

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Block Unit #1 Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 4100-4191 Enright Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town St. Louis vicinity N/A
state Missouri code MO county St. Louis [Independent City] code 510
zip code 63108

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 9 June 2000

Signature of certifying official /Claire Blackwell, Deputy SHPO Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- _____ entered in the National Register _____
_____ See continuation sheet.
- _____ determined eligible for the National Register _____
_____ See continuation sheet.
- _____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- _____ removed from the National Register _____
- _____ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>46</u>	<u>7</u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>46</u>	<u>7</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling
DOMESTIC multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC secondary structure

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling
DOMESTIC multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC secondary structure
VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Limestone
roof ASPHALT
walls BRICK
STONE: Limestone
other TERRA COTTA

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

Period of Significance 1932 -1950

Significant Dates 1932

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder see continuation sheets

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 8.9 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	<u>15</u>	<u>739900</u>	<u>4281200</u>	3 _____
2	_____	_____	4 _____	_____

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynn Josse, Associate Research Director

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date January 28, 2000

street & number 917 Locust 7th Floor telephone (314) 421-6474

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63101-1413

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name please see continuation sheet

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 1

Block Unit #1 Historic District
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary

The Block Unit #1 Historic District includes 42 dwellings and 11 garages located on the 4100 block of Enright Avenue in the City of St. Louis. Most of the dwellings are one- and two-family buildings constructed of red brick; three are larger apartment buildings. Dates of construction range from 1886 to 1928, and a variety of styles reflecting this forty-year span are represented. Although original features have been altered on some of the buildings, most of the major alterations were completed before the period of significance (1932 - 1950). Of the 53 resources in the district, 46 are considered contributing and seven are considered non-contributing. Two residential buildings are considered noncontributing due to facade alterations which occurred after the period of significance. Five of the 11 garages are considered non-contributing due to either age or integrity. There are also nine vacant lots on the block.

Site Background

The Block Unit #1 Historic District, located in north central St. Louis, was originally developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as a middle class Caucasian neighborhood. The boundaries coincide with the 4100 block of Enright Avenue. Original construction on the block began after the street was opened in the 1882 Delmar Place plat. The earliest extant building on the block dates to 1886 (it is considered non-contributing due to a 1950s refacing). The majority of contributing residences date from the 1890s (32 of 40 contributing residences).

The tornado which swept through St. Louis on September 29, 1927 visited its full force on the 3900 through 4100 blocks of Enright. It appears that many of the frame houses in the neighborhood were destroyed at this time. The permit record shows extensive repairs to brick dwellings, some totalling thousands of dollars. Four extant buildings in the district received new facades after the tornado, and six new buildings were constructed. Dates of construction for individual buildings are listed on the district/boundary map. (See Table 1.)

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Block Unit #1 Historic District
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Decade	Number of extant contributing residences built
1880s	2
1890s	32
1900s	0
1910s	0
1920s	6 (all from 1927-28)
total	40

Table 1: Contributing residences built by each decade

Enright's 80-foot right-of-way is wide for St. Louis, although it is comparable to parallel streets in the immediate neighborhood. Traffic is fairly low because the street is blocked at the west end of the 4300 block. Delmar, another 80-foot-wide street immediately south, is a major east-west artery in St. Louis.

Functions

Original development in the district primarily brought single-family dwellings for middle-class families. While only eight of the 19th century buildings are multi-families, it is interesting to note that all six extant buildings constructed in the 1920s were for multi-family use. All of the historically residential buildings in the district are still in residential use, with the exception of two vacant single-family buildings at **4150 Enright** (Photo 9) and **4133 Enright** (Photo 5, left). Of the occupied residences, 26 are single dwellings. The multiple dwellings are divided between low-rise apartment buildings (3), two multi-family flats, and nine two-family flats.

The eleven outbuildings are indicated on the district/boundary map. The contributing outbuildings, all garages, are located at 4125, 4145, 4153, 4173, 4112, and 4186 Enright. The non-contributing outbuildings are located at 4163, 4167, 4136, 4140, and 4160 Enright. All are garages with the exception of 4160 Enright, which, unlike a garage, is open to the alley.

Style and characteristics

A variety of styles representing the 1886-1928 time period are present on the block, but most of the primary buildings are linked by their common use of materials. All but two of the 40 contributing dwellings use brick as the primary facade material; most are red brick, with the

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Block Unit #1 Historic District
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

notable exception of the three buff brick apartment buildings. The apartment buildings are further differentiated by their use of terra cotta trim. There are also two houses with stone fronts; they too are of brick construction, with stone only used at the front elevation.

Most of the residences in the district fall under the general style category of "Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals." In most cases, the detailing and massing blend elements of different revival styles for an eclectic approach not taught in any architecture school. Almost all of the buildings in this style category date from the 1890s.

Although not strictly a style definition, the term "foursquare" describes over half of the residences on the block. Most are also examples of the "Late 19th and 20th Century Revival" category described above. As a type, the foursquares are distinguished by their massing rather than their stylistic details; in general, the buildings are simple vernacular two-story buildings, two bays wide. Most in the Enright group (21) have hipped roofs.

The most notable grouping of foursquares is found at the western end of the north side of the block. The original house on this section of the block (**4183 Enright**) was an imposing Queen Anne built for owner Robert Grant in 1887. In 1892-93, he built eight speculative foursquares on his property. The seven extant foursquares from this group have similar facades, although each is individualized through variations in window shape and trim. (See Photos 2, 3 and 10.)

Individual Buildings

City Block 4873

4109-17 Enright (Photo 12)
1928

Architect: P. Rollhaus
Builder: Leo Grossberg

This U-shaped apartment building sets three stories on a raised basement. Terra cotta details against the buff brick body reveal a Tudor influence, particularly in the ogee-arched door surrounds. Modernization has detracted from the building's integrity: doors and stair windows facing Enright have been closed over and windows are replaced with modern dark vinyl sashes. A tall block has been built at the entrance to the courtyard, closing the U shape; its peaked parapet line is built to resemble the cross gables of the original building. The new main entrance is at the parking lot, east.

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4119 Enright (non-contributing) (Photo 5)

1886; 1959

Builder unknown

Although the sides of this building give it away as a 19th century construction, a radical refacing has left it with a flat modern facade of red bricks with horizontal windows. The 1927 owner performed an estimated \$1500 of alterations following the tornado, but the current facade appears to be the result of a \$2000 permit ("repair storm damage") issued in 1959. The parapet wall is raised for a long center block; the entrance is behind a rectangular opening in the left bay.

4123 Enright (Photo 5)

1889; 1927

Builder: St. Louis Mutual Home Building Co. #3

The original permit for this building was granted in 1889; like many others in the immediate vicinity (particularly the 4000 block and eastern portion of the 4100 block of Enright), it underwent reconstructive surgery following the 1927 tornado. The new front is of variegated brick, with a double-story porch at the left bay. Windows at the right bay are paired. Courses of red soldier bricks stretch across both bays to form lintels. A gabled hood above the second story is supported on knee brace brackets. The parapet wall has end blocks and a center step.

4125 Enright (Photo 5)

c. 1895; 1927

Builder unknown

This two-family flat is one of several at the eastern end of the 4100 block of Enright which appears to have been rebuilt following the 1927 tornado. A double-height front porch at the left bay is set back behind the plane of the projecting right bay. Both sets of triple windows at the right bay are covered by modern awnings. Set into the soldier lintels and below the window sills are inset squares of limestone. A third story dormer stretches across the full length of the facade, added to what had been a medium-pitched roof facing the street.

At the rear of the property, a contributing garage/outbuilding clearly predates the historic period. The flat-roofed brick building has a darker wire-cut brick addition (also historic) at the alley side. The two-bay rear elevation at the alley has two metal doors of modern origin; the original openings are partially filled in with plywood and brick. There appear to be some structural problems.

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Block Unit #1 Historic District
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4129 Enright (Photo 5)

1892

Builder: Varney & Woolrych

The first floor of this red brick flat has two wide round-arched openings: a window in the right bay and front entry at the left. The front doors are in a paneled alcove behind the left arch; a shed roof has been installed over the arch at the porch. The arches' voussoirs are soldier bricks in two rows outlined with molded bricks (which also define the springing points and connect the two arches); a shield-shaped panel of raised bricks is in the spandrel area. The upper story has four one-over-one windows on a continuous sandstone sill. Two gabled dormers with flared bases face the street. The west (left) elevation defines the chimney with raised bricks featuring a cross-shaped arrangement of inset brick squares at the first story. This elevation also features a large round-arched staircase window and projecting second-story bay window. The stone at the facade is spalling in places and there is some cracking due to settlement.

4133 Enright (Photo 5)

1894

Architect: Will Levy

Builder: Cook & Casey

Set on a high basement of coursed limestone, the red brick facade of this foursquare house also uses stone (apparently red sandstone, painted white in places) between stories as a string course and as a sill course and wide frieze at the second story. The front door is under a hipped porch roof (on replacement iron supports) at the left bay; facade windows are rectangular (boarded at the second story). The two upper right windows are separated by three Corinthian pilasters formed of molded brick. a wide hipped dormer with three windows faces the street. Lower windows have shutters. There is a wide cross gable at the east elevation. Gutters and fascia boards are missing in areas.

4137-39 Enright (Photo 6)

1893; 1928

Builder unknown

This two-family flat is one of several at the eastern end of the 4100 block of Enright which was rebuilt following the 1927 tornado. A double-height front porch at the left bay includes a balcony for the upper story unit. The balcony and both pairs of windows at the right bay are covered by modern awnings. The facade is of variegated dark wire-cut brick, very different than the plain red brick with star ties found on the sides of the building. Ornament at the facade is limited to the steps of the parapet wall and a geometric design inset in white glazed brick.

4141 Enright (Photo 6)

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1895

Builder unknown

This red brick house was apparently constructed in 1895, but its Craftsman style details probably date from the 1910s (no permit has been located for this work). Obvious examples of Craftsman influence include the full-length front porch supported on grouped elephantine squared columns (on brick piers); exposed rafter tails at the eaves and dormer; sash windows with three vertical panes over one; and the green tile roof. Brickwork at the front porch also suggests the Craftsman style. Wide stone lintels and an inset bay window at the upper right give away the 19th century origin of the building.

4145 Enright (Photo 11)

1897

Builder unknown

This handsome light brown Roman brick facade uses Renaissance and classical detail - a Palladian window at the left over the dentilled stone porch; stone porch piers with foliated capitals; a round bay at the right side of the facade; triple keystone lintels at the narrow basement windows; and a wide dentilled frieze board. A gabled dormer faces the street.

At the rear of the property, a simple one-bay brick garage has a flat roof with parapet wall. The alley side of the building is taken up by a metal door. The garage clearly dates from the historic period and is considered a contributing building.

4149 Enright (Photo 11)

c. 1895

Builder unknown

This foursquare has a limestone facade. The gabled porch at the left bay has paired square supports at the front, a T1-I1 sided architrave, and dentils and a swag in the pediment. A three-sided projecting bay window is above the porch. At the right bay both window openings are wide. These windows appear to be replacements. The frieze board is wide and has wooden dentils. The gabled dormer at the facade has two small windows under a dentilled pediment.

4153 Enright (Photo 11)

1895

Builder unknown

This foursquare single dwelling has a red brick facade on a limestone basement. A hipped porch at the left bay shelters the front door, which has sidelights and a wide transom. The three main windows at the facade are wide one-over-ones under segmental arches and modern awnings. A brick panel at the right bay separates the two stories. The hipped dormer at the facade has two small windows, also under an awning.

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There is a two-bay garage at the rear of the property. It appears to be a frame building (hidden under asphalt siding). The shallow gabled roof has asphalt shingles; its exposed rafter tails help date the building to the historic period. Historic wooden doors still exist at the alley side. The garage is counted as a contributing building.

4157 Enright (Photo 11)

c. 1892

Builder unknown

This plain brick foursquare house has a full-length front porch (hipped) with paneled front door recessed at the left bay; the right bay has paired windows (under a transom and segmental arch at the second story, and under a stone-defined round arch at the first). A hipped dormer faces the street.

4163 Enright (Photo 3)

c. 1893

Builder unknown

This two-story house has a large round flat-roofed bay at the right half of the facade, projecting out and extending just above the main roofline. Two rectangular window openings are at each story of the bay; sash windows at the second story have been replaced by fixed panes. At the left bay, a shed-roofed porch on decorative iron supports has been added, obscuring the design of the round-arched entry. The front door is set inside an arch with a wide brick archivolt; its stone impost double as lintels for narrow windows flanking the door, separated from the doorway by Corinthian-capitaled pilasters. Above the entry a bay window projects. The roof's side gable ends still have slate shingles; two hipped dormers face the street.

4167 Enright (Photo 3)

1893

Builder unknown

This red brick foursquare has a prominent front porch at the left bay, its hipped roof supported on Doric-like columns on a low brick wall. Wide round-arched windows are at the upper left and lower right; they have brick archivolt outlined in molded brick. The same brick design is used above the upper right pair of sash windows. A five-sided dormer faces the street.

A gabled two-bay garage of uncertain age is considered non-contributing. It is covered with plywood and newer woodlike siding under an asphalt shingle roof.

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Block Unit #1 Historic District
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4169 Enright (Photo 3)

1893

Builder unknown

This red brick foursquare house has a prominent front porch at the left bay, its hipped roof supported on Doric-like columns on low brick walls. A bay window projects above. One wide round-arched window is at the upper right; its alternating-color brick archivolt is outlined in molded brick. The same brick design is used above the lower right pair of sash windows. Below the stone sill level at the first story, the basement level shows darker brick. A hipped dormer faces the street.

A garage at the alley is constructed of concrete blocks with metal doors. It is considered non-contributing.

4173 Enright (Photo 10)

1893

Builder unknown

This red brick two-family foursquare has a prominent front porch at the left bay, its hipped roof supported on Doric-like columns on a low brick wall. Pairs of sash windows at the lower right and both bays of the second story use long red brick (textured stretchers and plain headers) as lintels. Below the stone sill level at the first story, the basement level shows darker brick emphasizing the basement window. A five-sided dormer faces the street. This building was probably a single-family dwelling originally (like its similar neighbors); the design of the two front doors indicates that conversion to two-family use probably took place before the historic period. See also 4175 Enright.

A brick garage on a concrete foundation is at the rear of the property. Its pyramidal roof is of rolled asphalt. The building has exposed rafter tails and newer metal doors. It is considered a contributing building.

4175 Enright (Photo 10)

1893

Builder unknown

Property owner Robert Grant constructed eight foursquares in 1892-93 with similar materials and detailing. The two at 4173 and 4175 Enright were built to almost the same design. There is a prominent front porch at the left bay, its hipped roof supported on Doric-like columns on a low brick wall. Wide openings at the lower right and both bays of the second story use alternating long bricks laid in alternating soldier and rowlock fashion as lintels. Below the stone sill level at the first story, the basement level shows darker brick emphasizing the basement window in an Eraserhead-like splay of soldier bricks as lintel. A five-sided dormer faces the street. The upper left opening has three sash windows within but the lintel area has been parged. The right window

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openings have been filled in with vinyl siding to accommodate smaller sash windows.

4179 Enright (Photo 10)

1893

Builder unknown

This red brick foursquare house is one of eight similar buildings constructed on the property of Robert Grant. This example has a prominent front porch at the left bay, its hipped roof supported on Doric-like columns on a low brick wall. Wide round-arched windows are at the upper left and lower right; they have brick archivolt outlined in molded brick. A pair of sash windows at the upper right uses the same brick design as a lintel. A five-sided dormer faces the street.

4183 Enright (Photo 2)

1887

Builder unknown

This large house has a red brick exterior. The right bay projects forward. At the left bay a shed-roofed front porch is supported on unusual columns which look like celery stalks wearing pilgrim hats when viewed from a distance. A small round-arched window complements the front door. The basement level and curved porch walls are of coursed rock-faced stone painted white. Stone trim is also used between stories. The massive bracketed cornice is iron, painted white and rusting. A hipped dormer is at each bay of the facade's roofline. Unembellished rectangular window openings appear to be either rebuilt or partially filled in.

4185 Enright (Photo 2)

1892

Builder unknown

Property owner Robert Grant constructed eight red brick foursquares in 1892-93 with similar materials and detailing. Here there is a prominent front porch at the left bay, hipped with replacement (decorative iron) supports. Wide round-arched windows are at the upper left and lower right; their brick archivolt use textured and plain brick, outlined in molded brick. A pair of sash windows at the upper right uses the alternating soldier bricks as a lintel. A vinyl-sided hipped dormer faces the street.

4187 Enright (Photo 2)

1892 (certificate)

Builder unknown

Property owner Robert Grant constructed eight red brick foursquares in 1892-93 with similar materials and detailing. Here there is a gabled front porch at the left bay; its piers and wall, as well as the basement level of the facade, have been refaced in permastone. A wide round-arched

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window is at the upper right; they have soldier brick voussoirs of alternating light and dark brick outlined in molded brick. Paired sash windows at the upper left and lower right use the alternating soldier bricks as lintels. A five-sided dormer faces the street.

CB 4874

4106-10 Enright (Photo 6)
1927

Builder: Duncan & Garrison (possibly also architect)

This apartment building, four stories high, has been rehabilitated with modern windows and awnings but appears otherwise intact. The east elevation, now prominently displayed to Sarah Street across a vacant lot, originally formed an interior courtyard with a twin building to the east. The other building (razed), constructed as part of the same \$125,000 project in 1927, also featured shops along Sarah. The body is of variegated brick with stone trim (painted white). The parapet wall of the narrow Enright facade has a prominent center peak.

4112 Enright (non-contributing) (Photo 7)
1928; 1959

Architect: Mr. Stokes

Builder: Gorden-Horen Realtors

It is unclear how much of the moderne facade of the two-family flat is the result of a permastone veneer and how much can be attributed to the original design. An arched entrance at the right bay leads to a full-length front porch, and supports a balcony (the wide left side of the porch is left uncovered). The right bay projects forward just inches from the body of the building and rises above the roofline with the suggestion of crenelation. Variegated brick body suggests a late 1920s date; the permastone veneer may date from a 1959 permit for \$2000 in repairs.

The three-bay garage at the rear of the property is constructed of brick. Its flat roof is surrounded by a parapet wall. The east bay has a newer garage door; the center bay has a three-fold wooden door and the west bay is boarded with plywood. The garage dates from the historic period and is considered contributing.

4114 Enright (Photo 2)
1928

Builder: B. Hill

This four-unit building has a symmetrical facade with paired three-over-one windows to either side of a gable-hooded entrance supported by knee brace brackets. The dark variegated brick facade is rebuilt above the second story windows; dark glazed brick makes surface patterns

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between the upper windows.

4122-24 Enright (Photo 8)

1898

Builder unknown

The symmetrical facade of this 8-unit building has strongly projecting 3-sided bays breaking an otherwise flat facade on either side of a wooden front porch; generous use of decorative brickwork at the cornice and between the bays is balanced with thick, rough stone lintels over the windows of the facade. Full window replacement has altered the appearance of the building but it appears to be otherwise intact.

4128 Enright (Photo 8)

1893

Builder unknown

This red brick foursquare single dwelling has a full-length front porch with second story balcony. Windows at the left bay are paired; doors at both stories of the right bay have side windows (small and arched at the first floor). A hipped dormer with paired sash windows (featuring decorative multi-paned upper sashes) faces the street and a gable-roofed bay projects at the rear of the east (left) side.

4132 Enright (Photo 8)

1893

Builder unknown

The entrance to this small red brick foursquare is behind a recessed arched entry in the left bay. At the first story, the right bay features triple small-paned casement windows; three-over-one windows are at the second story with a small shed dormer above. The facade is painted red.

4134 Enright (Photo 8)

1928

Architect: Roberson & Sons

Builder: F. J. Ruehle & Behle

This two family flat has a variegated brick facade displaying many of the hallmarks of the Craftsman style as applied to brick multi-family units in St. Louis. Tapered brick piers support a full-length gabled tile porch roof, echoed by a bracketed gable applied at the parapet roofline. Decorative brickwork includes window surrounds and a panel in the upper gable end. Window types are characteristic of the period; six-over-one double hung windows are at the three bays of the second story; a triple set of the windows in the left bay of the first story is balanced by two doors at the right.

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4136 Enright (Photo 8)

1895; 1928

Builder: Nicholson Brothers?

A false gable roof with front-facing cross gable top off this buff brick two-family flat. Alterations include replacement windows and infill of the balcony door area (probably a former bay window) in the second story's right bay. The cross gable was almost certainly added in 1928. The composition of the facade, despite alterations, is very similar to both 4148 and 4150 Enright.

A two-bay concrete block garage at the rear of the property is not historic and is considered noncontributing.

4140 Enright (Photo 8)

1895

Architect: Matthews & Clarke?

Builder: E. A. Steininger?

This handsome red brick foursquare single dwelling has its three wide facade windows outlined in egg and dart molded brick; the upper windows rest on a red stone sill course which stretches across the facade. The hipped porch at the right bay is supported on Corinthian columns which rest on low brick walls. A hipped dormer faces the street. The attribution of architect and builder are questionable because the 1895 building permit on which they appear has not been definitively linked to this house, which is known to have been constructed in 1895.

The garage at the rear of the property is new or newly renovated. The gable-roofed building has new siding and doors and is considered non-contributing.

4142 Enright (Photo 9)

1895

Architect: George C. Stinde

Builder: George A. Grant

The facade of this large front gabled house is of red brick, with brick piers at the hipped porch in the right bay and vinyl siding in the gable end and at the second story bay windows above the porch. The bay appears to be new or completely rebuilt (new siding and windows), but the facade is otherwise largely intact. Triple windows in the gable end may have once been a Palladian arrangement (the top of the center window may be covered with siding).

4146 Enright (Photo 9)

1895

The full-length brick front porch appears to be an early 20th century addition in the Craftsman style to this otherwise intact stone-fronted turn of the century foursquare single dwelling. The front-facing dormer has a decorative swag in the gable end.

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4148 Enright (Photo 9)

1894-95

Builder: Nicholson Brothers?

This foursquare single dwelling has a red brick facade, with wide windows at both stories of the left bay. The right bay's hipped front porch with tapered stone piers is probably an early remodeling; the projecting bay window above has its own overscaled flared gable roof. Full window replacement at the facade. The composition of the facade, despite alterations to the porch and bay, is very similar to both 4150 Enright and 4136 Enright. The steep-pitched hipped roof has hipped dormers.

4150 Enright (Photo 9)

1894-95

Builder: Nicholson Brothers?

This foursquare single dwelling has a red Roman brick facade, with wide windows at both stories of the left bay. The composition of the facade is very similar to both 4148 Enright and 4136 Enright; with an intact porch and rounded second story bay window, this one appears to be the least altered of the three.

4154 Enright (Photo 9)

1897

Builder: Frank Gear

The wide frieze and round right bay (over the front porch) recall Colonial Revival style detailing, although little else on this plain single dwelling (steeply peaked twin roof dormers, replacement front porch) does. The brick facade is very similar to that of the building just west at 4156, although the porch and dormers do not correspond (and the brick here is red).

4156 Enright (Photo 9)

1897

Builder: Frank Gear

The wide frieze and round right bay (over the front porch) recall Colonial Revival style detailing. The Roman brick facade matches the building just east at 4154, although the porch and dormers do not correspond (and the brick here is buff-colored and Roman). The two buildings just west are also similar 2-story 2-bay compositions.

4160 Enright (Photo 1)

1897

Builder: Frank Gear

This simple house's detailing reflects an austere Colonial Revival aesthetic, including the wide

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dentilled frieze. The Roman brick facade and dormers match the building just west at 4164. A bay window is over the porch at the right bay; like the two buildings just east, the porch stairs exit the east side of the porch rather than the front.

At the rear of the property is a non-contributing outbuilding. The shed-like structure has asphalt siding and is open to the alley. It has no distinguishing historic characteristics.

4164 Enright (Photo 1)

1897

Builder: Frank Gear

This simple house's detailing reflects an austere Colonial Revival aesthetic, including the wide dentilled frieze. The Roman brick facade and dormers matches the building just east at 4160, although the porches do not correspond (here the variegated brick porch appears to be a replacement). A bay window is over the porch at the right bay; like its neighbors, the porch stairs exit the east side of the porch rather than the front.

4166-70 Enright (Photo 1)

1927

Architect: P. Rollhaus

Builder: L. Grossberg

The street facade of the three story high "the Beverly" apartment building is arranged symmetrically around a center entrance bay. The sandy wire-cut brick surface is highlighted by terra cotta quoins, window surrounds, and a belt course below the stepped parapet wall. The front door and two windows at both floors above it have been filled in with what appears to be louvered venting; entrances are located on the side of the building.

4176 Enright (Photo 1)

1896

Builder unknown

This handsome buff brick foursquare single dwelling has more elaborate detailing than most. Colonial Revival style is expressed in the front porch (at the left side of the facade), which has a wide festooned frieze carried on four columns which rest on stone piers. The frieze at the roofline also uses the same delicate decorative motif. Dormers at the front and side have been re-sided with vinyl or aluminum; most of the other woodwork appears intact but in need of repair. The flat-roofed porch also serves as a balcony for the upper floor; its original railing has been replaced by a crude 2x4 corral. Dressed limestone with battered ends are at the basement level; limestone is also used as heavy lintels (with triple keystones) for the basement and first story windows at the right bay.

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4184 Enright (Photo 1)

1892

Builder unknown

This red brick foursquare has a hip-roofed porch at the right bay sheltering a front door and small side window; the wide window at the left bay has a similar opening above it at the second floor with two narrower double-hung windows within. The porch roof is extra high (unusually steep-pitched for a porch) and the three small windows above it are proportionately smaller. A small hipped dormer faces Enright.

4186 Enright (Photo 1)

1891

Builder unknown

This imposing house is made more so by the prominent jerkinhead wall dormer at the north (street) elevation, which is both larger and sits farther forward than most of the third story dormers on the street. The painted red brick facade has two floors and two bays; the door is accessed from a limestone porch at the right bay with side steps. Paired one-over one windows under a single long transom and rough stone lintel are above. At both stories of the left bay, narrow one-over-one windows with transoms are spaced several feet apart but connected by a single stone sill and two courses of rough stone spaced along the height of the window. Painted stone roundels are at either side of where each lintel would be, but instead of a conventional lintel, plain brick fills in across the top of the windows.

A gabled garage at the rear of the property appears to date from the historic period but is considered non-contributing due to its alterations. The plywood-sided building has two different types of historic siding in the gable end facing the alley - a few courses of double drop siding above plainer clapboard. The overhead door is non-historic. The building appears to be in poor condition.

Non-contributing resources

There are two non-contributing residential buildings, both described above. The first is located at **4112 Enright (Photo 7)** Although it is an interesting example of the "Modern Movements" category, the foursquare's permastone veneer and porch configuration almost certainly date to 1959, after the close of the period of significance. The second non-contributing residence is located at **4119 Enright (Photo 5, right)**. This is actually the oldest building in the district, dating to 1886; however, its plain brick facade was added in 1959.

There are also five garages which are not considered contributing due to their age or integrity. These are located behind the residences at 4167, 4169, 4136, 4140, and 4160 Enright.

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Condition

Buildings within the Block Unit #1 Historic District vary in condition from poor to excellent. The two boarded buildings, in particular, suffer from the effects of neglect and disinvestment (**4133** and **4150 Enright**). However, the block has a relatively high percentage of owner-occupants (more than two thirds of the occupied buildings, according to city records). Many homes exhibit signs of preservation activity, and numerous owners take pride in maintenance - a tradition which is encouraged by Block Unit #1.

Alterations

Contributing buildings within the district display a variety of alterations which do not substantially detract from the neighborhood's historic character. The most common alteration is the replacement of the front porch structure and posts. (Porch roofs generally remain intact.) Some instances of this practice date from the historic period, and are generally distinguishable by the use of brick construction (such as **4164 Enright**). Other examples, such as **4185 Enright** (Photo 2, center), have more recent replacements.

The three low-rise apartment buildings in the district have all been altered to varying extents. At **4109-17 Enright**, doors and stair windows facing the street have been closed over and windows are replaced with modern dark vinyl sashes. A three-story tower has been built at the entrance to the courtyard, closing the U shape; its peaked parapet line is built to resemble the cross gables of the original building. The new main entrance is at the parking lot to the east. The Beverly at **4166-70 Enright** (Photo 1, 4th from right) has similar modifications: the front door and two windows at both floors above it have been filled in with what appears to be louvered venting. **4106-10 Enright** (Photo 6) has been rehabilitated with modern windows and awnings but appears otherwise intact.

Perhaps the most notable alteration to the block has been the loss of buildings from the historic period. There are nine vacant lots on the block: all four corner lots, and five interspersed between the remaining 42 primary buildings. These nine lots represent fewer than 20% of the lots fronting Enright. Although the loss of this historic fabric leaves unmistakable gaps, the neighborhood retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance. Using one of the standard tests, for example, there is no doubt that a 1932 resident of the district would have no trouble recognizing the street and its buildings today.

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Statement of Significance, continued

- Architect/Builder Gear, Frank
- Rollhaus, P.
- Cook & Casey
- Grant, George A.
- St. Louis Mutual Home Building Co. #3
- Gorden-Horen Realtors
- Hill, B.
- Grossberg, Leo
- Ruehle & Behle
- Levy, Will
- Roberson, F. J. & Sons
- Stinde, George C.
- Varney & Woolrych
- Duncan & Garrison
- Unknown

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Block Unit #1 Historic District is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage: Black. As the first block organized under the Urban League of St. Louis' Block Unit program, it became a model for effective community organization at the grass roots level in St. Louis. Formed under the leadership of St. Louis Urban League Executive Secretary John T. Clark in 1932, the unit was copied by other blocks in the city and became one of the founding members of the Federation of Block Units in 1933. Block Unit #1 is still active, one of more than 1400 blocks in the St. Louis Federation. The district retains integrity: over 80% of the primary buildings from the period of significance are extant and retain most important defining physical features. Of the 42 extant residences, two have undergone major alterations and are considered non-contributing. There are also 11 outbuildings on the block, six of which are considered contributing. In addition, there are nine vacant lots on the block, representing the demolition of buildings which contributed to the block during the period of significance. The period of significance is 1932 - 1950, from the birth of the Block Unit to an arbitrary 50-year cutoff.

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Early Development

The first land division for a large area of what is now north central St. Louis was by the French founders of St. Louis, who designated the Grande Prairie common fields for the use of settlers. Initial subdivisions were into large tracts suitable for country estates. The 4100 block of Enright was part of three different large parcels which were divided into lots in 1874, 1875, and 1882. The street itself was created in the 1882 Delmar Place plat, when it was named Morgan (later changed to Enright in honor of a World War I hero). Whittier and Sarah Streets, which define the west and east boundaries of the district, were created later and divided the already-existing plats.

Development in this area lagged behind nearby Elleardsville (later called the Ville, located a short distance to the north) and Cote Brilliante (to the northwest), which were already thriving suburbs by the late 1870s.¹ At the same time, city expansion approached from the east. Vandeventer Place, laid out in 1870, was just two blocks east of the district, although almost all of its grand mansions were built after the 1870s. By 1875 there was also extensive development all the way west to Vandeventer along Washington Avenue, just two blocks south of present day Enright.² Public transportation made the area more accessible starting in 1870 with a horse car line which ran west along St. Charles Road (now Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive).³ The West End Narrow Gauge Railway, which ran on the right of way at the district's northern boundary, began operations in 1875 and reached suburban Florissant in 1878.⁴

Although the permit record shows that a few houses were built on neighboring blocks as early as the 1870s, the earliest extant buildings in the district date from 1886. The families that settled the area were white, often German, members of the middle and upper class. They followed a typical

¹Norbury Lansing Wayman, *History of St. Louis Neighborhoods: Grande Prairie*, St. Louis Community Development Agency, 1979. 3-4. See also "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Ville, St. Louis [Independent City]" MPS registration forms.

²The terminus of the Missouri Railway Company's Olive Street Line, just southeast at Grand and Olive, spurred the early development south of the district.

³Wayman, 3-4.

⁴Andrew D. Young, *The St. Louis Streetcar Story* (Glendale, California: Interurban Press, 1988), 26-27. The railroad became one of the nation's first electric interurban railroads in 1891. This was the forerunner of the Hodiament streetcar line, which in 1966 was the last streetcar line in St. Louis to shut down. The wide alley is now reserved for Bi-State buses. Andrew D. Young, *St. Louis and Its Streetcars: The Way It Was* St. Louis: Archway Publishing, 1996), 11.

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St. Louis migration pattern as urban pressures from the east encouraged families to move west in search of land, clean air, and an escape from the problems of the city. They built in the prevailing revival, American and vernacular styles of the time.

African-American Settlement

Enright Avenue did not become an African-American enclave until the 1920s, but the seeds of its development were sown as early as the 1870s. Just seven blocks north of Enright in the suburb of Elleardsville, the black population was large enough in 1873 to merit its own elementary school, Colored School #8⁵ (renamed Simmons Colored School in 1891). The first two black churches in the neighborhood which would become known simply as "The Ville" were founded in 1878 (Antioch Baptist) and 1885 (St. James African Methodist Episcopal). By 1910, 13 percent of the Ville's ward population was black (3,108 of 23,253 residents). This was more than double the citywide concentration, which was closer to six percent.⁶ More significantly, a 1912 study reported that "most of the home owning negro population live in this section [Elleardsville]."⁷

Residential expansion of African-Americans to the streets south of the Ville was a slow process, hindered by two segregationist practices common in St. Louis through the 1940s. First, restrictive deeds and covenants prohibiting the sale of property to non-white owners were found on every side of the Ville. Upheld by the Missouri Supreme Court in 1931, such covenants were finally ruled illegal by the U. S. Supreme Court in the 1948 *Shelley v. Kraemer* decision, based on a case less than a mile away from the Block Unit #1 district.⁸

A second restrictive factor was the policy of the local white realtors' association, which threatened its members with expulsion for selling to blacks in certain neighborhoods. For example, in 1937 it

⁵Colored School #8 was the eighth elementary school built for blacks in post-Civil War St. Louis.

⁶Carolyn H. Toft, ed. *The Ville* (St. Louis: n.p., 1975), p. 6. A fuller reckoning of the institutional development of the Ville is found in "Historic and Architectural Resources of the Ville, St. Louis [Independent City]" MPS registration form.

⁷Sandra Schoenberg and Charles Bailey "The Symbolic Meaning of an Elite Black Community: The Ville in St. Louis," *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society*, 23 (2), 95; quoting William August Crossland, "The Occupations of Negroes in St. Louis," (unpublished master's thesis, Washington University, 1913).

⁸Richard S. Kirkendall, *A History of Missouri*, v. 5. (1919-1953) (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1986) 368. The Shelley House was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1990.

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was discovered that a restrictive covenant thought to be in effect on the 4300 block of Page Boulevard (five blocks north of Enright) was never filed. Within a few months after the first black family moved in, approximately 20 others followed. The executive secretary of the St. Louis Real Estate Exchange was quoted in newspaper accounts as saying that any member renting or selling to blacks in that area would "face possible expulsion from the exchange."⁹ The "Delmar District," which apparently included the 3900-4400 blocks of Delmar (just south of Enright), was apparently subject to the same restrictions in the early 1940s.

Predating the heyday of these restrictive practices, the growing black population of the Ville pushed south of Easton (now Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, the boundary of the Ville neighborhood) at an early date. By the time the 1910 census was taken, residential streets south of the Ville were heavily segregated by race. Enright (still known as Morgan) was still entirely white, but a few black families resided just north on West Belle Place. The next two blocks north, Fairfax and Finney, were largely black in the 3900-4100 blocks but white on the blocks west of that. A few Chinese households lived on the north-south streets of the area.

The few African-American families who were able to move to West Belle Place by 1910 paved the way for many to follow. The 1920 census shows that the streetcar right-of-way between Enright and West Belle had become the new demarcation line, with the population on the streets just north almost exclusively black (and mulatto, a distinction recorded by census takers). Only a few white families remained on West Belle.¹⁰ Enright, on the other hand, had no black families listed in the 3900-4400 blocks with the exception of one couple living in a rear unit.

This was soon to change. When the Newstead Avenue United Presbyterian Church sold its church building at 4371 Enright in 1920, it cited the westward migration of its congregation as the reason. No reason was reported in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* for the westward migration of the congregation, but it seems reasonable to postulate that as black families moved into the streets north of Enright, white Presbyterians went west. The white population which was holding fast on Enright was distressed to find that the new owner of the Newstead Avenue church was Lane Tabernacle C. M. E. Church, a black congregation. At about the same time, reports surfaced that

⁹"Negroes Seek to Buy Synagogue on Page," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, November 10 1937.

¹⁰ One of the remaining white households on West Belle was the Evangelical Deaconess Home and Hospital, which in 1920 had 49 nurse-sisters (most of whom were American-born of German parents) and a staff of 23, all of whom were white.

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black buyers had acquired homes on Enright.

At a January 23, 1920 meeting of white residents of the 4100 block of Enright (as reported in *The St. Louis Globe-Democrat*), neighbors met "to discuss reports that negroes had purchased property further west on that avenue and to agree that no property owner should sell any tract in that block to negro purchasers." Speakers suggested that the DeHodiamont streetcar tracks between Enright and West Belle should be the southern boundary for black residences in the area.¹¹ About a month later, the *St. Louis Argus*, an African-American newspaper, reported that the Real Estate Exchange had resolved to prohibit its members from selling to African-Americans in a broad section of the city bounded on the north by the streetcar tracks.

The preventive measures taken by neighborhood residents and white realtors did not succeed. By mid-1920, the *Argus* "Society and Local Notes" column was running items on families moving to (or already located on) Enright. At least ten of the households listed in the 1921 *Gould's Red-Blue Book* on the 3900-4400 blocks of Enright can be identified as African-American.

Given the proximity to the Ville and the size and grandeur of typical houses, the blocks south of the Ville soon were among the most fashionable addresses for African-American St. Louis. By 1920, residents of West Belle and the streets immediately north (Finney and Fairfax in particular) were frequently mentioned in the *Argus'* society column. Enright would soon join the ranks of most frequently mentioned streets. By the time the devastating tornado of 1927 struck, the district was recognized as the home of the city's black upper class. The first report of the cyclone in the *Argus* stated:

The aristocratic Negro residential district of the city received the brunt of the terrific Tornado Along Cook avenue, Finney avenue, West Belle Pl. and Enright avenue nearly every home sustained damage and many were completely destroyed. Some of the leading Race businesses, and professional men live on

¹¹ One of the neighbors mentioned in the *Globe* article as a speaker at the meeting was Walter Stork, a local grocer who served a mostly black clientele. His alleged presence at the meeting led to a boycott instigated by the black West End Business Men's Association. Stork denied that he was present and sued the newspaper. Within two months, Stork was forced to sell his business to a black organization; the *Argus* called the boycott the first successful action of its kind in St. Louis. A few days before Stork turned over the property, another black organization (the Central Civic League) released its findings that Stork had not been at the white property owners' meeting after all. The Business Men's Association did not accept this conclusion, and noted that Stork was also accused of being unfair to his black clientele. The store, located at 1041 Sarah, was apparently among the buildings destroyed in the 1927 tornado.

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these streets and some of the oldest and best known colored families of St. Louis.

While the devastation wrought by the tornado in the African-American community was terrible, just a few weeks later the *Argus* was able to report on the opportunities for change which had come about as a result. One result of the tornado was a call for the construction of more high-density housing, portrayed in the *Argus* as a service to the Race. Of the three low-rise apartment buildings on the block, two were constructed immediately after the tornado.¹²

The Urban League and the Block Unit Program

When St. Louis formed a chapter of the National Urban League in 1918, the parent organization had formally existed for only seven years. The National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes (NLUCAN), later known as the National Urban League (NUL), was born of the federation of three national organizations to study and improve the condition of African-Americans in urban areas. Through the 1920s, the local League offered employment and training programs, a day nursery, and other services.

The Urban League of St. Louis' annual report for 1932 is characterized by a spirit of humility, even frustration, at the League's inability to provide relief to the thousands of African-Americans who suffered from unemployment and poverty during the Depression. Applications for job placement assistance skyrocketed while actual placements decreased. The League investigated complaints of discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion in New Deal programs, and worked with labor groups to assure equal treatment. In the League's Neighborhood Department, neighborhood clubs, demonstration programs, gardens and recreation programs kept the staff busy.

Amidst the major problems of unemployment and poverty afflicting the city, many black residents found that the "usual elements of neighborhood disintegration" on their blocks were exacerbated.¹³ Localized problems which provoked outrage in the neighborhood included lax

¹²Although the construction of high-density housing in violation of zoning codes was listed as one of the reasons for formation of the early block units, these three buildings were apparently not at issue. Block Unit #1 was already zoned for multiple families at the time of the tornado. St. Louis Missouri Zoning Commission, Harland Bartholomew Engineer, "New Use District Map," April 1930 (on file at St. Louis Public Library); St. Louis Missouri Zoning Commission, Harland Bartholomew Engineer, "New Use District Map," December 1925 (on file at St. Louis Public Library).

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enforcement of zoning laws and building codes, irregular garbage pickup and street cleaning, and salesmen trampling lawns and plantings in a rush from house to house. As a response to such nuisance problems, residents of the 4100 block of Enright decided to organize.

St. Louis Urban League Executive Secretary John T. Clark wrote about the birth of the Block Unit movement in *Opportunity: The Journal of Negro Life* (the NUL's national magazine) in 1934. He described the problems outlined above and the response of property owners in the 4100 block of Enright, who came to the Urban League asking for assistance in organizing themselves:

During May 1932¹⁴ eleven residents in that block met and formed Block Unit No. 1. Invitations to membership were extended to every resident in the block. Committees were formed and they vigorously set out to correct nuisances which had been imposed on them by outsiders and thoughtless residents in their own block. They waited upon department stores, theatres and merchants whose advertising pamphlets and bills daily littered lawns and streets. They challenged and checked postmen, ice men and salesmen who were crossing lawns and ruining fences and flower beds and then they joined in an effort to improve their lawns. All signs on houses in that block that were not in keeping with certain artistic standards were condemned and their removal requested.¹⁵

According to one author, the organization of the Block Units was at least partially born of similar work that John T. Clark had done in Harlem as early as 1913. As an organizer for NLUCAN, Clark pioneered "neighborhood unions" which brought together residents in various districts of New York. The Civic and Improvement League in Harlem is cited as an early predecessor of the Block Units, although it operated on a larger scale.¹⁶

¹³John T. Clark, "When the Negro Resident Organizes," *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*, June 1934, 168.

¹⁴Other sources report that the first meeting of the block unit was in February 1932; the anniversary of the block unit program is usually given as February 29.

¹⁵Clark, 168.

¹⁶Guichard Parris and Lester Brooks, *Blacks in the City: A History of the National Urban League*. Boston: Little Brown, and Company, 1971, 221.

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Additional block units were formed within a few months of Block Unit #1. The local League's 1932 annual report stated the following objectives of the nine block units which had been formed by the end of the year:

... improving the physical appearance of homes, lawns, sidewalks, streets and alleys; abating nuisances which destroy the beauty and peace of a residential area; obtaining group action in expressing approval or disapproval of certain city or county legislation which would tend to harm property values in that area.¹⁷

It is possible that the potential of such groups was not recognized in the first months of the program - the formation of the early block units was not noted in meeting minutes, and the first projects were entirely aimed at nuisance abatement. It did not take long, however, for the new organizations to test the possibilities of "obtaining group action." By the end of 1932, the blocks had experimented with purchasing wholesale lots of coal to reduce heating costs.

The year 1933 brought more significant forays into the area of group action. By mid-year, twelve blocks were organized, and the Urban League formed the Federation of Block Units with Clark as its president.¹⁸ By the end of the year there were 23 organized blocks. In addition to the expanded cooperative buying program, the Federation had started to flex its political muscle. Enright Avenue block units successfully protested an assessment levied against their property for the widening of another street. At the request of the Federation, an ordinance was passed to replant trees in areas damaged by the tornado of 1927. The Federation also secured promises from the City for new recreational facilities for African-Americans.¹⁹ Authors Parris and Brooks ascribe the local Urban League a "pivotal role" in Depression-era St. Louis due to the effectiveness of the Federation.²⁰

¹⁷Quoted in "Annual Report of the Urban League of St. Louis for the Year 1932," submitted by Executive Secretary John T. Clark, 1933. 1.

¹⁸Clark served as president until 1948. "St. Louis Federation of Block Units Twenty-First Anniversary Celebration Program." Microfilmed Urban League records, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.

¹⁹"Annual Report of the Urban League of St. Louis for the Year 1933," submitted by Executive Secretary John T. Clark, 1934. 3.

²⁰Parris and Brooks, 222.

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The Urban League's report for the year 1935 listed 35 active block units, most of which claimed between 35 and 60 members. All but one of the block units were located west of Grand Avenue in the Ville neighborhood and the area just south of the Ville which included Enright Avenue. The early block units were generally organized by homeowners, and were therefore located in areas with a larger percentage of owner-occupants. There were no block units at this time in the Mill Creek Valley area, the City's other district of concentrated African-American residences, which included a larger proportion of tenement housing.²¹

Activities listed in the 1935 report ranged from presenting a 2000-name petition calling for equal and unsegregated recreation facilities in the city to holding a variety of recreations and carnivals. The "outstanding work of the units" was said to be the annual Lawn Contest. By this time the Federation had been divided into two areas. In Area A, a resident of Block Unit #1 took first prize for best front lawn, and the whole block was awarded the *Globe-Democrat* cup as Area A's best block. Mayor Bernard Dickmann presented the cup for Area B, a symbol of the growing influence of the Block Unit movement.²²

A 1942 Master's Thesis on the Block Units in St. Louis included case studies of individual block units. It appears that when Block Unit #1 was studied at the beginning of 1941, it had settled into a comfortable position within the federation. The unit supported Urban League-initiated activities, such as the boycott of an unsanitary poultry shop and the effort to prevent children from skipping school to sell newspapers and magazines. The Block Unit also kept tabs on sick neighbors and sent cards.²³

Clark's 1934 article on the development of the Block Units concluded with his hope that the new organizations, after finding their footing in remedying problems on their own blocks, would be able to use their new power "in a larger civic way."²⁴ By 1950, with 144 member units, the Federation had claimed more of that power. In that year alone, according to the Annual Report,

²¹Almost the entire Mill Creek Valley neighborhood was demolished in the urban renewal period.

²²"Annual Report of the Urban League of St. Louis for the Year 1935," submitted by Executive Secretary John T. Clark, 1936. 8.

²³Layne, Ruth Elizabeth, "Block Units of the St. Louis Urban League," Thesis (M. S. W.), Washington University, St. Louis, 1942.

²⁴Clark, 171.

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The Federation organized two credit unions, participated in a wide range of health initiatives, improved the condition of alleys and streets, eliminated nuisance businesses, presented educational programs, and worked to lessen the disparity in hiring and promotion of black police officers.²⁵ In that year, Executive Secretary Leo Bohanon named the Block Unit program the League's most important and successful contribution to the community during its 32 years of existence.

The main objectives of the block unit program, as stated by the Urban League in 1938, were:

- to improve neighborhood appearance and maintenance;
- to work with other organizations and inform residents to improve health, education, recreation, housing, and cultural standards;
- encouraging good citizenship;
- developing the spirit of teamwork;
- developing grass roots leaders.²⁶

In 2000, the St. Louis Federation of Block Units still strives for these objectives. Three staff members of the Urban League administer the program, which now counts over 1400 member units. Block Unit #1 is still active; under the direction of current president Mr. Jollie Harris, it has recently become a nonprofit corporation and is actively participating in local planning efforts.²⁷

Period of Significance

The period of significance is defined as 1932, the date of the formation of the Block Unit, through 1950. The end date represents an arbitrary cutoff because exceptional significance for the Block Unit is not claimed. This method of determining an end date has been used because the activities of the Block Unit had no end date; indeed, they continue to this day. No other date has been

²⁵Annual Report of the Urban League of St. Louis for the Year 1950." unnumbered pages.

²⁶Lawrence Harvey Boxerman, "St. Louis Urban League: History and Activities." Saint Louis University Ph.D. dissertation, 1968. 52.

²⁷Additional research on the Block Unit movement in St. Louis would undoubtedly be a fruitful field of inquiry. While the historical effectiveness of the Federation of Block Units is undeniable, there appear to be very few independent evaluations of its impact outside of the material generated by the Urban League itself. Currently, although there does not appear to be a coordinated source for this type of information, sources at the St. Louis Urban League are aware of only two other cities with Block Unit programs.

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identified to mark a decrease in the significance of the activities of the Block Unit.

Integrity

Despite typical problems of economic disinvestment and urban decay which have afflicted this area of north St. Louis, Block Unit #1 retains the integrity necessary to convey its historic significance. Review of the site map indicates that most of the block is still densely built, with nine vacant lots compared to 42 extant primary buildings. All but two of the primary buildings are considered contributing. The two non-contributing buildings are from the historic period, but both have undergone extensive facade alteration. The retention rate on this block is high compared to the blocks immediately north, south and east; in fact, Block Unit #1 is one of the most intact blocks in the immediate vicinity.

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Block Unit #1 Historic District
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description

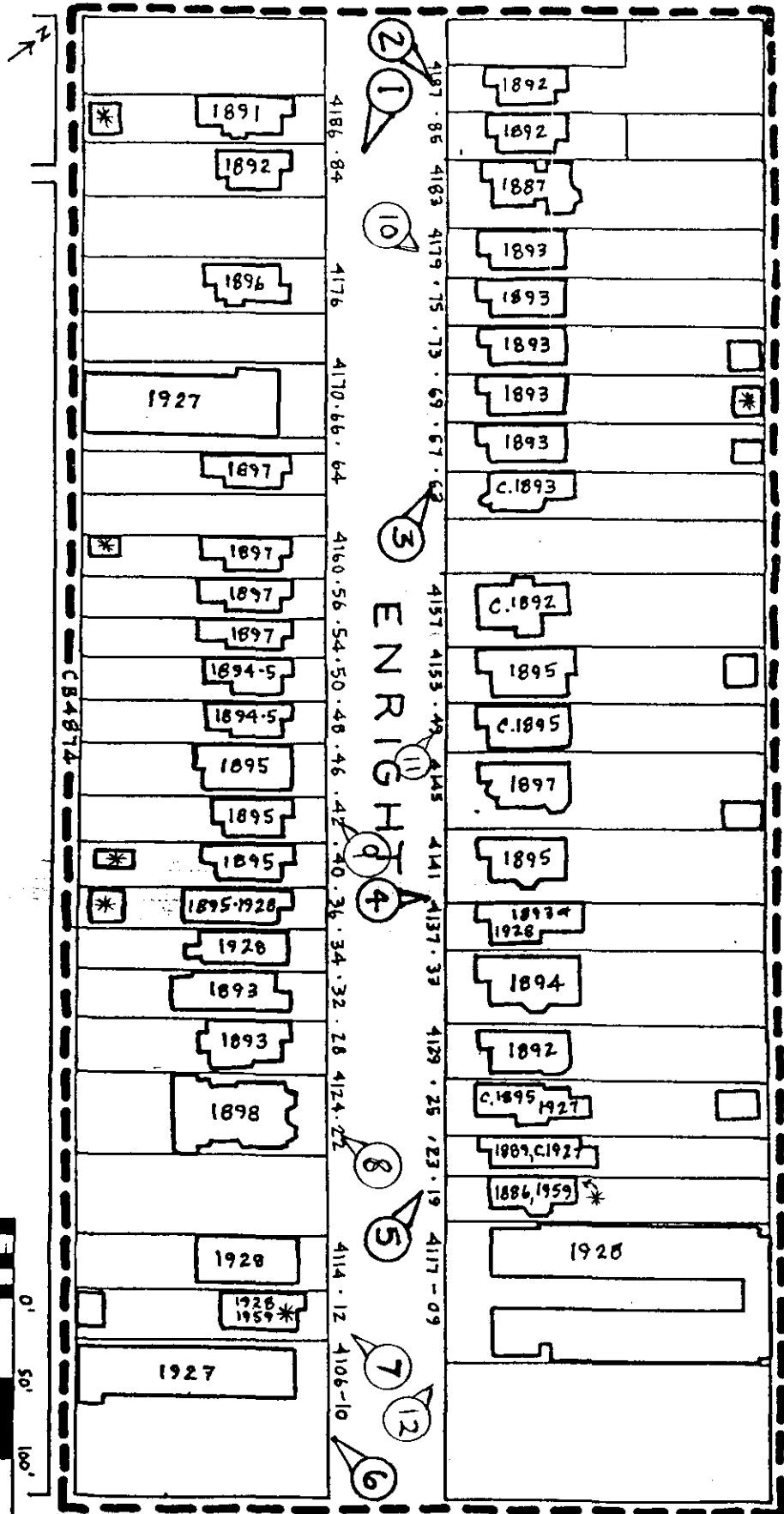
Boundaries of the nominated district are Sarah Street to the east, the Bi-State right of way which bisects City Block 4873 to the north, Whittier Street to the west, and the east-west alley which bisects City Block 4874 to the south. These boundaries are indicated with a broken line on the accompanying map entitled "Boundary Map: Block Unit #1 Historic District."

Boundary Justification

Proposed boundaries for the Block Unit #1 Historic District include the entire land area associated with the block unit. Membership in the Block Unit has traditionally been extended to persons living within these boundaries, commonly referred to as the 4100 block of Enright.

WHITTIER

CB4873
BI-STATE RIGHT-OF-WAY



N. SARAH

--- BOUNDARY MAP:

BLOCK UNIT #1 HISTORIC DISTRICT

ST. LOUIS [INDEPENDENT CITY], MO.

NOVEMBER 1999

* Noncontributing



Block Unit #1 Historic District,
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri
Site map with photo key

4284

40' 00"

4283

4282

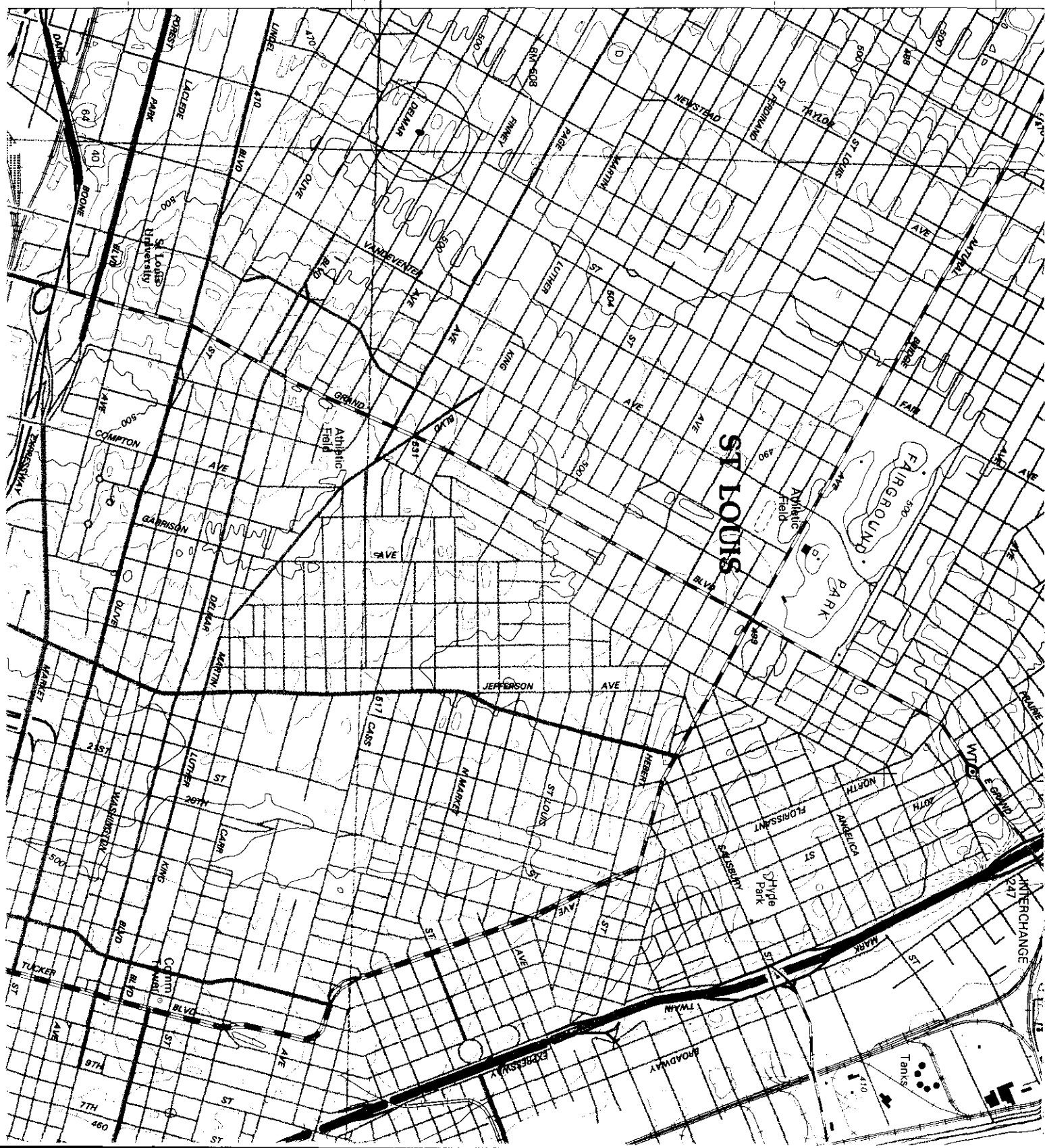
BLACK UNIT #1
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

4180 - 4191
ENRIGHT AV.

ST LOUIS 720 000 FEET
UNDERMONTILLI,
CITY, MO

ZONE B
EASING-
739 900
NEETING-
4281 200

4280



Black Unit #1 Historic District

S. side of Enright; 4186 Enright, right
St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Cynthia Longwisch

4/9/8

reg. Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing SE

Photo #1



Block Unit #1 Historic District
4187 - 4183 Enright (L→R)

St. Louis (Independent City), MO
Lynn Josse

10/1999

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St Louis
camera facing N
Photo #2



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4169, 4167, 4163 Enright (L→R)
St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Lynn Josse

10/1999

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing NW

Photo # 3



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4141-4137 Enright (L-7R)

St. Louis (Independent City), MO

Lynn Josse

10/1999

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis

Camera Facing N

Photo #4



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4133-4119 Enright

St. Louis [Independent City], Mo

Lynn Josse

10/1949

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis, Inc.

camera facing NW

Photo #5



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4106 - 4110 Enright

St. Louis [Independent City], MO
Cynthia Longwisch

4/1998

neg: Landmark Assn. of St. Louis
Camera facing SW

Photo 6



Block Unit # 1 Historic District
4112, 4114 Enright (L to R)
St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Lynn Josse

3/2000

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing SW

Photo 7



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4122-24, 4128, 4132, 4134, 4136 Enright (L to R)

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Lynn Josse

3/2000

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis

camera facing SW

Photo 8



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4142, 4146, 4148, 4150, 4154 Enright (L to R)

St. Louis [Independent City], Mo

Lynn Josse

3/2000

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing SW

Photo 9



Block Unit #1 Historic District
4179, 4175, 4173, 4169 Enright (L to R)
St. Louis [Independent City], Mo
Lynn Josse

3/2000

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing NE

Photo 10



Block Unit # 1 Historic District

4145 Enright (R), 4149, 4153, 4157 Enright
St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Lynn Josse

3/2000

neg: Landmarks Association of St. Louis
camera facing NW

Photo 11



Block Unit #1 Historic District

4109.17 Enright

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Lynn Jasse

3/2000

neg: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis

camera facing NW

Photo 12

