

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name U.S. Civil Service Commission Building

Other names/site number U.S. Trade Representatives Annex, 1724 F Street NW

2. Location

street & number 1724 F Street, NW not for publication

city of town Washington, D.C. vicinity

State District of Columbia code DC county District of Columbia code 001 zip code 20505

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official _____
Date

Title _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____
Date

Title _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

| I, hereby, certify that this property is: | Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain:) | _____ | _____ |

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal
- private

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 | 0 | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | Objects |
| | | buildings |
| 1 | 0 | Total |

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: Government Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT: Government Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:

Italian Renaissance

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: BRICK

walls: BRICK; STONE: Limestone

roof: STONE; METAL

other: STONE: Limestone

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building at 1724 F Street, NW occupies a 0.3-acre lot on the south side of F Street, NW in Washington, D.C. The lot is bounded by F Street to the north, a narrow, limited access service road to the south, the office building at 1718 F Street, NW to the east, and the office building at 1730 F Street, NW to the west. The six story building was constructed in 1911 to house the U.S. Civil Service Commission and underwent various interior renovations in the late twentieth century. Currently, the building houses annex offices for the U.S. Trade Representatives, as well as offices for the U.S. Secret Service and the Executive Office of President, Office of Administration.

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building exhibits elements of the Italian Renaissance Revival style applied to the basic commercial office building form of the early twentieth century. The Italian Renaissance Revival influence can be seen in the tripartite division into base, shaft and crown, the deeply projecting bracketed cornice, the engaged pilasters separating the central bays of the front and sides and the classically elaborated door surround. These ornamental details are sparingly applied to the standard office building form derived from the Commercial style: flat front, flat roof, little ornament, highly regular fenestration with triple-ganged windows and a balance between horizontal and vertical lines. Due to its simple but high-quality building materials, including brick and limestone, the building remains in generally good condition with few alterations to its 1911 exterior appearance and configuration.

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheets 7.1 through 7.4.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1911-1932

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Unknown

Architect/Builder

Appleton P. Clark, Jr., Architect

James Knox Taylor, Supervising Architect

Samuel J. Prescott Company, Inc., Builder

- 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

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is significant in the areas of Politics/Government and Architecture as headquarters of the U.S. Civil Service Commission for two decades; as an example of a federal building that was privately designed and developed under a construct-to-lease agreement; and as an expression of the Italian Renaissance Revival style applied to a commercial type office building, as designed by prominent Washington, D.C. architect Appleton P. Clark, Jr. The building is significant from 1911, the date of its completion, until 1932, when the U.S. Civil Service Commission relocated.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph and Criteria Considerations

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is emblematic of the growth and status attained by the important Progressive Era agency in the three decades following its establishment in 1883. During its two decades at the 1724 F Street, NW headquarters, the Commission was instrumental in the enactment of laws and policies protecting the rights of federal employees and in rationalizing federal administrative structure and procedures. The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is significant as a rare example of a federal building designed and constructed outside of the Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury and the provisions of the Tarsney Act (1893-1912) during a major early twentieth-century federal building campaign. Moreover, the building is significant as an early and unusual example of a federal building erected through a construct-to-lease arrangement with a private developer. The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is a notable example of the Italian Renaissance Revival architectural style applied to a commercial office building form as designed by prominent Washington, D.C. architect Appleton P. Clark, Jr. The federal building's significance falls under both National Register Criterion A (properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and Criterion C (properties that embody a distinctive characteristic of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master).¹

Narrative Statement of Significance

Politics/Government

The building at 1724 F Street, NW is significant for its original use, as the headquarters of the U.S. Civil Service Commission from 1911 to 1932. The Commission was responsible for the reform and administration of a rapidly expanding federal employment system. The U.S. Civil Service Commission played a major role in setting the conditions of employment for the federal bureaucracy, replacing the old spoils system with one based on merit, and increasingly ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all federal employees. Just before the building was erected, the civil service rules had come to apply to a majority of federal executive branch positions. In the two decades that the Commission was headquartered in the building, the size of the civil service and percentage of employees under its jurisdiction continued to expand while the Commission addressed major concerns such as retirement, job classification, salaries, and the enormous employment demands created by World War I and the onset of the Great Depression. The Commission has had a national impact and has been an institution that has contributed significantly especially to Washington, as the seat of government and a "government town."

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is significant as a federal office building designed and constructed outside the normal federal building design and construction practices of the period, which is closely associated with the Tarsney Act (1893–1912) and with the tenure of James Knox Taylor as Supervising Architect of the Treasury (1897-1912). From 1893 until its repeal in 1912, the Tarsney Act authorized the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Treasury to use private architects, selected through architectural competitions, to design federal buildings. The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building was one of only a handful of buildings designed outside the provisions of the Tarsney Act by private architects chosen directly instead of through competition.² Designed by local architect Appleton P. Clark, Jr., the U.S. Civil Service Commission Building nonetheless reflects the prevailing taste of the Supervising Architect's office for classical revival styles.

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is an unusual example of an early twentieth-century building constructed with private funds expressly for the sole use of the federal government. A reaction to the inability

¹ The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building was determined eligible by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office on October 15, 1992.

² Antoinette Lee, *Architects to the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 208.

to fund the construction of all necessary offices for the rapidly expanding bureaucracy during the Progressive Era, the construct-to-lease mechanism allowed the federal government to secure the construction of a building without having to appropriate a large sum of money up front to fund the land acquisition and building construction. The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building was designed to meet the Commission's requirements and the Commission was its sole tenant until 1932.

Architecture

The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is significant as an example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style applied to a commercial office building form as designed by noted local architect, Appleton P. Clark, Jr. The building has a rectangular footprint, symmetrical facade, double-hung-sash windows, accentuated main entry and strongly projecting cornice.

Appleton P. Clark, Jr. was one of Washington, D.C.'s most prominent and prolific early twentieth century architects. Clark was responsible for the design of a number of residences, commercial, office, and religious buildings throughout Washington, D.C. His more notable projects include the Washington Post Building (1893, now demolished), the Foundry Methodist Church (1903), the Embassy of the Union of Myanmar (1903), the Jewish Community Center (1910), the Roosevelt Hotel (1919), and the Presidential Apartments (1923). Clark also designed several banks, including the National Register-listed Riggs National Bank (1924), and numerous private residences throughout Washington, D.C. The U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is the only known federal building designed by Appleton P. Clark, Jr.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

See Continuation Sheets 8.1 through 8.10.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

**U.S. General Services Administration and State
Historic Preservation Office for the District of
Columbia; See Continuation Sheets 9.1 through**

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Name of repository: **9.3.**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.3

UTM References

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | <u> 18 </u> | <u> 323018 </u> | <u> 4307135 </u> | 3 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | 4 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary surrounds the approximately 0.3-acre tax parcel upon which the U.S. Civil Service Commission Building is located. F Street, NW forms the northern boundary of the property. The southern boundary is delineated by a narrow limited-access service road that runs parallel to the building. The eastern boundary is delineated by the service road running between the U.S. Civil Service Commission Building and the office building at 1718 F Street, NW, and the western boundary is delineated by the narrow service road between the federal building and the office building at 1730 F Street, NW to the west.

Boundary Justification

The National Register boundary for the U.S. Civil Service Commission Building includes the entire extent of the lot that is historically associated with the building during its period of significance (1911-1932). The boundary encompasses all of the significant resources and features that comprise the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Emma Young/ Architectural Historian

organization A.D. Marble & Company, prepared for the U.S. General Services Administration date September 2010, rev. April 2011 and June 2013

street & number 3913 Hartzdale Drive, Suite 1302 telephone 717-731-9588

city or town Camp Hill state PA zip code 17011

Email eyoung@admarble.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

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 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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.