

**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 Engine Company 29

other names _____

2. Location

street & number 4811 MacArthur Blvd., N.W. not for publication

city or town Washington, D.C. vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county _____ code 001 zip code 20007

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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

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 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 the 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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		Sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Firehouses in Washington, D.C.

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/Firehouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/Firehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Slate

other

Narrative Description

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

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Engine Company 29

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Description Summary:

Engine Company 29 is a 1-1/2-story, freestanding neo-Georgian, Colonial Revival-style brick building located at 4811 MacArthur Blvd., N.W. in the Palisades neighborhood of northwest Washington, D.C. It was constructed in 1925 and follows a domestic building form meant to blend into the surrounding residential building stock. The firehouse features a 1-1/2-story main block with one-story cross wings toward the rear creating a T-shaped plan. A truly majestic four-story hose tower two-thirds of the way rearward is the primary character-defining feature of the modest building. The building was designed by Albert L. Harris, Municipal Architect.

General Description:

Exterior:

Engine Company 29 consists of three main parts: a principal 1-1/2-story main block; a lower, one-story intersecting dormitory side wing; and a tall hose tower. All three parts are constructed of red brick with wood trim. The main block is covered with a front gable roof while the side wing features a side gable roof that intersects with the main block. The tower, rearward of the main block and wing, is capped by a wood belfry with a pyramidal roof.

Main Block: The front elevation of Engine Company 29 facing MacArthur Blvd., N.W. consists of a two-bay, implied temple-form building with a front-facing gable. Two wide arched apparatus door openings are paired and located on center of the front elevation. Large semi-circular fanlight transoms fill in the upper arch of the openings. The front gable is formed by a raking cornice and cornice returns with sizeable modillions. A stone panel with the name of the Engine Company inscribed on it is centrally located above the openings and at the attic level in the gable end. A centrally placed flag pole is installed between the apparatus door openings.

The main block extends eight unequal bays deep with an irregular assortment of single and paired window openings, including three 9/9, three 6/6 double-hung windows and three casements. The rear elevation, located in the opposing gable end, similarly features a random sampling of single 6/6 window openings and a single door opening.

Side wing: The side wing is a one-story brick wing attached to the southeast side of the main block more or less on center of the elevation. The wing accommodates the firemen's dormitory on the interior and is a simple one-story structure with brick walls and a gable roof and 6/6 windows. The end wall of the wing has a pair of false slab chimneys obscuring the gable roof behind.

Tower: The hose tower is four stories in height and located at the rear of the building, with an exterior door at the ground-floor rear. The tower is topped by a square lantern with a six-over-six, double-hung window on each side. The lantern is topped by a steeply-pitched copper roof with a weathervane.

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A small one-story oil house, located at the rear of the lot, is designed as a complementary pavilion.

Interior:

The interior is divided into an open apparatus room on the first story of the main block, with room for two engines, and a series of service rooms behind (dining room/kitchen, restrooms). The side wing accommodates the dormitory, locker room and bathroom. An attic level, or half-story, is located above the rear part of the main block of the building.

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 pattern of our history.
- B** Property 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)

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1925-1957 (50 years from the present)

Significant Dates

1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Albert L. Harris

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 files (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
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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Summary Statement of Significance:

The context for firehouses is described in the National Register Multiple Property Listing: *Firehouses in Washington, D.C.: 1806-1945*. Engine Company 29 was constructed in 1925 for the District of Columbia's professional firefighting force at the beginning of the final phase of development of the city's pre-World War II firehouses. During this inter-War period (1925-1945), most of the city's public buildings followed a mid-20th century Colonial Revival style that was ushered in by the Office of the Municipal Architect in the 1920s and 1930s with the encouragement of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. Indeed, Engine Company 29 is executed in a red brick Colonial Revival-style to the designs of Municipal Architect Albert Harris. The building provides a good example of post World War I firehouses that were built to fill gaps in service and to cover growing and newly developing areas. The building meets Criteria A and C for listing in the National Register with Architecture as the Area of Significance.

Resource History and Historic Context:

Engine Company 29 was constructed in 1925 to the designs of Albert L. Harris in the nearly built-out Palisades neighborhood, replete with scores of frame houses. The building, the first firehouse to be constructed after World War I, is also Washington's first one-story firehouse. One-story firehouses were referred to as "bungalow firehouses" at the time.ⁱ According to news articles, these one-story firehouses were intended to blend with nearby residential buildings. Four were eventually built, three of which were located in outlying areas of the city where a land-intensive scheme was economically feasible.ⁱⁱ

Designed by architect Albert L. Harris, Engine Company 29 features an innovative one-story plan with the dormitory off to the side of the apparatus room, rather than above it. This plan positioned the firefighters conveniently while reducing the threat of injury from falls and the difficulty of sealing dorm spaces off from the fumes, varying temperatures, and noise of the apparatus room.ⁱⁱⁱ

Architect Albert L. Harris was born in Wales in 1868 and came to the United States at the age of four where he first lived in Pittsburgh. He received a BS in Architecture from George Washington University in 1912. He moved to Washington in 1900 to work for Hornblower & Marshall and was made partner in 1911. While with Hornblower & Marshall he worked on the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History and was responsible for the Army and Navy Club^{iv} and Engine Company 23, 2119 G Street, NW, 1910. He received a BS in Architecture from George Washington University in 1912 and was a professor of architecture at Catholic University from 1916-1921.^v

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END NOTES

- i. "Design for Washington's First Bungalow Engine House," The Sunday Star, December 7, 1924.
- ii. The three one-story firehouses in outlying areas are Engine Company 26 at 1340 Rhode Island Avenue, NE, built in 1936; Engine Company 14 at 4801 North Capitol Street, NE, opened in 1945 and Engine Company 31, 4930 Connecticut Avenue, NW, built 1930.
- iii. The second floor dormitories were historically exited via poles. The problem of making the poles immediately accessible while somehow temporarily sealing the aperture in the floor was a persistent one.
- iv. Anne E. Peterson. Hornblower and Marshall, Architects. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1978.
- v. Stanley H. Williamson, ed. Who's Who in the Nation's Capital. Washington, D.C.: Ransdell Incorporated, 1929-1930, p.327.

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Kohler, Sue A. The Commission of Fine Arts, A Brief History, 1910-1976. Washington, D.C.: The Commission of Fine Arts, 1984

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Withey, Henry R. and Elsie Rathburn. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 15,179 square feet

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8	3 2 2 3 5 6	4 3 0 9 2 5 3	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
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 Sally Berk, Architectural Historian; Kim Williams (edited, 2007), Architectural Historian

Organization The Capitol Fire Museum date June 2001

street & number 2214 Wyoming Avenue, NW telephone _____

city or town Washington, D.C. state _____ zip code 20008

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- X A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- X A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

- X 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 District of Columbia Fire Department

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction 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 to amend existing 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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Engine Company 29 occupies Lot 808 in Square 1372 in Washington, D.C. The lot is located at 4811 MacArthur Blvd., N.W.

Boundary Justification:

Engine Company 29 has been associated with this lot since construction of the firehouse on the site in 1925.

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END NOTES

ⁱ "Design for Washington's First Bungalow Engine House," The Sunday Star, December 7, 1924.

ⁱⁱ The three one-story firehouses in outlying areas are Engine Company 26 at 1340 Rhode Island Avenue, NE, built in 1936; Engine Company 14 at 4801 North Capitol Street, NE, opened in 1945 and Engine Company 31, 4930 Connecticut Avenue, NW, built 1930.

ⁱⁱⁱ The second floor dormitories were historically exited via poles. The problem of making the poles immediately accessible while somehow temporarily sealing the aperture in the floor was a persistent one.

^{iv} Anne E. Peterson. Hornblower and Marshall, Architects. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1978.

^v Stanley H. Williamson, ed. Who's Who in the Nation's Capital. Washington, D.C.: Ransdell Incorporated, 1929-1930, p.327.