

A Look Back in Time

The Allis Apartment building located at 811 60th Street is a contributing property within the National Register of Historic Places and listed in the Library Park Historic District. The Allis Apartment building is in a mixed-use neighborhood just south of Kenosha's downtown and sits on a large lot that has very little landscaping.

Section 15.04 of the City's Zoning Ordinance establishes standards for designating structures and sites as historic and the site or structure must meet at least one of these standards. It was determined that The Allis Apartment building is architecturally significant under Standards 1 and

3: "exemplifies or reflects the City's...architectural history; or embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen..." Early twentieth century apartment buildings like The Allis are architecturally significant because they represent a new type of structure – the garden or luxury apartment building for middle and upper class professional families. These apartment buildings became popular because they offered a luxury living environment to the many people who wanted to live close to downtown, but did not want or could not acquire a single family house in the area. The Allis has a high level of architectural integrity, and its streamlined Classical Revival details reflect its

modern concept. Although the early residents of The Allis are of historical interest, the building is not individually historically significant. The Allis Apartment building was originally designated a Kenosha Historic Site in 1988 and re-designated on June 16, 1996.



The Allis Apartment building is a three-story red brick building that sits on a raised foundation. The building has a flat roof decorated with a narrow parapet that sits above a plain stone cornice. Under the cornice is decorative brick corbelling in a belt course and cross pattern. There is a stone belt course and simple brick corbelling between the first and second stories, and a stone water table delineating the raised foundation. The east elevation of the building features large, single-pane openings, some with decorated with sidelights. These are recessed balconies covered with wrought iron between these openings. The north elevation features similar windows along with tall and narrow openings decorated with wrought iron faux balconies. The windows of the east and north elevations are also decorated with flat stone lintels. The other

elevations of the building have plain single lights or single-light double-hung sashes sitting under segmental brick arches. The main entrance is in the north elevation and is decorated by pilasters that extend to the top of the building forming a parapet. The entrance consists of glass and metal doors flanked by enclosed sidelights and covered with an awning.

The Allis Apartment building was constructed around 1915 and is architecturally significant because it is a good example of a streamlined or “modern” Classical Revival building. The Classical Revival architectural style was popular for large institutional buildings in the early twentieth century and the style is often seen on apartment buildings from that era. The Allis' streamlined Classical Revival details give the building a modern appearance that belies its 1915 construction date. The Allis is also architecturally significant because it is a good example of a new type of building that became very popular during the early twentieth century – the luxury or garden apartment. Prior to the period when the automobile was widely used, residential areas close to downtown were becoming more densely populated as Kenosha grew and many more people wanted to live close to downtown, but the number single-family homes was limited. The business population in Kenosha's downtown grew as did the need for conveniently located homes. Many of the people who desired a residential location close to downtown were professional people who would have purchased a single-family home in the nineteenth century. To meet the demand to house these people, developers began to construct small to large-sized apartment buildings that had many of the luxuries found in single-family homes but could house a large number of people in a relatively small area. The Allis is a good example of this trend that provided convenient housing for growing professional middle class urban families.