

**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 Rosedale Apartments

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1180 Narragansett Boulevard not for publication

city or town Cranston vicinity

state Rhode Island code RI county Providence code 007 zip code 02910

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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

Rosedale Apartments
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
County and State

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.)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
0		structures
		objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation STONE: granite; BRICK
walls CONCRETE: block
BRICK
roof _____
other _____

Narrative Description

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

Rosedale Apartments
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1939

Significant Dates

1939

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hunt, Herbert R., architect

Rosedale Apartments
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.7 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	9	3	0	1	1	6	0	4	6	2	8	1	8	0
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
2															

3															
	Zone		Easting						Northing						
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 Edward Connors

organization Edward Connors and Associates date April 2006

street & number P.O. Box 154522 telephone 401 595-0699

city or town Riverside state RI zip code 02915

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7

Page 1

DESCRIPTION

General

Located on a roughly three-acre lot in Cranston, Rhode Island, the Rosedale Apartments comprise one large, modified U-plan building fronting on Narragansett Boulevard. Built on a lot that slopes to Narragansett Bay, Rosedale is three stories at its street elevation and four stories in the rear. This Art Moderne structure exhibits the eclecticism of much of the architecture of the period, drawing design elements from the International Style and Art Deco as well as streamline treatments drawn from aeronautics and hydraulics. Comprising 34 apartment units of three to five rooms, the Rosedale extends 207 feet along Narragansett Boulevard with two 140-foot wings extending to the rear to form an open courtyard facing Narragansett Bay.

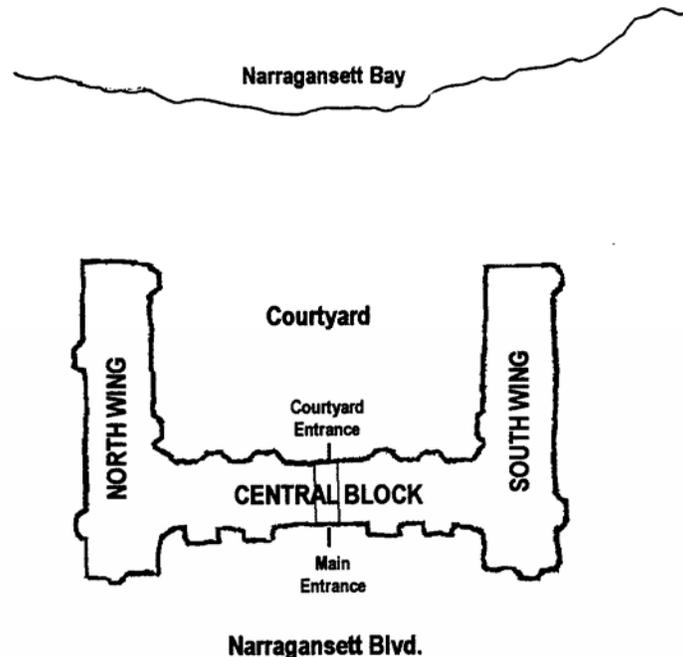


Figure 1

Plan of Rosedale Apartments
Approximate scale: 1" = 100'

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7

Page 2

Exterior:

Sitting on a granite and brick foundation with raised basement, the Rosedale is constructed of cement block sheathed in two tones of buff brick, the lighter color providing the main surface, the darker color serving as an accent in several locations (described below). Typical of much of the architecture of the period, this building has a flat roof and, originally, a simple, restrained cornice. The original roofline was defined by a coping, portions of which may survive on the central block. On the north and south wings this cornice coping has been replaced with a projecting cornice (applied sometime after 1980) of a heavy, molded design inappropriate to the style of the building. This alteration occurred in the context of a re-roofing of these two wings.

The 70-foot central block of the building is recessed about 20 feet from the westernmost projection of the two perpendicular wings. Along this recess are four rectangular bay windows that appear only on the front of the building (two placed symmetrically on each side of the front entrance). Elsewhere on the building are angled bay windows more characteristic of 19th- and early 20th-century design. In both cases, the bay windows rise from the foundation to the roofline.

Significant among the alterations to the building was the removal (also after 1980) of a series of stepped parapets that broke the roofline at the main entrances and at each of the bay windows around the building. The most dramatic of these were over the main entrances, which consisted of three tiers of brickwork rising from the building foundation. These, as well as the parapets at each of the front projecting bays, were removed and replaced with the unbroken roofline and coping seen at present. The verticality of the front and rear main entrances, accentuated by the upward tilt of the front steel canopy, was completed by the striping in the brickwork and the evocation of a moderne ziggurat in the three-tiered, stepped parapet. The loss of this feature weakened the strength of the original design. The rear main entrance closely resembles the front, with a smaller stainless steel canopy.

The Rosedale is divided into six sections of three or four stories containing several apartment units each, accessible by a series of canopied entrances around the building.¹ The central front entrance, providing no access to the individual units, leads into a tiled interior walkway running through to the rear courtyard. Flanked by four symmetrically placed rectangular bays, this central entrance, the defining architectural feature of the building, consists of a recessed doorway surmounted by a large stainless steel canopy and an oriel window of glass block with inset steel frame windows at the upper floors. This oriel window is capped by a smaller stainless steel canopy similar in design to the one below. The recessed doorway is framed by concrete inscribed with recessed stripes drawn from the design vocabulary of this period: a straight line with a parabolic curve at

¹ These sections are separated by firewalls that rises from below the foundation to above the roofline.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7 Page 3

the end, often called the “streamline.” In his 1975 study, *Depression Modern*, Martin Greif places this simple design element in a larger context:

The world of the 1930s was especially fond of a particular line, a curved line, recurring again and again, a line with a sharp parabolic curve at the end, which it called the “streamline.” And it was the streamline which contemporary designers considered the characteristic “rhythm” of the age.²

These mirror-image vertical lines on either side of the doorway terminate above at the inscription ROSEDALE APARTMENTS in a delicate, highly stylized large- and small-upper case typographic treatment typical of the period. Rosedale architect Herbert Hunt utilized other streamline design elements in this building. The curved stainless steel canopies on the secondary entrances are secured to the brick wall by a steel bracket in the shape of a “fin,” evoking—along with streamlining of the front entrance trim—speed gained from wind tunnel and nautical design.³ The fact that apartment buildings did not require aero- or hydrodynamic design was irrelevant—streamlining in architecture of the 1930s was of a piece with the redesign of a wide range of consumer products of the period to reflect speed, organic lines and unbroken surfaces drawn from nature.

Surface treatments. The interplay of the main mass of light buff brick with striping and trim of a darker color is utilized at several places on the surface of the building. The darker buff brick appears in the following locations:

- raised horizontal striping on rectangular bays (echoing the “speed stripes”⁴ of the canopies)
- lintels and sills
- definition of the stylized parapet at the peak of each rectangular bay

² Martin Grief, *Depression Modern*, p.35.

³ These secondary canopies have been removed on all of the front elevation secondary entrances. They survive on the rear and side elevations.

⁴ As it developed through the 1910s and '20s, much of the literature of architectural modernism celebrated function and the absence of ornament. Despite this, certain purely decorative motifs found common application in architecture as well as consumer products, among these the “stream line” and the three “speed stripes.” Martin Grief critically discusses the “strange cult of the ‘three little lines,’ three parallel lines intended to suggest ‘modernity’ to the consumer, three parallel lines marring surfaces everywhere in America. Few objects of the ‘30s escaped the plague of this unholy trinity, suggesting one reason why the Depression Modern style is so frequently, and incorrectly, mistaken for the modernistic dilution of Art Deco.” (Martin Greif, *Depression Modern*, p. 35.) See *Additional Information* section, Figure 5 for the presence of three vertical concave impressions in the sheet metal of the 1939 GE refrigerator as well as a kick panel and front vent consisting of a set of curved stainless steel bands. The tripartite design of this refrigerator is typical of much of the modern design of consumer products of the period, finding architectural expression in the Rosedale parapets and the massing of the WPRO Transmitter Building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7

Page 4

- two vertical stripes on secondary doorways
- diamond motif at the roofline of each angled bay
- rectangular motif at the roofline of the front and rear main entrances

Fenestration. Although the present-day metal-frame windows are replacements of relatively recent construction, photos dating to 1939 show double-hung, steel sash windows. The form of these windows varied considerably throughout the building. Fenestration on the angled bays consisted of narrow 2/1 sashes flanking a wide single sash and low hopper. On the front elevation rectangular bays, the windows were grouped in fives: one narrow window on each side and three wider ones across the front. These were 2/1: two horizontal lights on the upper sash, a single light below. This type of corner window was an adaptation of the metal-frame windows employed in industrial buildings from about 1915. This adaptation associated with the International Style accentuated the horizontality of the building by wrapping windows around corners, a thicker metal element built into the window corner serving to bear the load of the wall. Elsewhere on the non-projecting surfaces of the building, windows were either single or paired 2/1, the upper sash divided into two horizontal lights. Venetian blinds, an 18th-century innovation that found renewed application in 1930s in the form of thin metal slats, were installed throughout.

Although glass block is not used extensively throughout the building, its incorporation into the front and rear main entrances makes it a very visible feature of the Rosedale. This material, mortared and assembled into walls like traditional brick, was an early 20th-century European innovation that began to gain popularity in the U.S. for interior and exterior use in modern architecture in the mid-1930s. Paired narrow windows consisting of a long upper casement and a small lower sash are set into the glass block at the second- and third-floor elevations of the front and rear main entrances. The two apartment units situated over this main entrance enjoy portions of this glass wall as an interior feature.

On the side and rear elevations, original steel bar railings of various lengths and detail run alongside granite stairways at several of the secondary entrances. These consist of 2" by 3/8" steel bar formed into curvilinear patterns at the terminations. The most complex and stylized of these metal stairways occurs at the courtyard entrances to units C and G (see photo). All exterior doors are steel and glass replacement type of relatively recent manufacture.⁵

A semicircular asphalt drive provides access from Narragansett Boulevard. Light buff brick (now painted white) endposts with traditional-style granite ball finials terminate a wrought iron fence along the front of the property.

⁵ A wood frame, basement entrance door on the north elevation appears to be original. A steel door knob with a concentric circle design is consistent with door hardware of the 1930s.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7

Page 5

Two duplicate endposts (unpainted) are found across Narragansett Boulevard, indicating an entrance to what was likely a parking area for the apartment building (not here nominated). Through the central passage, the rear entrance opens to a sidewalk that hugs the building and leads to the various unit doorways. A long three-tiered granite stairway with railings similar in design to those described above leads to a circular cement sidewalk at the center of the courtyard.

Interior

Consistent with the Rosedale's efforts to offer sophisticated "modern" design and up-to-date amenities to its tenants, the 3- to 5-room layout of the thirty-four apartments featured large rooms and many newly introduced features.

The six premier units at Rosedale are located at the rear of the side wings facing Narragansett Bay. These are five-room, 14' x 30' apartments with water view, fireplace,⁶ and built-in bookcases. Although the wood trim of these latter features is simple and not explicitly "modern," a central corridor with opposing curved walls dramatically evokes the modern⁷ (see photo). These units also include two full tile bathrooms, a luxurious amenity for the period.

The remaining apartments consist of single bedroom units. Some in the central block include a dining room separated from the kitchen and living room by moderne-styled hardwood French doors of five horizontal lights. In most apartments, an interior glass block window allows light into the foyer. A typical floor plan (including the dining room) as advertised in May 1940, is reproduced below.

⁶ A few more modest apartments in the central block have mantels with non-operable fireplaces. The July 9, 1939, *Providence Journal* article noted that the premier, five-room apartments had "practical" fireplaces.

⁷ The living room of the ground level, southeast corner apartment of this 5-room type has been significantly altered.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7

Page 6

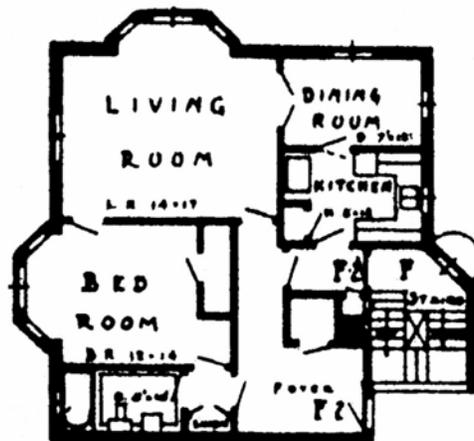


Figure 2

Typical four-room layout as found in apartment F-2
From May 1940 advertisement, "Have you seen Rosedale Apartments?"

The present kitchens at Rosedale date to the 1970s-1990s; none of the original General Electric "all-electric" kitchens (see *Significance* and *Additional Information*) survives. Although painted over and out of service, incinerator chutes (originally intended to be accessible from the kitchen) are found in the hallway adjacent to each unit. A few original bathrooms, however, survive almost intact. These include black and cream ceramic tile baths with some original sinks and fixtures. A brass plaque is mounted on the inside of each closet door with the inscription:

Rosedale Apartments

Designed and built to provide a comfortable, peaceful, happy abode for all occupants.

*We invite your cooperation in maintaining this ideal
so that all may be protected against any disturbance.*

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County , RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 7

Page 7

PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The information for numbers 1–5 below is the same for each photograph:

1. Rosedale Apartments
2. Providence County, Rhode Island
3. Edward Connors, photographer
4. April 2006
5. Original negative at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
150 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island

The following information is specific to the indicated photograph:

6. Front elevation, view looking southeast.
7. Photograph #1

6. Façade entrance and oriel window detail, view looking north.
7. Photograph #2

6. South elevation, view looking northeast.
7. Photograph #3

6. East elevation, view looking northwest.
7. Photograph #4

6. Entrances along south elevation of north wing, view looking northwest.
7. Photograph #5

6. Interior hallway in main block, view looking south.
7. Photograph #6

6. Living room interior, north wing, view looking south.
7. Photograph #7

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 8

Page 1

SIGNIFICANCE

The Rosedale Apartments building is significant on the state level as a rare, generally well-preserved example of Art Moderne architecture in a large-scale Rhode Island building. Utilizing duochrome brick, glass block, steel-frame windows and stainless steel canopies, the Rosedale is a good example of depression-era Moderne design.

History

A product of the high population density of European cities, the apartment building made a comparatively late appearance in the Providence metropolitan area. An early example of this form in Providence, based on the “French Flat,” was the 1889 Aylesworth Apartments at 188-194 Broad Street [NR, 1978]. Despite the sophistication of the Aylesworth Apartments, the idea of multiple-unit housing, linked as it was in the public mind to factory tenements, took hold slowly. Another reason for the slow acceptance of the urban apartment was the ample availability of land in and around Providence for more traditional, detached single-, two-, and three-family residences.

Apartment buildings first appeared in the Providence area in the 1880s but did not become popular until the early 1900s, especially during the 1910s and '20s, when a number of prominent examples were built, primarily on the East Side and in the Elmwood neighborhood. Typically these contain from six to twenty-five units, with the majority being in the smaller range of size.

The Rosedale is notable for its relatively large size and ambitious plan and articulation, clearly aimed at a luxury rental market with urbane and sophisticated tastes. The association here of modernity with the height of fashion is notable. The Rosedale is also noteworthy for its relatively removed location. Most other examples of apartment houses were constructed closer to the center of Providence; there appears to be a deliberate intent here to take advantage of suburban “seclusion” on a spectacular waterfront site. The Rosedale is one of only two or three apartment houses of this type and scale constructed in the City of Cranston before World War II.

Although there are some examples of post-World War II Moderne design in metropolitan-area commercial buildings,⁸ sensibilities changed during these years. Auto-based suburbanization commonly took the form of low-density, single-family housing in the remaining open areas of the city, penetrating deeper into the suburbs, a process that continues. The Rosedale Apartments thus exemplify a pre-war development of the apartment

⁸ People’s Bank (Cram and Ferguson, architects, 1949) on Kennedy Plaza (then Exchange Place) is a fine example of a stark, late-Moderne design in a commercial building. The 1943 Nicholson File Power House (NR listed in 2005 as part of the Nicholson File Co. Complex) is another example of late-Moderne design in an industrial building.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number

8

Page

2

form at a scale of size and design sophistication unseen in the Providence metropolitan area before that time and never replicated in the Moderne style.⁹

Herbert R. Hunt

Rosedale architect Herbert R. Hunt was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1885. At age fifteen he was working as a draftsman in the Lowell area. Upon graduating from high school, he either attended or worked at Lowell Institute from 1903–04¹⁰. From 1907–1910 he worked as superintendent of construction at Clark Thread Company in Newark, New Jersey. Hunt returned to New England in 1911, working in Providence for U.S. Finishing/Queen Dyeing¹¹ as superintendent of construction (1911–1912) and the Williams Company as an engineer (1913–1914).

By 1915 Hunt was listed in the Providence City Directory as an architect and engineer, living on the East Side and renting office space downtown. Hunt's ledger for his first year in business shows a mix of design and engineering projects.¹² Notable among his early clients was William S. Cherry (1867–1941), who had established a clothing store in Fall River with partner Frederick Webb in 1895.¹³

⁹ The only other Art Moderne apartment in the metropolitan Providence area is 218 Waterman Street in Providence, considerably smaller than Rosedale, designed by David Shapiro in 1936. Sheathed in a single color of buff brick, this 2-story, E-plan building has metal-frame windows, raised brick striping, and semi-circular stainless steel canopies. It is also worth noting that there are some significant Deco/Moderne houses in the Providence metropolitan area including the 1935 Arthur J. Levy House (30 Fairview, Cranston) and the 1938 Mary Rose Ross House (27 Druid Road, Warwick).

¹⁰ Herbert Hunt's business ledger (1915–1953) is unclear as to his role at Lowell Institute. The ledger shows an income of \$660 derived from his two years there, which suggests that he might have worked as a draftsman rather than studying there. If the former is true, then Hunt worked his entire career as a self-taught mechanical engineer and architect.

¹¹ Queen Dyeing, established along the Woonasquatucket River on Valley and Atwells Avenues in 1892, was purchased by U.S. Finishing in 1909. Hunt's employment as superintendent of construction with this company in the period 1911–12 was likely associated with expansion and adaptation of the works following the acquisition, and not with new construction. All of Queen Dyeing on the north bank of the Woonasquatucket was demolished during the development of Eagle Square in 2001. Queen Dyeing's office and storehouse building, later known as Crawford Seed, was built by 1900 and is the sole surviving building of the Queen Dyeing complex.

¹² For example, Hunt completed a number of storefront designs in that year for clients ranging from Weybosset Diamond Company to Metropolitan Fur Company. In the same year he also contracted for chimney repair for the Remington Company and firewall coping for Queen Dyeing, his former employer.

¹³ The circumstances of the connection between Hunt and Cherry are unknown. Cherry, a Canadian by birth, settled in Lowell and worked for a period of time at a store operated by his cousin, John Storey. He may have met a young Herbert Hunt during this period. Earlier, Cherry made the acquaintance of Frederick Webb when they were both working in a store in Aurora, Ontario. Webb provided the financial side of the retail partnership with Cherry.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 8

Page 3

The success of Cherry and Webb's Fall River enterprise led to a general expansion of the retail enterprise throughout southern New England, which included a small store in Providence in 1905 and the construction of the Cherry and Webb building on Westminster Street in 1914.¹⁴ In the early years of his business Hunt provided a range of architectural and engineering services to Cherry. These included storefronts, cash booths, and storm doors for Cherry's stores as well as engineering work at the waterfront residence that William Cherry had purchased in 1911 on Narragansett Boulevard in the Edgewood section of Cranston. By 1916 Cherry had retained Hunt to design a New Bedford store for his growing commercial chain. This \$2500 project was Hunt's first substantial architectural commission.

In 1925 Hunt completed plans for his own residence on Narragansett Boulevard,¹⁵ a short distance north of Cherry's estate. In the same year he designed the O'Gorman Building in downtown Providence, for which he received over \$7000 in fees during 1925. Despite considerable success in the 1920s, Hunt experienced a significant decrease in income in the early years of the depression.¹⁶

Profitable investment in radio was a welcome anomaly in the otherwise slow economy of the depression years. In 1931 Cherry and Webb diversified their investments with the purchase of the Edgewood broadcasting facility of Dutee W. Flint, then the country's largest Ford dealer.¹⁷ In 1924 Flint had established WKBF, a low-power, commercial broadcast station in a building popularly called the "Castle" (1332 Narragansett Boulevard, demolished), built for Providence businessman Herman Posner in 1901.¹⁸ With the purchase of Flint's property, Cherry and Webb acquired new call letters—WPRO—and, in 1937, a power increase to 1000 watts. In 1932 Hunt provided the broadcast company with design studies for a radio studio.¹⁹ In 1939 he designed WPRO's transmitter building along the wetlands of Hundred Acre Cove on the Wampanoag Trail in East Providence.²⁰

¹⁴ This building was designed by Angell and Swift, architects.

¹⁵ This building survives at 1080 Narragansett Boulevard, at the corner of Narragansett Street

¹⁶ Although there is no indication of this in his City Directory listings of the period, the 1930 Federal Census lists Hunt as an insurance agent. His ledger for that year, however, indicates that he continued to provide architectural and engineering services to a number of clients. Hunt's gross income for 1930 was \$5600, a sharp decline from a peak of \$19,000 in 1925.

¹⁷ It was a common practice in the early years of commercial radio for retailers to set up small broadcasting stations as a means of advertising their wares. Few of these stations survived the stiff competition of the latter 1920s, as radio entered most American households. This thinning-out process accelerated in the depression years.

¹⁸ Flint set up a broadcast facility in the Castle, 1332 Narragansett Boulevard, demolished ca 1990.

¹⁹ Hunt received \$232 for this design, likely installed at the Mason Street, Providence, studio of WPRO.

²⁰ This Hunt building has been incorporated into the present-day "Salty Brine Broadcast Center," 1502 Wampanoag Trail, East Providence. Two separate renovations and additions have enclosed the façade of the original building. Radio stations

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 8

Page 4

In the same year, this Moderne building (see *Additional Information* section) shared Hunt's drawing board with the largest single commission of his career, the Rosedale Apartments.

The Rosedale Apartments

Narragansett Boulevard was laid out during 1896-98 as an extension of Allens Avenue from the Providence city line to Ocean Avenue at Pawtuxet village, as the Edgewood section of Cranston became a desirable waterfront location for the residences of Providence businessmen and industrialists. In 1911 William S. Cherry purchased several properties along the boulevard, erecting a mansion, later demolished for the construction of the Colonial Motor Inn in 1959.²¹

Cherry merged several of these lots in 1922 as the William S. Cherry Plat. By 1930, he had established Rosedale Realty Company²² (of which he was president). In March 1939 Cherry set aside a roughly 3-acre waterfront lot for the construction of a modern apartment building.²³ Shortly after, he retained Herbert Hunt for design studies; the first Rosedale entry in Hunt's ledger is dated May 12, 1939.²⁴ By July of that year, a *Providence Journal* article, "New apartment house rising in Edgewood," described a substantial, "modern" building of three- and five-room suites:

...all rooms will be unusually large. The average room size bedrooms will be 12 x 14 and the average living room dimension will be 13 x 18. Unusually large closet space will exist throughout the building. Kitchens will be ultra-modern, with steel cabinets, electric ranges, and refrigerators and stainless steel sinks. Garbage chutes from all kitchens will connect with basement incinerators.²⁵

sought wetlands for the erection of transmitting towers to take advantage of the superior electrical grounding and better signal afforded by the wet soil.

²¹ As a civic improvement, Cherry planted trees along the boulevard, most of which were uprooted in the 1938 Hurricane.

²² The name "Rosedale" predates this apartment. The 1930 *Book of Rhode Island* describes Cherry's varied associations as follows: "He is President of the Cherry & Webb Company, the Rosedale Realty Company, and the Urban Realty Company; Vice-President and Director of the New England Equity Corporation, a Director of the Investors' Corporation, and is active in the textile industry of Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut."

²³ See "Plat of Land Belonging to William S. Cherry," (1939). On file, Cranston City Hall, Plat Book 13, p. 10 or Plat Card 332.

²⁴ Hunt received a total of \$5000 in 1939 for this project.

²⁵ *Providence Sunday Journal* (9 July 1939), Home Section, p. 3. See also advertisement for General Electric's "New American" Homes in the November 1935 edition of *Better Homes and Gardens* (reproduced in *Additional Information* section). In the mid-1930s General Electric began promoting nationally its "all-electric kitchens." Rosedale advertisements from 1940 make specific mention of this amenity. The incremental introduction of electrical appliances into the kitchen began in the post-World War I years. Purchase of an electrical refrigerator often completed this process.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 8

Page 5

Hunt gave particular attention to the eight rear, waterview apartments located in the projecting wings of the U-plan building. These included a 14- by 30-foot living room with a large window facing the Bay and a fireplace flanked by built-in bookcases. Most apartment units offered a view of the bay. Although Moderne treatments in the interior trim were subtle, a long corridor from the living room to all other rooms was defined by two opposing curved walls, highly evocative of the aesthetics of the period.

Elsewhere in the building, Moderne/Art Deco interior treatments included hardwood French doors with horizontal lights and tile bathrooms with chrome trim and high-style pedestal sinks (see photo). Hunt freely employed modern materials in exterior treatments, among these glass block, stainless steel canopies²⁶, flat-bar curvilinear railings, and duochrome brick.²⁷

Glass block, an early 20th-century European innovation, found popular acceptance in modern architecture in the mid-1930s, used for interior as well as exterior purposes. Mortared in the same way as ordinary brick, this material could be used to bring diffused light into interiors while still providing privacy.²⁸ Hunt designed central oriel windows consisting of convex shafts of glass block rising above the main front and rear entrances. Within these shafts he set steel-frame casement windows at the second and third floor levels. Occurring in only the two center apartment units, the rooms defined by this glass block provide dramatically-lit interior spaces. Elsewhere, Hunt employed interior glass block windows as a means of bringing light into foyers.

By the mid-1930s weekly lay-away payments for electrical refrigerators were roughly equal to the cost of home delivery of ice. Industrial designer Raymond Loewy's famous redesign of the Sears Coldspot refrigerator in the mid-1930s greatly accelerated the adoption of the electrical refrigerator and hastened the demise of the residential ice trade.

²⁶ Steel-chromium alloy came into general use in the 1930s in a wide range of applications, from the radiating designs of diner interiors to the sheathing of the tower of the Chrysler Building (1928-30).

²⁷ The internal structure of Rosedale itself is concrete block, a 20th-century innovation standardized by the 1930s in the form of the 8" x 8" x 16" block.

²⁸ The development of glass brick, the earliest patents for which date to Frenchman Gustave Falconnier's late 19th-century innovations, went through much evolution in the early 20th century. Earlier forms consisted of two halves sealed with a bead of lead along the mortar edge. By the 1930s new technologies, spearheaded by Owens-Illinois and Pittsburgh-Corning made available mass manufactured hollow, airtight, and dimensionally stable glass block in nominal 6", 8", or 12" squares. Hunt's pre-Rosedale experience with architectural glass included installation of a "glass sidewalk," a means of introducing light into basements, for Cherry and Webb in 1934. This often involved setting individual pieces of solid conical or prismatic glass in concrete. Source: Dietrich Neumann, *Twentieth-Century Building Materials* (1995), p. 194-5.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 8

Page 6

Herbert R. Hunt continued his architectural and engineering practice through World War II, working at the U.S. Naval Base in Newport in 1942 and 1943. In the postwar years he worked for Carr Manufacturing Company in Bristol, Rhode Island, retiring in 1954 at age 69. He died in 1961.

Recent history

William S. Cherry died an apparent suicide in 1941. His son, William S. Cherry, Jr., continued the family involvement in real estate and broadcasting, maintaining ownership of Rosedale Realty Company until 1969. The current owner, Belvoir Place, LLC, acquired the property in 2004. Rehabilitation of the Rosedale Apartments is underway.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 9

Page 1

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 9 Page 2

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number 10

Page 1

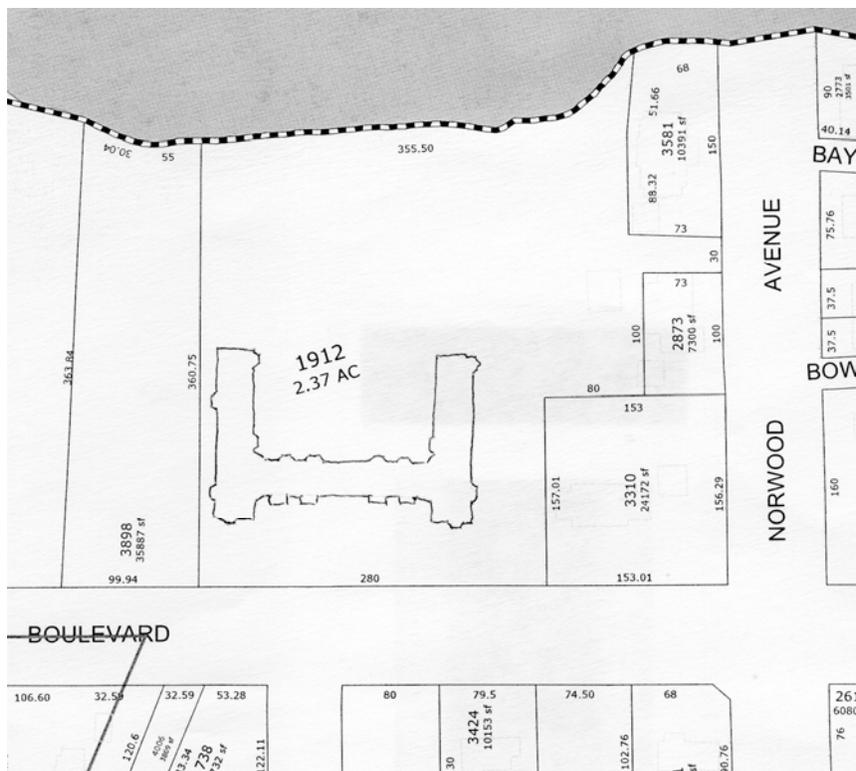
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Rosedale Apartments are contiguous with Cranston Tax Assessor's Plat Map 2 Lot 1912.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries, comprising 2.4 acres, define the land historically associated with the Rosedale Apartments from 1939 to the present.



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence County, RI

Name of Property

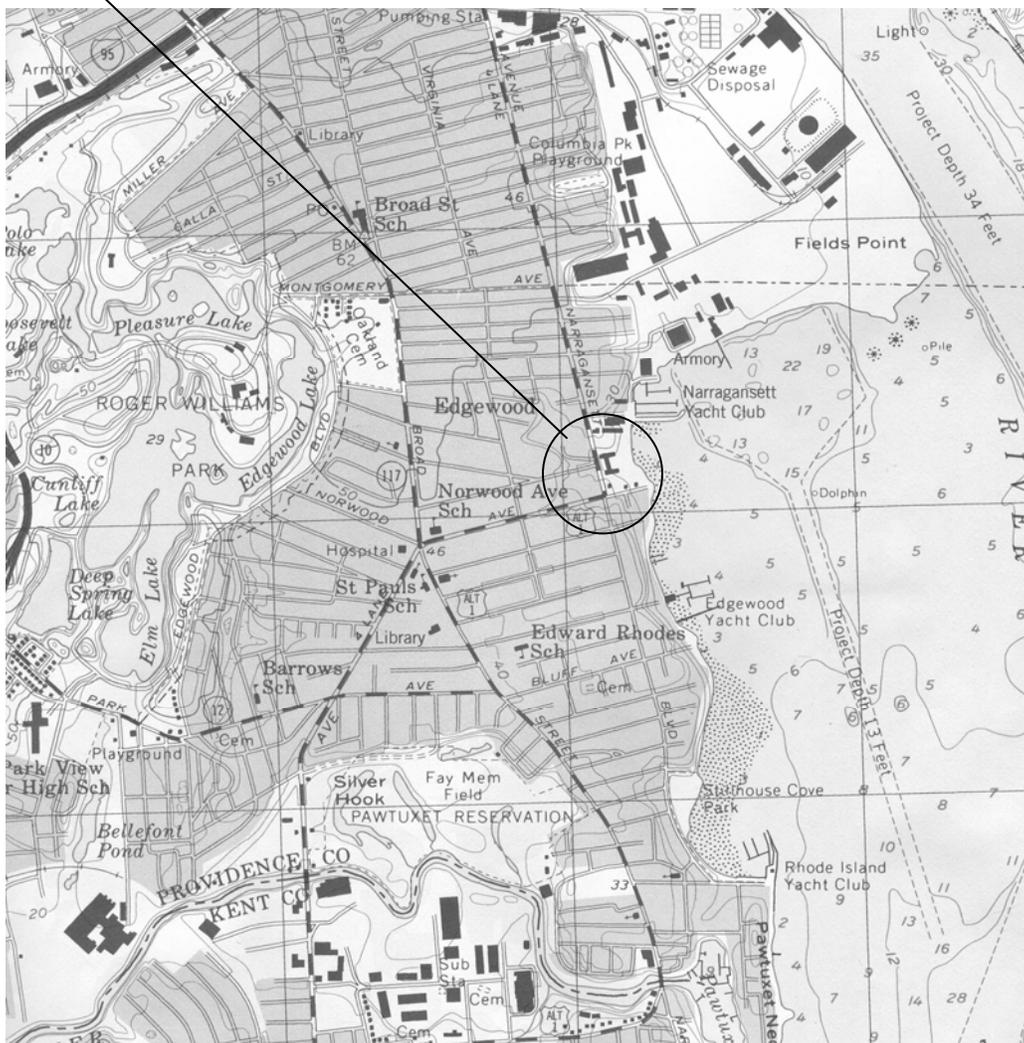
City/Town

County and State

Section Number 10

Page 2

Rosedale Apartments
1180 Narragansett Boulevard
Cranston, RI
Providence, RI, Quadrangle
Scale: 1: 24,000



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence, Rhode Island

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number Add'l
 Info

Page 1

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Figure 1
Historical photo of Rosedale Apartments
Front elevation, ca 1940
Courtesy of Steven R. and Joanna Hunt

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Rosedale Apartments

Cranston

Providence, Rhode Island

Name of Property

City/Town

County and State

Section Number Add'l
 Info

Page 2

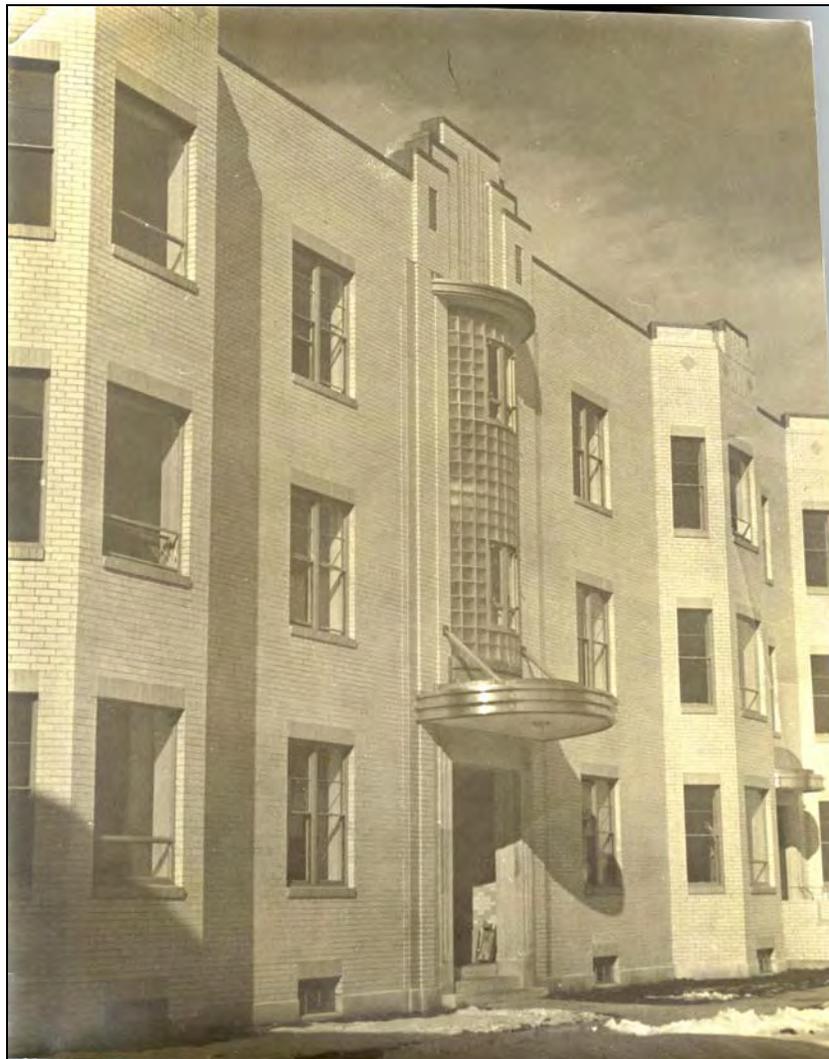


Figure 2

Historical photo of Rosedale Apartments
Rear elevation, ca 1940

Courtesy of Steven R. and Joanna Hunt

















*29

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*26

ROSEDALE APARTMENTS
PROVIDENCE COUNTY, RI
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