/161517745/>); Google Earth Pro

Architect: Jules Jacques Benois Benedict

Source of Information: City and County of Denver Building Permit #1441

Builder: Hansen & Laursen

Source of Information: City and County of Denver Building Permit #1441

Original Use: Domestic/Single Dwelling

Source of Information: Denver City Directories

Present Use: Domestic/Single Dwelling

Source of Information: Current owner; property site visit by Miniello Consulting

Previous field documentation (date and surveyor): 5DV.4219, May 1990, Colorado Historical Society

National Register Status and date (listed, eligible, study list): Eligible, May 1990

6. **Statement of Significance**

Category 1: History, Criteria a. Have direct association with the historical development of the city, state, or nation

The Peet-Abman House is directly associated with the development of the Washington Park Neighborhood of the City and County of Denver. The Washington Park Neighborhood, located southeast of downtown Denver, is bound by Cherry Creek on the north, South University Boulevard on the east, Interstate 25 (Valley Highway) on the south, and South Downing Street on the west. It shares its name with Washington Park, a 160.8-acre park that occupies a considerable portion of the western side of the neighborhood.¹

The park was designed by Reinhardt Schuetze, who also designed Denver's Platt Park.² Schuetze's design called for a tree-lined perimeter marked by streets and residential neighborhoods, with the exception of the southeast corner that now adjoins South Denver High School.³ The park would include two lakes, Smith and Grasmere, as well as a lily pond bordered with Russian willows and other trees.⁴ The park was fully developed between 1902 and 1923, and during the popularity of the City Beautiful movement in Denver, the regionally renowned architect, Jules Jacques Benois (J.J.B.) Benedict, contributed to those efforts by designing the boathouse at the south end of Smith Lake (1913).⁵ Benedict had previously been hired to design other significant resources for city parks, including a pavilion for

¹ Denver Public Library Digital Collection, "Washington Park Neighborhood History," (available from <https://history.denverlibrary.org/washington-park-neighborhood-history>), accessed 11 September 2018.

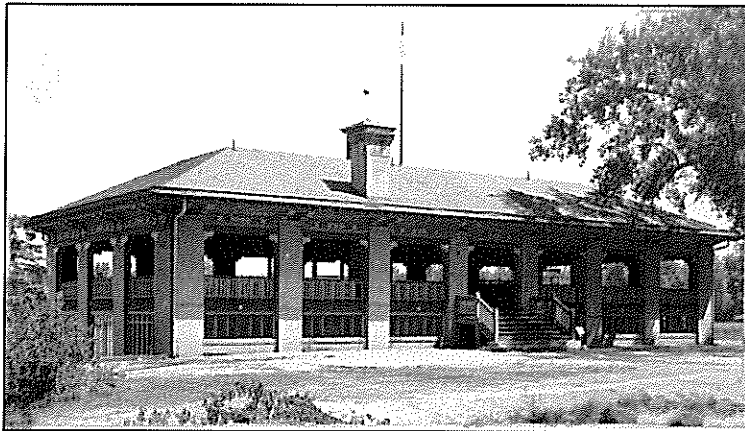
² Fisher, Steve, *A Brief History of South Denver & University Park* (Charleston: The History Press, 2012), 51.

³ U.S. Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places-Nomination Form: Denver Park and Parkway System," (available from <https://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>), accessed 13 September 2018.

⁴ Fisher, 51.

⁵ "National Register of Historic Places-Nomination Form: Denver Park and Parkway System,"; *Rocky Mountain News*, May 19, 1907, Ad for Washington Park Place.

Sunken Gardens Park (1911) and the esplanade extending westward from the Denver Natural History Museum in City Park (1911). However, the boathouse in Washington Park is the only such extant resource today.⁶



Benedict-designed boathouse in Washington Park (Source: Denver Public Library Digital Collections)

As park improvements were implemented, the properties around it were soon purchased for residential development. Washington Park Place, the neighborhood surrounding the park, was advertised by developers as “an exclusive residence section of fine homes...” with “...a view of mountains, hills and valley, superior to any other in the city.” The ads went on to state that “...a proper building restriction will protect your homes from undesirable buildings and

people....”⁷ Denver residents began flocking to this area not only because of the attractive quality of life outside of the city, being cleaner than downtown, and directly next to a beautiful city park development. The Washington Park Neighborhood early houses were modest brick bungalows, but as the park improved and wealthier individuals were drawn to it in the mid-1910s, the houses became larger and significantly more ornate, reflecting the status of the new neighbors. Included in that shift to grander commissions were this property and the Peet-Tatlock House (1168 S. Gilpin St.), both of which were designed by Benedict. As the 1920s would prove to be Benedict’s most fruitful time for designing residential buildings, these two homes are considered early commissions. Later Benedict designs would be heavily concentrated in the Country Club neighborhood, making the fact that the two homes were built on the same block and separated by one property all the more unique.

Today, the park has a large meadow, the remnant of the City Ditch, the two lakes, numerous plantings, and a forested hill that was graded by the Olmsted Brothers and planted by Saco Rienk DeBoer.⁸ The Olmsted Brothers were nationally known for their designs that included the Cleveland Metroparks System in Cuyahoga County, Ohio and the Oldfields-Lilly House and Gardens in Indianapolis, Indiana, among many others. DeBoer succeeded Schuetze as the city’s landscape architect and was involved in the design of several National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed resources including South Marion Street Parkway, Speer Boulevard, East 6th Avenue Parkway, East 7th Avenue Parkway, East 17th Avenue Parkway, Alamo Placita Park, Hungarian Freedom Park, Berkeley Lake Park, Cheesman Park Esplanade, City Park, and Sunken Gardens Park.⁹ The Peet- Abman House at 1717 E. Arizona Ave. is directly associated with the early development of the Washington Park Neighborhood and directly associated with the park.

⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior, “National Register of Historic Places-Multiple Property Documentation Form: The Architecture of Jules Jacques Benois Benedict in Colorado,” (available from <https://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>), accessed 13 September 2018.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ “Washington Park Neighborhood History,” DPL.

⁹ Denver Park and Parkways National Register nomination.

Category 2: Architecture, Criteria a. Embodiment distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type

Built in 1915-1916, the Peet-Abman House is an excellent and intact example of the Tudor Revival style, which was popular in the United States between 1890 and 1940. The style took its cues from early and Medieval English building traditions and was exceedingly popular in residential designs across the country. This property exhibits numerous character-defining features of the style, including the use of brick and half-timbering on the exterior, multiple front gables, an arched front entry, arched window openings, window groupings in strings of three or more, and a tower-like curved wall on the west side. Additionally, the house is a rare and distinct subtype of the Tudor Revival style with its steeply-pitched false thatched roof that attempts to mimic thatch roofs found in rural England.

Category 2: Architecture, Criteria b. Be a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder

This Tudor Revival style property was designed by J.J.B. Benedict, one of Denver's most well-known and celebrated high-style architects. Benedict was influenced by the 1893 World's Exposition in Chicago and its famed White City that started the City Beautiful Movement, and he formally trained at the L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. Benedict was frequently hired by prominent individuals in Denver to design residences in wealthy neighborhoods. Over the course of his career, Benedict demonstrated that he was unquestionably capable of conveying practically any style a client may request. He designed residential properties in the Italian Renaissance, Renaissance Revival, English, Spanish, French Renaissance Revival, Beaux Arts, Chateausque and Tudor Revival styles, among others. Benedict also applied his talents to civic buildings, including the Tudor Revival/Collegiate Gothic Denison style Memorial Building, the Prairie and Craftsman style Washington Park Boathouse, and the Rustic style Chief Hosa Lodge and Fillius Park Shelter.

In many of his designs, Benedict favored more permanent building materials such as stone, brick, or stucco-over-stone. Other commissions in the Tudor Revival style (Huff House at 120 Humboldt St., Denver, built in 1912; and the Snyder-Dorsey House at 330 Gilpin St., Denver, built in 1912) are more straightforward in their interpretation of the character-defining features, appearing much less whimsical. The scale of those houses is much larger, and the use of brick on the first and second floors, as well as stone for the door and window arches and hoods, makes them appear heavier, less approachable, and more castle-like. The Peet-Abman House is significant, because it is the most imaginative and fantastical of Benedict's designs in the Tudor Revival style, standing out from other commissions with its wavy half-timbered second story and rare false-thatched roof. It is also an excellent example of one of his earlier residential commissions, built several years before his popularity increased and designs were focused on homes in the Country Club neighborhood.

7. Architectural Description

- a. *Concisely describe the structure and its surrounds. Include building size, shape, # stories, style and site terrain.*

This property is located at the northeast corner of E. Arizona Ave. and S. Gilpin St. The property occupies Lots 21 to 24 of Block 5 of the Washington Park Place Addition in the Washington Park neighborhood in the City and County of Denver, Colorado. The site is level, with a sidewalk along its west and south boundaries. A paved alley runs along its east boundary, and a residential property is located to the north. The two-story, 3,271 ft.² Tudor Revival style house has a T-shaped plan with a one-story addition on the southeast corner and is centered on the lot.

- b. *Architectural description including mention of major features, uncommon or unique design features, ancillary structures, and important landscape or site features. Also describe interior spaces with extraordinary design features (if any).*

A short retaining wall with a wrought-iron fence encloses the large lawn, and the gate is located at the southwest corner of the property. Mature trees and vegetation are found throughout the grounds, mostly shielding the house from view of the public right-of-way. A two-car brick garage is located behind the house, near the northeast corner of the property, and it is accessed by a paved driveway off of S. Gilpin St. The two-story Tudor Revival style house has brick on its first story and wavy half-timbering on its second story. Combined with its steeply pitched, cross-gabled, false-thatched roof with wooden shingles (as originally constructed), it brings to mind images of cottages from storybooks and fairy tales.



Brick column supporting front porch, photo taken during recent repairs (Source: Owner)

South Façade

The main entrance is located near the southwest end of the house and is set in an arched brick opening under a simple porch of thick wood brackets that are supported by two Doric columns with brick interiors. Two single-light windows are located in the arched openings to the east, and each has a brick keystone and sill. A one-story brick addition (1982/1983) on the east end of the house has two large, square openings with a fixed, 25-light window in each.

A thick, horizontal wood band partially divides the first and second stories, and the second story is further distinguished by its wavy half-timbering with stucco. Centered above the main entrance is a square opening with a pair of eight-light casement windows, and a small, rectangular opening with a single-light window centered above underneath the gable. To the east of the casements and tucked under the sweeping eave is a small, rectangular opening with a six-light casement window. Beyond the eave is another square opening with a pair of eight-light casement windows.

West Elevation

The south façade joins the west elevation with an impressive curved brick two-story bay window that is almost tower-like. Three arched stained-glass windows are found at ground level, a simple wood panel motif is located above each, and three larger, arched stained glass windows situated between the first and second stories are above those. Heavy decorative wood brackets support the half-timbered gable above the bay, and smaller brackets radiate out from the curve. A small, rectangular opening with a fixed, six-light window is centered under the eave. North of the bay on the first story is a pair of arched window openings identical to those on the south façade. Above each of those on the second story, which is also brick, is a rectangular opening with a fixed-light window set under a gabled dormer with wood brackets.

North Elevation

A large, rectangular opening with brick sills is located on the first and second stories at the west end of the north elevation. The opening on the first story has five, 12-light windows, while the opening on the second story has five, four-over-one windows. Centered above those under the gabled, half-timbered attic level is a pair of square openings with single-light windows.

Toward the center of the elevation is a tall, rectangular opening with a single-light window. A small opening with a one-over-one window is centered above that on the second story. The eastern end of the elevation has two small, rectangular openings, each with a one-over-one window on the first story. Above those is a large, rectangular opening occupied by a pair of eight-over-one sliding windows. A half-timbered gabled eave is located above them.

East Elevation

The one-story addition on the east elevation somewhat curves around from the south façade, mimicking the transition at the other end of the façade to the west elevation. Two tall, rectangular openings with a fixed, 10-light window are found on the curve, followed by a short brick chimney and two identical openings to the north of the chimney. An entrance is tucked into the corner by a full-height brick chimney, where the addition joins the rest of the east elevation. A metal stairway leads up to the flat roof of the addition.

A rectangular opening with two, one-over-one windows is located north of the addition entrance, and another entrance to the house is located at the northeast corner. Set back on the roof of the addition on the second story is a third rear entrance to the house. It is surrounded by a half-timbered gable supported by thick brackets. On either side of the full-height chimney is a tall, rectangular opening with four-over-one windows. A large square opening is located at the northeast corner with three, four-over-one sliding windows.

- c. *Describe character defining features; identify the key visual aspects that make up the character of this building.*

Character defining features of the Tudor Revival property include asymmetrical massing, mixed materials of brick and ornamental half-timbering with stucco, a steeply-pitched wood-shingled roof that resembles thatch (original to the design), gabled dormers, stained-glass windows, arched windows, and a façade dominated by a prominent cross-gable.

- d. *Describe location and setting including physical context and relationship to neighborhood and other historic structures.*

Washington Park, with its Benedict-designed boathouse in the style of “Twentieth Century American Movements”, is located one block west/southwest of the property. The surrounding area is residential. On the block of S. Gilpin St. between Mississippi and Arizona Avenues, approximately 66 percent of the houses are from the 1910s and 1920s, while only 55 percent of the homes one block to the south are from that time period due to more recent demolitions and infill. A house is currently under construction directly across E. Arizona Ave. to the south, and within the past year other houses on S. Gilpin St. were demolished. The new houses noticeably differ from the existing fabric of the neighborhood in terms of scale, style, materials and setback.

A variety of architectural styles are found throughout the neighborhood, including Foursquare, Tudor Revival, Italian Renaissance Revival, Spanish Revival, Craftsman, and Dutch Colonial Revival. A handful are designated historic properties, including: Grant House at 100 S. Franklin St. (Denver Landmark), Neahr House at 1017 S. Race St. (Denver Landmark), Myrtle Hill School at 1125 S. Race St. (Denver Landmark), Steele Elementary School at 320 S. Marion Pkwy. (Denver Landmark), South High School at 1700 E. Louisiana Ave. (Denver Landmark), South Marion Street Parkway Historic District (Denver Landmark), University Boulevard Parkway Historic District (Denver Landmark), and several resources within the NRHP-listed and Denver Landmark Historic District Washington Park (Pavilion/Boathouse, Bath House, Eugene Field House, and Smith’s Ditch).¹⁰

- e. *Describe major alterations to the exterior of the structure and dates of major alterations if known. Describe any plans to alter the exterior.*

Major alterations include a one-story brick addition on the east elevation in 1982/1983 and the addition of a retaining wall with wrought iron fence along the south and west property boundaries in 1983. The current owner has no plans to alter the exterior.



Looking northwest at house prior to addition, date unknown (Source: Cheryl May correspondence)

¹⁰ Denver Maps, “Historic Landmarks & Districts” (available from <https://www.denvergov.org/Maps/map/historiclandmarks>; accessed 13 September 2018).

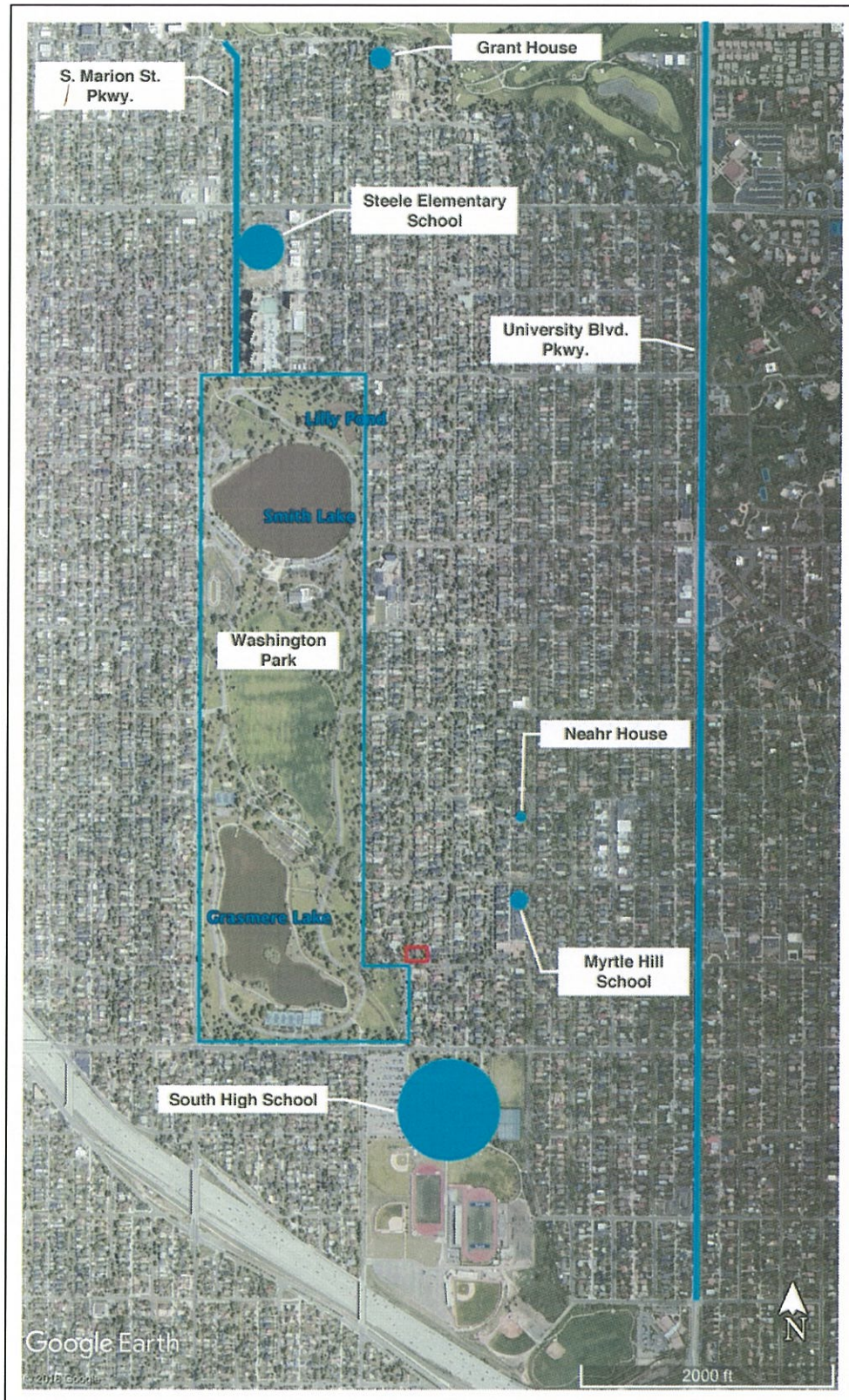
- f. *Include a statement describing how the building currently conveys its historic integrity.*

The Peet-Abman House retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Several buildings from around the property's period of significance, 1915, remain, as does Washington Park. Benedict's original design is easily recognizable and, with the exception of the one-story brick addition to the east elevation, the house has few alterations.

The openings have not been altered, the majority of the windows are original, a majority of original materials remain, and the original distinctive wood roof has been retained.



Looking northwest at house showing the addition, 2018 (Source: Miniello Consulting)



Designated historic properties within the Washington Park Neighborhood indicated with blue; red rectangle is location of Peet-Abman House (Source imagery: Google Earth Pro)

8. History of the Structure and Its Associations

- a. *Describe the history of the structure and its associations with important individuals, groups, events or historical trends.*

See following paragraph for statement.

- b. *Describe specific historical associations including why this structure has direct association with the individual, group, event, or historical trend.*



*Bettie Lou (about 2.5 years old) and Billy Reese (about 7 years old) in front of the Peet-Abman House, c.1918
(Source: Cheryl May, daughter of Bettie Lou, correspondence)*

The Peet-Abman House is located on lots 21 through 24 of the Washington Park Place subdivision, which were purchased in 1915 by Jane C. Peet. Less than two months later, a permit for a "Brick Residence & Basement" with a footprint of 41 feet by 41 feet was filed. The architect was listed as "J.B. Benedict," one of Denver's most celebrated architects, and the estimated cost for the house was recorded as \$8,000.¹¹ A newspaper article at the time stated that Benedict had, "...completed plans for a \$10,000 two-story dwelling to be erected at South Gilpin and Arizona by Mrs. J.C. Peet" and that the house would be...built of red brick, finished in hardwood thr[ough]out, with sleeping porches, three large baths and built-in buffets."¹²

With the ink barely dry on the plans for her Arizona Ave. property, Jane had her eye on what to do with several undeveloped lots to the north that she had purchased earlier that year. Apparently satisfied with her first experience working with the man whom she considered to have impeccable taste and attention to detail, she commissioned him to design another large single-family home on her property at 1168 S. Gilpin St.

With construction just underway, the house at 1717 E. Arizona Ave. was already being called "...one of the most beautiful residences

erected in Denver this year..."¹³ When it was finally finished in the summer of 1916, Jane sold it to Anna B. Reese, and newspapers continued to express their awe by stating it was,

¹¹ City and County of Denver Building Permit #1441, Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources, text-fiche.

¹² *Denver Post*, October 14, 1915.

¹³ *Denver Post*, December 16, 1913, "Old English Style Residence is being Erected for Mrs. Peet."

"...considered one of the most unusual and ornate in the South Side."¹⁴ They also shared the information that Jane was "...already planning another home to cost \$10,000 and to be erected somewhere in Washin[gt]on [P]ark [P]lace."¹⁵ Jane moved into a house at 1284 S. Gilpin St. (now 1274 S. Gilpin St.) while the next home was under construction to the north at 1168 S. Gilpin St.

Anna Reese and her husband, William T., a man who was 30 years her senior, moved into the 1717 E. Arizona Ave. house a few weeks after its purchase. The oil magnate-turned-sheep-rancher from Oklahoma had two children with his young wife, William Jr. (also known as "Billy," who died at the age of 12 after succumbing to pneumonia) and Bettie Lou.¹⁶ About a year-and-a-half after moving into their new house, Anna placed an ad in the *Denver Post* seeking, specifically, an "...experienced Japanese or Filipino for cooking and housework."¹⁷

A few months later, a sales transaction for the property shows that Emily Lucille Reese purchased it in 1918, but she sold it less than a year later to Finlay L. MacFarland, a successful businessman.¹⁸ The 1922 City Directory lists him as president of the MacFarland Auto Co. He and his wife, Ellen L., lived in the home for 15 years and apparently had no children.

Dr. Jack G. and Margarette L. Hutton bought the house in 1936. Dr. Hutton was a physician in private practice with an office in the Republic Building. The 1940 U.S. Census tells the story of a full house with Dr. Hutton, Margarette, their children Donna and Jack, Jack G.'s father, and their maid. Two years later, Dr. Hutton died, and Margaretta was left a widow. She sold the house in 1946 to the Hibbards and continued to support herself and her children, working as a nurse and, later, a saleswoman for a broker.¹⁹

Lester C. and Beatrice Hibbard owned the house for slightly less than two years before selling it to Floyd C. and Verona Peterson in 1948. In 1955, the house was sold once more, this time to Robert J. and Adeline P. McConnell. At the time, Robert was a teacher at University Park School, located to the south at E. Iliff Ave. and S. Saint Paul St. Permits filed with the City and County of Denver show that Marlin J. and Marlene Dorhout owned the house for several years in the early 1980s, followed by Jacqueline A. Porreco.²⁰ In 1990, Steve and Carolyn Abman, the home's current owners, purchased it.²¹ Although the house has seen a relative amount of turnover, substantial changes have been few and the house successfully conveys a high level of integrity.

Washington Park

Before it was developed into the dense residential area that it is today, the Washington Park neighborhood was previously a dairy farm. In the 1880s, the prairie-like site of the park was platted for residential development.²² Several lots in the vicinity were purchased by Henry Wilcox, who made his fortune during the 1890 silver rush. In 1901, Wilcox built his home at

¹⁴ *Rocky Mountain News*, September 14, 1916, "Oklahoma Magnate Buys Denver Home."

¹⁵ *Denver Post*, September 20, 1916, "Two Fine Residence Properties on Hill Sold During Week."

¹⁶ May, Cheryl, Letter and photographs to Carolyn Abman, November 16, 2000.

¹⁷ *Denver Post*, May 30, 1918, Want Ad.

¹⁸ City and County of Denver Assessors Lot Indexes 1860-1917, *Washington Park Place*, Denver Public Library, Genealogy, African American & Western History Resources.

¹⁹ Denver City and Householder Directories (Volumes from 1905 – 1986), various publishers, Stephen H. Hart Library and Research Center, History Colorado.

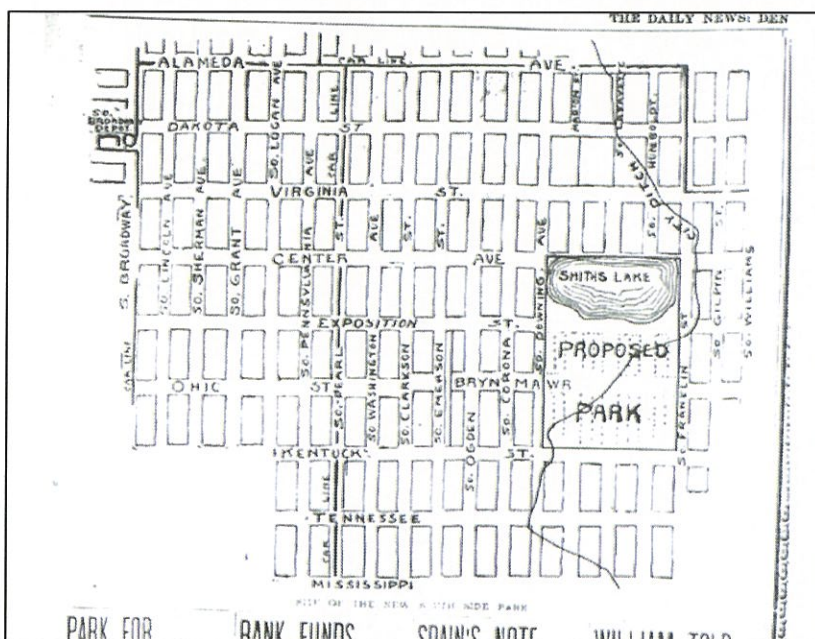
²⁰ Denver Building Permits.

²¹ Abman, Carolyn, property owner, interview by author, 17 July 2018.

²² Denver Park and Parkways National Register nomination.

the southwest corner of S. Downing St. and E. Bayaud Ave., located in the northwest portion of the neighborhood.²³ Numerous plots were also owned by railroads, including the Kansas Pacific Railway.²⁴

A map of the park's proposed layout was presented to the public in 1897, and a Rocky Mountain News Article stated, "South Denver is to have a park at once... It will have about sixty acres when completed, taking in Smith's lake and the tract of ground lying south of it containing about 40 acres."²⁵ When the city acquired the land, two buildings were already on it; a two-story brick house remained as a home for the park keeper, and the other building was removed.²⁶ Two years later, Washington Park officially received its name, along with three other new city parks, Highland and Jefferson.²⁷ At the time, Washington Park, void of trees and vegetation, was nothing more than bare land with a city ditch running through it. Few saw the potential for such a beautiful oasis in the city, and the *Denver Eye* stated at the end of the 19th century that, "...nothing resembling a park can be made in the next 10 years."²⁸ City commissioners were likely aware of the expansive eyesore and announced plans to spend \$3,000 in improvements in 1901.²⁹ Once people saw the City's efforts to transform the open space, residential lots advertised near one of the "finest pleasure spots and picnic grounds in Denver" were sold for \$150 to \$400.³⁰



Layout of Washington Park (Source: Rocky Mountain News, October 24, 1897)

The homes being built around the park in the early 1900s were mostly brick bungalows, and a handful of those remain on S. Gilpin St. near the intersection with E. Mississippi Ave.³¹ The wealthy were attracted to the area, and larger, more elaborate residences began to pop up in the mid-1910s and 1920s, including the Peet-Abman House. In 1923, the cornerstone for the William E. Fisher-designed South High was placed on 172 acres of land that once belonged to the Colorado & Southern Railroad at the southeast corner of the park. The

²³ Washington Park East Neighborhood Association, "The Waiting Station," Summer 2018 Newsletter.

²⁴ The Title Guaranty Company, "Abstract of Title Lots 21, 22, 23 and 24, Block 5 Washington Park Place."

²⁵ Rocky Mountain News, October 24, 1897, "Park for South Denver."

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., August 9, 1899, "New Parks are Given Names."

²⁸ Fisher, 50.

²⁹ Rocky Mountain News, November 15, 1900, "Improvements in Park System."

³⁰ Rocky Mountain News, January 1, 1907, Washington Park.

³¹ Noel, Thomas J. and Barbara Norgren, *Denver: The City Beautiful* (Denver: Historic Denver Inc., 1993), 68.

building was completed within a few years, and the first classes were held in January 1926.³²

In 1911, the first bathing beach at Smith Lake opened, with swimming areas for male and female swimmers divided by a rope. However, only whites were allowed to use it, the segregation of which eventually led to a riot in the summer of 1932 when Black citizens attempted to use the beach. According to the *Denver Post*, when they entered the water, an estimated 200 hundred Whites initially left but returned, armed with clubs and stones. The riot lasted over a half hour and spread for ten blocks, with many homeowners either coming out to observe or join the fight. Ultimately, the whole incident was downplayed as a result of the influences of Communism.

Jane C. Peet

Jane was born in Ohio in 1864 and was the youngest of William H. and Jane T. Creighton's five children. William H. farmed his own land, while Jane T. kept the house. She married William Creighton Peet, a man who was 30 years her senior. The Creighton surname was quite popular in 1800s Ohio and surrounding states, and research has not resulted in confirmation that Jane and William were somehow related.

William C. was born in Ohio in 1836 to Sarah Creighton and Edward William Peet, an Episcopal clergyman. He was the eldest of six boys. By 1875, William was living in New York City with his parents and brother, George. William was recorded in that year's New York Census as being employed at a mercantile, while George was listed as a lawyer. However, the 1880 U.S. Census shows William as the lawyer and George as the merchant. According to "The Ryerson Genealogy," it was George who was a member of the firm of Rogers, Peet & Co. in New York City, and an obituary for their brother, Charles, notes that William was a retired merchant.³³

William C. Peet was not the same William Peet of the soap-making Peet Brothers' Manufacturing Company that became part of Colgate-Palmolive. That individual was born in England in 1847, emigrated to Cleveland, then moved to Kansas City in 1872 and started the company with his brother, Robert.³⁴ Coincidentally, the Peet Brothers' Soap Co. established a presence in Denver around 1920 with an office in the Cooper Building on Champa Street.³⁵

In 1876, William C. Peet married Elizabeth C. Morgan. The two had no children and, after 10 years of marriage, Elizabeth died.³⁶ Twelve years later, William married Jane Boyes Creighton in Los Angeles, California. After their wedding, William and Jane moved to New York City and had two sons, Creighton and Telfair B. When William died in 1906, Jane was left to raise a seven- and two-year old alone. In 1907, a bill for partition was filed in the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois by William's brother, Henry. Five years prior, William made and executed a last will and testament in which he left all of his property "wherever situated" to Jane. At the time, his only son was Creighton. Telfair was born following the will's execution. Henry was the owner of half of the real estate, and he testified that if

³² "Washington Park Neighborhood History," DPL.

³³ Ancestry.com, "The Ryerson Genealogy" (available from www.ancestry.com), 180-81; *New York Daily Tribune*, December 11, 1902, "Obituary: Charles B. Peet."

³⁴ The Kansas City Public Library, "William Peet" (available from <http://kchistory.org/content/william-peet-0>), accessed 17 October 2018.

³⁵ Denver City and Householder directories.

³⁶ *New York Herald*, April 22, 1886, Funeral Announcement for Elizabeth Peet.

William's real estate was held until Telfair became of age, it would mean bankruptcy to the estate since he estimated the property was encumbered for one-third to one-half of its value. Despite Henry's appeal, the court affirmed that Jane was the one who rightfully inherited the entire property from her husband.³⁷

Jane remained in New York for another six or seven years. By 1914, she and the boys had moved to Denver, Colorado and were living at 1346 Downing Street, a modest brick Foursquare in the Cheesman Park Neighborhood. She was involved in the Historic Art Club, hosting some of their semi-monthly meetings in her home, and her specialty seems to have been French culture. On October 20, 1914, Jane spoke to the group about the chateaus of France and, at the November 2, 1915 meeting, she gave "...an interesting talk on the history of French literature, poetry, fiction and drama during the close of the eighteenth century and also a review of 'Athalie,' one of Victor Hugo's dramas."³⁸

In addition to her appreciation for the finer things, Jane was also involved in several land transactions in Denver. She purchased the lots for the 1717 E. Arizona Ave. property in April 1915, sold three lots she owned in June 1915 on what is now the 600 block of Saint Paul St. in Congress Park, purchased two lots for the 1168 S. Gilpin St. property on September 22, 1916, purchased the property at 1284 S. Gilpin just four days later, and bought the two lots

Chop Suey.

(Submitted by Mrs. J. C. Peet, 1168 South Gilpin Street.)

One green pepper, one small onion, one box flat noodles, half pound ground meat, raw or cooked, one small can tomato sauce. Season to taste.

Melt one tablespoon drippings in large sauce pan. Fry in it one green pepper chopped fine. Then add one small onion sliced and then ground meat and stir till browned. Now add the noodles cooked in salted water and drain and the can of tomato sauce. Stir all together and pour into greased pyrex dish or any kind of baking dish and cover closely. Bake thirty minutes. This dish can be prepared in the morning and baked for lunch or dinner.

immediately north of the 1168 S. Gilpin St. property in 1919.³⁹ With all of those dealings, it is possible that she simply wanted to develop properties and turn a profit in desirable areas of the city.

From 1916 to 1922, records show that Jane lived in one of two houses she hired Benedict to build in Washington Park (a matter of weeks or months at 1717 E. Arizona Ave. and several years at 1168 S. Gilpin St.), as well as a third house she bought at 1284 S. Gilpin St. while the other Gilpin Street house was being constructed.

With the growing popularity of personal automobiles, the 1910s saw an increase in serious accidents involving pedestrians. Over one weekend in Denver in March of 1917, four women were injured in separate accidents with

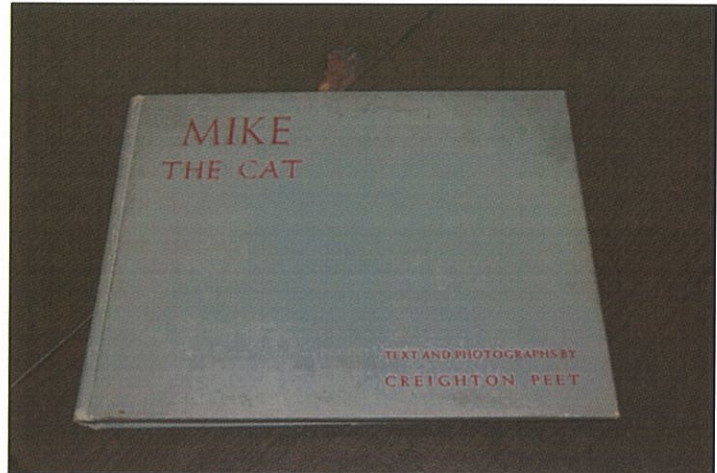
Jane's Chop Suey recipe (Source: Rocky Mountain News, August 9, 1921)

³⁷ Clark, William Lawrence, "Probate Reports Annotated Containing Recent Cases of General Value Decided in the Courts of the Several States on Points of Probate Law: Peet v. Peet" (available from <https://books.google.com>), accessed 10 October 2018.

³⁸ *Rocky Mountain News*, October 19, 1914, "Mrs. W.C. Peet to Speak Before Denver Art Club."; *Denver Post*, November 14, 1915, "Mrs. Weir Hostess to Historic Art Club."

³⁹ Denver Assessor Records, "Washington Park Place."; *Denver Post*, April 23, 1915.

either automobiles or tramways. Although her injuries were reportedly not as serious as one of the other women who had suffered a skull fracture and was near-death in the hospital, Jane was one of those victims. As she was crossing the street at 14th Ave. and Logan St., she was knocked down by Howard C. Louthan's car. She was badly cut and bruised, and Louthan took her to St. Luke's Hospital.⁴⁰ In May, Jane sued Louthan for \$5,600 (approximately \$109,000 today), alleging that she had been dragged from the street to the parkway, that her spine was injured, and that she was confined to her bed.⁴¹



Hardbound copy of Mike the Cat (Source: Owner's personal collection)

On a more positive note, Jane continued to be involved in Denver society, and she even entered her chop suey recipe in a 1921 Rocky Mountain News contest. Although she did not take the top prize of ten dollars, she received Honorable Mention, and her recipe was published in the paper a few days later.⁴²

It is not clear if Jane stayed in Denver following the sale of 1168 S. Gilpin St. in 1922, but she likely moved following Telfair's graduation from high school in 1923. By 1926 she was living in New Rochelle, NY, followed by a move to nearby Mount Vernon. By 1930 she was living in Manhattan as a lodger.⁴³ Jane died in 1936 at the age of 72 and was buried in Los Angeles. Her oldest son, Creighton, had also moved to Manhattan, and he had a son, Creighton Jr., with his wife, Bertha. Creighton Sr. was the author of the 1939 book, *Mike the Cat*, as well as *Man in Flight: How the Airlines Operate*, *First Book of Skyscrapers*, and *Eye on the Sky: How Aircraft Controllers Work*.⁴⁴ Telfair became a teacher and moved to Auburn, Alabama, where he married a woman named Helen who was a native of Mississippi.

Jules Jacques Benois Benedict

A short man with a large presence, Jules Jacques Benois Benedict was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1879. When Benedict was 14, Chicago hosted the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, which featured the the Beaux-Arts style "White City," designed by famed architect, Daniel Burnham. The White City is credited as being the origin of the City Beautiful Movement and likely influenced Benedict. With his interest in artistic expression through the built environment sparked, Benedict studied at the Art Institute of Chicago, followed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

⁴⁰ *Denver Post*, March 19, 1917, "Four Women are Badly Hurt in Auto and Tram Accidents."

⁴¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, May 1, 1917, "Woman Injured by Auto Asks \$5,600 Damages."

⁴² *Ibid.*, August 6 and 9, 1921.

⁴³ U.S. Census records.

⁴⁴ Goodreads, "Creighton Peet" (available from https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2489212.Creighton_Peet), accessed 25 October 2018.



*Jules J.B. Benedict, date unknown (Source:
Denver Public Library)*

When Benedict returned to the United States in 1905, he was employed by Carrere & Hastings in New York.⁴⁵ By 1909, Benedict took the leap and moved west to Denver, Colorado. Sources cite different reasons for this change, and nothing can be confirmed about his decision to leave the wealthy clientele and guaranteed work back East. Benedict's move appears to have been perfect timing, given his training, experience, and the near-height of the City Beautiful Movement in Denver. Additionally, some of the largest fortunes in Colorado were being amassed from mining, agriculture, railroads, and the processing of sugar and flour. Those with money were eager to showcase their new wealth by commissioning elaborate new homes, and Benedict's designs fit the bill.

According to his obituary, when Benedict first arrived in Denver, he had a disagreement with a plumber over a business matter and challenged him to a bare-knuckle boxing match at the Denver Athletic Club. Benedict "trounced him thoroughly in spite of

[his] small stature" and, following the bout, the men developed a lasting friendship.

Benedict's reputation for impeccable designs quickly grew, and he was hired by John Brisben Walker to fulfill his dream of building a summer White House on land he owned on Mount Falcon, just outside of Golden, Colorado. It is rumored that this challenge is actually what drew Benedict to Colorado in the first place. In 1911, a Yule Marble cornerstone was laid for the house. Construction commenced, but in 1912 wooden scaffolding against the stone walls was struck by lightning and caught on fire, resulting in a total collapse of the unsupported structure.⁴⁶ The project had required a great deal of fundraising in the first place, but the budget was exhausted and neither Walker nor Benedict had the energy to pick up the pieces and start over.

In February of 1912, Benedict married June Louise Brown, the daughter of a wealthy mercantile, at her home at 333 Pennsylvania St.⁴⁷ They purchased acreage in Littleton with a farmhouse and named the property Wyldemere Farm. Benedict raised hogs, registered cattle, and registered bull terriers. In 1920, he was awarded the Civic and Commercial Association's Poultry Cup for his exhibit of Dark Cornish birds.⁴⁸ In addition to his agricultural pursuits, he maintained his architectural practice in impressive fashion at the same time. Benedict was commissioned by Jane Peet to design the houses at 1717 E. Arizona Ave. and 1168 S. Gilpin St., and he was also hired by the Coors, Mayo, Waring, Bonfils-Stanton, Phipps, Weckbaugh, Cranmer, and Maytag families.

After sixteen years of marriage, he and June divorced, and she remained at the farm while he lived in the city. Not only were his designs extremely sought-after, his attendance at

⁴⁵ McPhee, Mike, "Jacques Benedict, Denver Architect" (Historic Denver News, Winter 2018).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ *Denver Post*, February 19, 1912, "Benedict-Brown Wedding to be Tuesday at Noon."

⁴⁸ *Rocky Mountain News*, January 2, 1920, "Littleton Man Wins Civic Association Cup."

social events was, as well. He was frequently a sought-after guest at dinner parties thrown by members of Denver society. In his later years, Benedict resided at the Colburn Hotel on Grant Street. He retired from architecture at the age of 70 and died in January 1948.⁴⁹

- c. *Describe other structures that have similar associations and the relationship/comparison of this structure to these other structures.*

Of the 80-plus designs attributed to Benedict, seven are individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), including: Littleton Town Hall and Fire Department, the south wing of Richthofen Castle, Kerr House, Campbell House/Denver Botanic Gardens House, St. Andrews Episcopal Church Clergy House, Weckbaugh House/Willbanks House, and St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church Cloisters/Prayer Garden/Monastery. With some overlap, 10 have been designated as individual Denver Landmarks, one was designated as an individual Boulder County Landmark, one was designated as an individual City of Golden Landmark, and three were designated as individual City of Littleton Landmarks. Many more are contributing resources within NRHP and local landmark districts.⁵⁰

Within a few years of the Peet-Abman House commission, Benedict was designing residences such as the Classical Revival Craig House (605 E. 9th Ave.), Italian Renaissance Revival Cranmer House (200 Cherry St.), Italian Renaissance Revival Peet-Tatlock House (1168 S. Gilpin St.) and the Wilson-Wilfley House (770 Olive St.). His civic commissions included Denison Memorial Building (University of Colorado Campus in Boulder), Rustic style Chief Hose Lodge and Picnic Shelter (near Golden), and the Italian Renaissance Revival Littleton Carnegie Library.⁵¹

The impressive list of Benedict's designs includes not only private residences, but also chapels, churches, banks, schools, libraries, civic buildings, and even a fountain. All told, 80 Benedict properties were built, and 60 of those verified as his designs still stand as of late 2018. Unfortunately, only a handful of his original drawings and architectural plans remain, as he reportedly burned many of them in a "fit of temper."⁵²

The Peet-Abman House, located at 1717 E. Arizona Ave., is unique in that it shares a significant link to the house two properties directly to the north. That house, located at 1168 S. Gilpin St., was also designed by Benedict and commissioned and lived in by Ms. Peet after this property was built. With its Italian Renaissance Revival style, it is entirely different from the Peet-Abman House and indicative of Benedict's broad talents. The Peet-Abman House is significant for its history in the development of Washington Park/Washington Park Place, its relationship with Jane C. Peet, its architectural integrity and excellent example of a Benedict design, and as a rare example of a Tudor Revival style house with the original false-thatched roof design.

⁴⁹ *Rocky Mountain News* obituary.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: The Architecture of Jules Jacques Benois Benedict" (available from <https://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>), accessed 18 May 2018.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Noel, 189.

9. Owner Consent to Designation

I, the undersigned, acting as owner 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: Carolyn Abman
(please print)

Date: 7/5/19

Owner: Carolyn Abman
(signature)

Date: 7/5/19

Owner: Steven Abman
(please print)

Date: 7/5/19

Owner: Sh H Ar
(signature)

Date: 7/5/19

10. Resources

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11. **Photographs**

See page 23 (attached).

12. **Site Map**



13. Staff Visit

A pre-application meeting was completed with the property owner on July 17, 2018 at 1717 E. Arizona Ave. by LPC staff member Jennifer Buddenborg.

14. Application Fee

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$250 for an individual structure with owner consent or \$875 for an individual structure without owner consent. (Make check payable to Denver Manager of Revenue).

11. Photographs - 1717 E. Arizona Ave. (Peet House)



Looking northeast at west and south elevations

11. Photographs - 1717 E. Arizona Ave. (Peet-Abman House)



Looking northwest at south elevation

11. Photographs - 1717 E. Arizona Ave. (Peet-Abman House)



Looking west at east elevation (rear)

11. Photographs - 1717 E. Arizona Ave. (Peet-Abman House)



Looking southeast at north elevation

11. Photographs - 1717 E. Arizona Ave. (Peet-Abman House)



Looking east at garage and north elevation

11. Photographs - 1717 E. Arizona Ave. (Peet-Abman House)



Looking northeast at west elevation



Stained glass on southwest corner



Detail of wood shingles



Entry door hardware