NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

184

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 if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name 320 West Oakdale Avenue

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 320 West Oakdale Avenue ☐ not for publication

city or town Chicago ☐ vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60657

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 X 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** X **local**

Anne E. Haaker DSHPO 3-4-13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) ___

for Edson H. Beall 4.23.13
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

320 West Oakdale Avenue
Name of Property

Cook, IL
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [x] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

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

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: CONCRETE
roof: CONCRETE
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The property at 320 West Oakdale Avenue is a 21-story high-rise with a reinforced concrete foundation, floor slabs, wall divisions, and roof, glass window-walls with aluminum frames, and interior walls of plastered brick or plastered Mackalite. Designed to contain 57 residential units – 4 on the third floor, 3 on each floor from 4 through 20, and 2 on 21 -- the structure now has 51 dwellings occupying floors 3 through 21. Milton M. Schwartz, the architect and developer of 320 West Oakdale Avenue, located the International Style building in a historic neighborhood filled with homes belonging to prominent Chicago families. The high-rise is situated north of Diversey Parkway and Harbor, south of Belmont Avenue and Harbor, east of Sheridan Road in close proximity to North Lake Shore Drive West and Lincoln Park, with views of Lake Michigan, the park, the urban skyline, and the city merging with the prairie to the west. The carport, also designed by Schwartz, is a contributing structures.

Narrative Description

Exterior Description

The 320 West Oakdale building is a Modern flat-roofed, reinforced concrete structure composed of horizontal bands of glass window-walls installed between reinforced concrete floor slabs which extend 3 feet beyond the glass curtain walls at floors 3 through 21.

The building has a 2-story high lobby, enclosed by full-height glass window-walls on all four sides, inset from the structure above. Large columns exposed on the exterior carry the structure above. The concrete canopy, reinforced with 2 ½ -inch thick steel rods, cantilevers from the exterior columns to the lobby's glass perimeter and outward 20 feet on all four sides, forming covered parking on three sides and a covered drop off area at the entry.

The structure sits upon a reinforced concrete pedestal, extending 10-1/2 feet from the glass lobby walls, with a smaller 2-foot step below the pedestal, leading to parking arranged around the base of the building.

The architect engineered a transfer girder system to allow the perimeter columns on floors 3-21 to offset inward, to make the building appear to hover and to emphasize the horizontal planes of each of the floor slabs. The transfer girder system is located on the third floor. Floor-to-ceiling height X-shaped transfer girders occupy each of the 4 corners of the third floor with two load-bearing walls situated between each of them.

Floor slabs on floors 3-21 and the roof slab project 3 feet from the line of the exterior wall. These projections form a primary element of the building's architectural expression, and provide some solar control.

The horizontal window-walls at floors 3 through 21 are quarter-inch plate glass in aluminum, sliding sash frames, designed by Abraham Grossman of Glide Windows, Inc., Los Angeles.[1] 320 West Oakdale was built on

[1] Manufactured by Libbey-Owens-Ford, the glass is Parallel-O-Plate. For information about Abraham Grossman, see Reed Johnson, "This Old Aluminum House; Futuristic Valley Home Has Colorful Past," *Daily News*, Los Angeles, California, May 31, 1997, "The Free Library" [online].

a 5-foot module as opposed to the standard 4-foot structural component.[2]Five 15-foot bays comprise each of the 75-foot elevations of the square structure. The windows in each bay are divided with the top two-thirds of each consisting of three 5-foot square glass panels. The top center 5-foot panel slides open its full length. The bottom third of the gliding windows is fixed glass set in aluminum framing and divided in three horizontal sections, each measuring 27 inches x 5 feet. The total height of the windows is 7 feet 3 inches set along the exteriors of 8-foot high rooms. Each glass wall of windows is placed on discreet concrete curbs or "ledges" housing electrical components on the interior. The curbs are cast over the reinforced concrete floor slabs cantilevering 3 feet from the window-wall, which along with the windows fill in the concrete frame on all four elevations.

The two penthouses on the 21st floor have terraces excised from the facade on the southeast and northeast corners of the building. On the south and north sides, the terraces are open 15 feet from the corner; on the east, facing Lake Michigan and Lincoln Park, there is 30 feet of open exposure for each penthouse. Both terraces are protected by metal tubular railings in the International Style. The metal portions of the railings are painted to blend with the cream-grey concrete elements of the building exterior.

The ground surrounding the 320 West Oakdale high-rise is flat with bituminous paving for parking around 3 sides of the building. The entrance is on the south-facing facade, with the cantilevered canopy protecting visitors and parked cars from the elements. The architect provided additional parking under a long carport on the north side of the lot which runs parallel to the alley and to the rear facade of the building. The carport has a flat roof cantilevered 10 feet to either side from a single row of columns down the center lengthwise.

A cream-grey painted metal railing with clear side-panels, which is original to the building and simpler than those around the penthouse terraces, is situated atop the concrete pedestal as a guide to the rear entrance on the ground floor of the building. The railing then wraps around to protect and conceal a ramp leading into the basement and storage areas.

Lobby Description - Interior and Exterior

Specific, measurable elements give the 2-story lobby at the 320 West Oakdale building its luminous quality, geometric harmonies, repetitions and seeming simplicity. The core, with a 32-foot perimeter, is an opaque square within a glass square, rising up to reach a plastered, dropped ceiling which appears to float by ending 44 inches short of the windows around the lobby's exterior. The interior finished space located above the floating, dropped ceiling is partially revealed in multiple reflections off the exterior windows. In addition, the space on the exterior, above the 20-foot cantilevered canopy but below the 3-foot cantilevered ledge at the foot of the third floor, is revealed when looking up through the top level of lobby windows. The upper 8-foot portion of all the exterior columns is visible through the top level of lobby windows.

The lobby windows are stacked in two levels. The bottom level windows are taller, measuring 12 feet in height x 7-1/2 feet across. Six of these windows, fixed in heavy-gauge aluminum frames, constitute the east and west lobby facades. Because entrance doors interrupt the south and north facades, there are fewer aluminum framed windows but fixed glass panels complete the dimensions of the exterior square. Located above the first level of 12-foot windows is an unbroken horizontal spandrel panel, finished with plaster on the interior, around the perimeter of the glass walls and upon which the second level windows, measuring 8 feet in height, six to a facade on all sides, rest. The second level windows have the same aluminum frames as those on windows

[2] Milton M. Schwartz, "Oral History of Milton M. Schwartz," Chicago Architects Oral History Project, Interview by Harvey M. Choldin, Department of Architecture and Design, Art Institute of Chicago, October 2005, p. 29.

below. It is through these upper windows that it is possible to catch sight of the exterior space above the horizontal canopy but before the first of the 3-foot ledges. Through these upper windows reflections of the area above the floating ceiling, as well as views of the space above the exterior canopy repeat back to the interior, while also displaying the core's height to viewers outside the building.

Nearly everything except the floor in the lobby is white or glass. Only the mailboxes placed against the open east-side of the core are black, with grey metal faces, as are the floor and minimal furnishings. The dropped, floating ceiling, with indirect lighting above it, is pierced by the original square-shaped light fixtures, which are flush to the ceiling and arranged 4 across the rear with 1 fixture at each corner. The corner fixtures then count as the third light on each side when proceeding to the front but with 2 round lights set into the ceiling, diagonally, across the front-facing corners. On the exterior canopy, larger square-shaped light fixtures, which drop down from the flat concrete surface by 4 inches, are positioned on each facade. A row of these exterior square fixtures bisects the canopy, extending over the entrance driveway in a line of 5 lamps.

The entrance vestibule is a glass rectangle centered on and projecting beyond the south facade. On the interior, the top of the vestibule is part of the horizontal spandrel panel running completely around the lobby wall. Some of the vestibule is enclosed by moveable glass doors; some by fixed glass in heavy-gauge aluminum frames, matching most windows in the main lobby. The glass vestibule is lit with 3 of the square fixtures also used in the lobby interior.

Interior Description

Generally, there are three residences per floor, with variations between them in layout and number of rooms. Many of the variations date from the time of construction and were made to suit the original unit-owners. A few floors are now divided between two dwellings, but no floors are occupied by a single residence. Early in the life of the building, one unit was designed with an interior staircase to connect living spaces on floors 19 and 20. The third floor consists of four 1-bedroom dwellings, along with a laundry room for residents and a few utility spaces.

The -01 units occupy the building's south facade with southeast corners; the -02s occupy the north facade and the northeast corners; and the -03 units have the west facade with southwest corners and, generally, the northwest corners. The -01s, -02s and -03s all have 45 feet of full-height glass along one leg of their combined living and dining rooms, which then flow into more open living space with an additional 15 to 30 feet of floor-to-ceiling glass. All units have full-service kitchens, 2 or more bedrooms with views, more than one bathroom, closets, long hallways and open entrances.

All the residences are built around the building core which includes the mechanicals, two elevators – one for passengers, the other for freight, garbage rooms, and double-loaded stairwells, also known as "scissor stairs," with doors on the north and south sides of the core opening into them.

Because the transfer girders interrupt the third floor space, the architect designed 4 smaller, more economical 1-bedroom dwellings for residents on floor 3. The building's laundry room and storage areas for the engineer are also on this level.

The mechanical equipment rooms, which include a new boiler installed in 2009, various other maintenance areas and residents' storage lockers, are located in the basement.

Integrity of the Property

The integrity level of 320 West Oakdale is quite high. Only a few alterations have been made to the building over its nearly 60 years of existence. Sometime in the 1970s or earlier, striated aluminum panels which originally clad the 2-story lobby core were removed, exposing the plywood support panels beneath them. On the front face of the lobby core, 38 x 40-inch white marble overlays replaced the striated aluminum cladding. On the remaining three sides of the core, the 6 foot 8 inch x 3-foot plywood panels with 1-3/4 inch reveals were left exposed but painted white. However, the dimensions of the core remain unchanged. The 2-story walls of fixed windows, set in heavy-gauge aluminum frames, in the lobby have also been maintained, as has the dropped, floating and plaster-covered ceiling. The original lighting system remains unaltered. Both the front and back entrances have black terrazzo surfaces but with the majority of the floor covered by carpeting as it was near the time of its completion in 1953. While the striated aluminum panels are gone, nothing has been altered to disturb the lobby, nor its ultra-modern, transparent and minimal character.

The 10-1/2 foot exterior platform, with one 2-foot step, upon which the building rests, was originally covered with black terrazzo with carborundum chip for traction and sparkle, and all the columns on the exterior were painted black below the canopy. Subsequently, the columns were painted cream but the columns are being repainted black, their original color. The architect's intention was to create the illusion of the well-lit building floating above the ground. The illusion was enhanced by one continuous, floating black horizontal base, extending from the black terrazzo and black carpeted interior to the black exterior surround. Several decades ago, the black terrazzo on the exterior surface was removed with the reinforced concrete beneath it functioning as the platform's surface since that time. These are rectifiable alterations which are being corrected to return the property to its original appearance.

Two grey metal mailboxes, which flanked the front entrance doors and which had been designed by the architect to appear nearly free-standing, again "floating," while on vertical poles extending from the terrazzo floor to the vestibule ceiling, were removed from the glass entrance vestibule and replaced by a single bank of minimal matte-black mailboxes with grey metal faces stationed against the core on the open east-side of the lobby. The unobtrusive, new 70-1/2 x 98 x 15-inch mailboxes were installed circa 2003. When the original mailboxes were removed, a new doorman's station was also installed at the southwest corner of the building core. The original rectangular doorman's station, which occupied the same location, was too small for the needs of the staff. Its replacement resembles the original in its grey-black color, it also blends with the materials used in the new mailboxes, but its curvilinear shape is at odds with the consistently rectilinear elements of the lobby and with the building's architecture. The newer doorman's station, a furniture piece, is replaceable.

Four of the five original, decoratively pierced and painted metal fan-coil unit covers, located around the base of the lobby core, have been replaced with newly designed white covers. Some residents have added the covers to fan-coil units in their dwellings.

In 2002, after a 2-year project testing and refurbishing the cantilevered floor ledges on all elevations with new rebar and concrete, the exterior concrete was covered with an elasto-meric coating very similar to the color of the original in shades of light grey, with the lobby-level exterior columns painted a light cream. In 2005, with preventative technology the horizontal canopy was similarly restored: new rebar and concrete were added where needed to address deflection over the years in the corners of the canopy, but the canopy has yet to be finished with a coating.

In 2009, two brushed aluminum railings, which conform with the architecture of 320 West Oakdale, were added on the exterior to the main entrance in order to conform with code. The railings are accented with a matte black

finish where the vertical supporting members meet the horizontal rail. Executed in a modern sans serif typeface, the building's address in wrought iron is being stripped of black paint and returned to its original silver metal surface so as to appear, and read, against the face of the black supporting column the way it did when 320 first opened as a multi-family residence.

Also in the new millennium, the original tar and gravel roof was replaced with a membrane roof system.

The parking area originally had an underground heating system, with copper coiling embedded in it, to melt ice and warm parked cars, but in some previous decade the piping was cut to make parking modifications.

320 West Oakdale Avenue
Name of Property

Cook, IL
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.
- [x] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1954

Significant Dates

1954

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Schwartz, Milton M.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is 1954, the year the construction of the property was completed.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

p

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The 320 West Oakdale Avenue building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for architecture as a good local example of mid-20th century Modern architecture in a Chicago residential high-rise building. The twenty-one story, lakefront luxury Modern apartment building was part of the tall apartment building boom that occurred in Chicago during the 1950s and 1960s. The period of significance for the building, which was designed by Milton M. Schwartz, is 1954, the year it was built.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The apartment at 320 West Oakdale is located in the East Lakeview neighborhood which was home to mansions designed between the years 1913 and 1930 by the noted architects Charles A. Platt, Howard Van Doren Shaw, Mayo & Mayo, Rissman and Hirschfeld, E.H. Frommann and Frederick Lindquist in architectural styles, including Georgian Revival, Italian Renaissance Revival, Beaux Arts Classicism and Tudor Revival. The single-family residences surrounding 320 West Oakdale were either built for or subsequently occupied by several of Chicago's most prominent families, including Arthur Meeker, Lester Armour, Cudahy, Florsheim, Kellogg, Oscar Mayer, Martin J. Quigley and Walter Quigley, and Mrs. Montgomery Ward.[3] The eclectic, historical architectural styles of East Lakeview, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Meekerville Historic District, reflected the tastes of Chicago's wealthy business class during the early 20th century.

Tall Apartment Buildings in Chicago

With the increase in property values and change in the public's opinions towards multiple family dwellings, mansions were no longer practical and were supplanted by high-rise apartments. The first boom of high-rise apartment construction in Chicago occurred during the 1920s. These apartments, located mostly along Lake Michigan neighborhoods, were generally between 10 to 20 stories tall and built in revival architectural styles. Private construction projects came to a halt after the 1929 Stock Market Crash, and remained dormant until after World War II.[4]

In 1948 the zoning restriction against multi-family residences was repealed and the change from single-family dwellings to apartments precipitated a surge of construction consisting almost entirely of glassy modern apartment buildings. The most popular location for the new postwar high-rise residential buildings was along Chicago's lakefront. In the 8 years between 1948 and 1956, a vast amount of construction occurred in Meekerville and the contiguous 2 blocks south of the enclave. With the lifting

[3] Linda Peters, "Meekerville Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (March 28, 2006), pp. 1, 3-6, 9, 16.

[4] Commission on Chicago Landmarks, "Draft Preliminary Summary of Information, 227 East Walton Place Apartment Building," November 2011.

of the zoning restriction, 10 high-rise apartment buildings were built east of Sheridan Road within the 6 block area between Belmont and Diversey.[5] The postwar high-rise apartments, located alongside the mansions of the early 20th century, were designed by well-regarded architects such as the Mies van der Rohe, Richard Bennett of Loebl, Schlossman and Bennett, Loewenberg and Loewenberg, and by Belli and Belli. The 1950s are widely regarded as the time when the United States had its greatest influence in the world economically and politically, and made its greatest contributions culturally and aesthetically. By locating these tall structures amidst established wealth, the powerful influence of the past adhered to and legitimized the new forms of Modernism with a taste for the "new" and simplicity rather than intensely detailed historicism.

Modern Architecture and the International Style

The modern architectural movement began in Europe in the 1920s with the introduction of the Art Deco and Art Moderne, architectural styles that lacked traditional historical references. These were soon surpassed by the International Style, a form of modern architecture characterized by square or rectangular forms, open interior spaces, use of new materials – typically glass, steel, and concrete, and lack of ornamentation of any kind. The term for the style was coined by architect Phillip Johnson and architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock, the curators of *The International Style* exhibition of international modern architecture at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1932. The exhibit brought the new architectural movement from European shores to the United States.[6] In addition, renowned European architect and Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius, who came in 1937 to chair Harvard's Department of Architecture, also had an impact on the modern architectural movement in the United States.[7] But it was the arrival in the U.S of German architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe that marked the beginning of the International Style. [8] Mies came to Chicago in 1938 to become the Director of the Architecture School at the Armour Institute of Technology, renamed the Illinois Institute of Technology, for which he created the master plan and building designs. Mies emphasized the structural components in his designs; his works of steel and glass curtain wall construction, like those of the apartment buildings at 860-880 N. Lake Shore Drive (the prototype for curtain wall construction in the United States[9]), and exposed concrete structural frames, such as Promontory Apartments at 5530-32 South Shore Drive, lacked any references to past historical architectural styles, making them ideal representatives of the Modern Era.[10] "The IIT project, together with Mies's curtain wall, became the origin of a generic style of the forties....Mies's precedent

[5]The record of high-rise construction is as follows: (1) Richard M. Bennett, The Darien, one of the first large apartment buildings built in Chicago after the war, 1948-51; (2) Shaw, Metz and Dolio, The Kenwood/Briar-Barry, 1950-51; (3) Shaw, Metz and Dolio, 350 West Oakdale, 1950-51; (4) Pace Associates/Mies van der Rohe, 2933 N. Sheridan Road, 1950-51; (5) Shaw, Metz and Dolio, 3130 N. Lake Shore Drive, 1952; (6) Philip B. Maher, 2909 N. Sheridan Road, 1952; (7) Shaw, Metz and Dolio, Belmont Apartments, 3180 N. Lake Shore Drive, 1953-55; (8) Milton M. Schwartz, 320 West Oakdale, 1952-54; (9-10) Mies van der Rohe, Commonwealth Promenade, 330-340 Diversey Parkway, 1953-56.

[6] Commission on Chicago Landmarks, "Reconnaissance-Level Survey of Architectural Post- 1940 Resources in Chicago, Interim Report," Fall 1999, p. 8.

[7] Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture volume 2: 1860 – 1976*, pp. 340 – 341.

[8] Ibid, p. 8.

[9] Ibid, p. 11.

[10] Commission on Chicago Landmarks, "Draft Preliminary Summary of Information, 227 East Walton Place Apartment Building," November 2011.

provided a workable vernacular for modern architecture for more than two decades. To adapt Mies was the best most architects could do."[11]

The Apartment Building at 320 West Oakdale Avenue

The twenty-one story, lakefront luxury Modern apartment building at 320 West Oakdale was part of the tall apartment building boom that occurred in Chicago during the 1950s and 1960s. The building was designed by Chicago resident Milton M. Schwartz. Schwartz served simultaneously as a contractor, developer and architect, a practice that, during his career, was discouraged by the AIA. The idea was that architects, like doctors or lawyers, could best serve clients by avoiding conflicts of interest which might arise if the architect had any financial stake in the building. The 320 West Oakdale Avenue high-rise was Schwartz's first major design project as an architect. The building embodied many of the distinguishing characteristics and ideals of postwar Modernism in the United States. Its defining Modern features include the following:

A seamless flow between indoors and outdoors: Floor-to-ceiling glass window-walls bring the landscape into the dwellings to enhance residents' relationship with nature and to increase their visual perception of spaciousness. The residences are designed with views in three or four directions. Designed to experience the outdoors as part of the home's interior, 320 West Oakdale was a departure from older residential architecture characterized by closed off and dimly lit interior rooms, exterior courtyards and interior airshafts.

An emphasis on horizontality and flat planes: 320 West Oakdale's strong horizontal planes create the experience of each residence being a single-story, single-family Modern dwelling. As such, they resemble the Case Study Houses of the 1950s and 1960s -- efficient, inexpensive residences which were designed by prominent architects to meet postwar housing needs. The 320 building, with 8-foot ceiling heights, combined with cantilevered 3-foot ledges, open volumes of residential space and views of Lincoln Park, was designed to give its urban occupants an equivalent of the new postwar suburban experience, a residence resembling a horizontal ranch home, often with the same square footage, without leaving the city and proximity to work. The horizontal is pronounced at 320's exterior lobby level with its 20-foot cantilevered canopy; the horizontal is repeated in the stacking of floors with 3-foot ledges on every level and elevation and it is further emphasized by the building's flat roof.

Open floor plans and a flow between interior spaces: The design of the 320 West Oakdale residences is marked by open floor plans with flow between rooms. Combining the living and dining rooms was a design principle of Modern architecture. Removing formal, framed doorways and expanding the size of door openings were also indicative of Modern design. Designed to be flexible, 320's kitchens could be left open or closed with multiple doors offering easy options to suit the situation. While living and dining rooms merge in the 320 dwellings, the bedrooms have doors but the rooms are airy because of their views and size. Bathrooms positioned near the building core are private.

An absence of historical references: There are no cornices, no floorboards, nor door frames and window moldings in the 320 residences as designed. Doors flush to walls, smooth walls intended to meet floors and ceilings without embellishment, windows set in aluminum flush to the curtain wall, angles which are all right angles, the clean-cut style is without historical motifs. Whatever adornment was applied to

[11] Marcus Whiffen and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture Volume 2: 1860 – 1976*, pp. 353.

surfaces was Modern but removable decoration. The 320 West Oakdale building invokes no older historical styles in the residences, lobby or exterior. Redefining the meaning of ornament and decoration, its unadorned features include:

Strong geometric form – The building is entirely rectilinear but was designed round, then "squared" by the architect to accommodate the project's bankers.[12]

Simplicity – Smooth, plain walls respect the unadorned and emphasize the building's geometry.

Transparency - One can see straight through the lobby, as well as in and out of floors.

Repetition – Bands of floor-to-ceiling windows repeat, ledges repeat, horizontals repeat, dimensions repeat, planes echo and play off one another.

An embrace of innovative design, new technology and materials: Architect Milton Scwartz's experience with reinforced poured-in-place concrete, then a relatively new building material for residential buildings, led him to use it in the construction of 320 West Oakdale and, moreover, to reveal the material's special properties in his design of 320's cantilevered structures. The 3-foot concrete ledges, critical design elements projecting from the curtain wall, sheltered residents from the sun, as well as blunting the drop in space from a sheer window wall. The interior partitions were plastered mackalite blocks which made 320 soundproof. The exceptional soundproofing plays a role in experiencing the residences as single-family homes.

The innovative engineering with the positioning of transfer girders on the third floor, shifting how and where the weight of the building was carried, allowed ample parking around the structure and made the building's open construction design possible with large, uninterrupted living spaces on all floors above the third. In addition, Schwartz constructed the 320 Oakdale building on a 5-foot module because he "wanted the columns a little further apart" to augment his design of large, flowing residential spaces.[13]

The new products and new elements of residential design included the sliding aluminum windows, themselves built on the 5-foot module and critical to diminishing the boundaries between nature and enclosed living space. The technology involved in the windows sliding open was new; the frames made of aluminum, which made the size of the windows feasible, were new; and building elevations covered in glass were also new to high-rise domestic dwellings in Chicago.

Lighting behind a dropped ceiling lit the lobby evenly and limited the number of fixtures which could detract from the design of the space. The illumination system is yet another example of a new technology, indirect lighting.

Schwartz described himself as "greatly influenced by Mr. Wright in those days,"[14] and there are elements in Frank Lloyd Wright's work -- the horizontal cantilevers in reinforced concrete with great expanses of glass, the contrast of solids and voids, the integration of exterior and interior – which appear as

[12] Harvey M. Choldin, "Interview with Milton M. Schwartz," Chicago Architects Oral History Project, Department of Architecture and Design, Art Institute of Chicago, May 2007, pp. 20, 45-46, 103.
[13] "Interview with Milton M. Schwartz," Choldin, p. 38.
[14] Ibid, pp. 30-31, 89.

influences in the 320 West Oakdale Avenue building. The design also shows influences of historic East Asian architecture, as the cantilevers resemble the tiered towers of a pagoda.

When the building was finished, it was advertised as was one of the first completely air conditioned all glass apartment buildings in Chicago. The use of central air preserved the design integrity of the window-walls by keeping the exterior free from the interruption of window air units. A heating system was installed in the ground surrounding the building exterior where cars parked.

The building was extensively covered in the local press. For example, the *Chicago Tribune* had a series of articles on its design, financing and construction, including a story on November 25, 1954, accompanied by a large nighttime picture of the building under construction that explained how the dramatic lighting pattern was attracting the attention of drivers along Lake Shore Drive and a piece on October 11, 1955, describing the use of a helicopter to deliver a 7 x 8-foot sheet of replacement glass to one of the building's penthouse units.

The building was also covered in the national and international architectural press. It was one of eight projects described and evaluated in an extensive article in *Architectural Forum* in November 1955 entitled "Eight Chicago Apartment Projects." A full page was devoted to the building along with commentary by architect Minoru Yamasaki, contractor A.L. Spencer of the S.N. Nielson Company and realtor Graham Aldis of Aldis & Company. The building was compared to the nearby Commonwealth Promenade Apartments by Mies van der Rohe, the Lake Meadows development of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, as well as several others. The most important French architectural journal *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* devoted a page to the building in its July 1956 issue.

Comparable Examples

The high rise at 320 Oakdale compares favorably to other high-rise apartment buildings in Chicago's lake front neighborhoods from the same era. The best known examples are those designed by Mies van der Rohe. Mies's Promontory Apartments, the first high-rise residential building that was completed in Hyde Park in 1949, and the 2933 North Sheridan Road apartments, with Pace and Associates and Mies as the building's architects in 1951, have the same exposed concrete frame with brick and glass infill. The 2933 Sheridan Road apartments are on the southern side of Oakdale from East Lake View. The 14-story L-shaped building wraps the southeast corner of Oakdale and Sheridan. As a rental building it is composed of uniform units, none larger than 1000 square feet. It remains a rental building aimed at the same singles and youth market in East Lake View to date. Unlike the Promontory Apartments, which retain excellent integrity, the apartments at 2933 Sheridan Road were renovated in 2006. The original windows of 2933 Sheridan Road, which covered all but the end walls of the structure, were more expansive; the panels of glass were larger and uninterrupted by the vertical supports that were added recently. The building originally presented itself as very urban, a city building: it was a brown, black, and gray structure -- masonry, glass and metal -- with its structural support system expressed on its exterior. Today, after the renovations, it presents as a lighter structure. Its dwellings are studio-like and unvarying even when they include separate bedrooms.

Mies van der Rohe's Commonwealth Promenade Apartments (1953-1956), 2 blocks south of Oakdale on Sheridan and Diversey, were built at nearly the same time as 320 West Oakdale. Mies' Commonwealth Promenade buildings, like his famous 860-880 Lake Shore Drive and 900 Lake Shore Drive, are models

of restraint and minimal expression, with their grid-like appearance. In contrast, the cantilevered floor slabs of 320 Oakdale are its defining visual elements, reinforcing the horizontality of the building. The 12 columns at the base, painted black so as to disappear, allow the enormous third floor canopy and the rest of the building to appear to float weightlessly above the ground.

The 21-story Darien Apartments at 3100 North Lake Shore Drive, built in 1948-1951, were the first Modern apartment buildings in East Lake View. During the same time period, The Darien's architect, Richard Bennett, also designed two similar high-rises at 1350-1360 North Lake Shore Drive. These three buildings, with their larger horizontal windows, serrated facades and sightlines to the lake are clean, understated reddish-brick buildings, devoid of historical architectural references. Their red brick exteriors signal an older Chicago, but their lack of historical details is characteristically Modern. Unlike 320 West Oakdale Avenue, Bennett designed the buildings to contain studios and one-bedroom rentals, with a few two-bedroom apartments, all of smaller room sizes, lined up in regular fashion along a double-loaded corridor. Although located near the lake, the buildings, with relatively small units, aimed primarily at a market consisting of middle class couples without children and singles. 320 West Oakdale Avenue, a luxury cooperative with spacious apartments, which in some ways resembled the layouts of prewar co-operative and luxury apartment buildings, was altogether a different kind of building. With 3 residences per floor its standard and with the absence of long corridors, 320 Oakdale contained homes intended for wealthier families, similar to those who resided in the neighborhood from earlier in the 20th century.

In 1951, the Briar-Barry Apartments, designed by Shaw, Metz and Dolio, at 3121 North Sheridan Road, were completed. Fourteen-stories high, the Briar-Barry Apartments have horizontal ribbons of windows alternating with horizontal strips of dark, sand-colored, utilitarian-looking bricks with supporting columns in the core. As is the case with The Darien, air-conditioning units are incorporated into the designed surface: units are the same model, uniformly placed with little disruption to the curtain wall. The Briar-Barry's utilitarian appearance must have seemed harsh compared to the Darien with its subtle pleats and larger horizontal windows, moderated by the warm red brickwork surrounding them. However, both the Briar-Barry Apartments and The Darien targeted couples without children and singles who were attracted to the buildings' progressive and unapologetic functionality and simplicity. The Bennett buildings and the Briar-Barry Apartments as well as the nearly identical and nearby 350 West Oakdale (also by Shaw, Metz and Dolio) and 3130 North Lake Shore Drive apartments, and the Walton-Seneca Apartments -- now a Marriott Residence Inn -- built at 201 East Walton in 1953 (Shaw, Metz and Dolio) all have the following in common: interior rooms that are well-lit, easy to maintain and economical in their size, regularity and repetitiveness. In contrast, 320 West Oakdale Avenue communicated openness with vast expanses of glass. Its exterior proclaimed the residences' interiors would be spatially dramatic, open plans and Modern, but not predictably machine-like.

The market for the buildings played a significant role in their design. The design of a 1950's Modern cooperative residential building did not need to be limited to creating smaller units which would recover their initial financial investment through regularly recurring, modest rents multiplied by the number of units in the structure. Many, but not all, of the high-rises built in East Lake View in the 1950s were the standard rental apartment buildings with relatively small apartments aimed at tenants of fairly modest means. In contrast, the units in 320 West Oakdale were spacious with very few dwellings to a floor.

In 1953-1955, the Belmont Apartments (Shaw, Metz and Dolio), a 23-story Modern building with 50's decorative elements at 3180 Lake Shore Drive, were constructed at the northern-most end of East Lake View. Less basic and predictable than the Briar-Barry building a block away, the Belmont Apartments at 3180 Lake Shore Drive offered the luxury of amenities and dwellings with size and variety according to tier. The building's most distinctive 50's Modern decorative element is the seafoam-green painted brick which alternates with blond brick on the 9 tiers which compose the structure. The use of expressive color in the curtain wall is reinforced in the window frame and air-conditioning units, all seafoam-green in tiers of that color. 3180 Lake Shore Drive exemplifies the enthusiasm that many American architects brought to the task of providing suitable decorative schemes for Modern buildings.[15] Where 3180 relied on decorative motifs applied to the building's walls to create visual interest, 320 West Oakdale relied on fully developed postwar Modernism of the all-glass curtain wall.

By 1961, the apartment building at 3150 Lake Shore Drive (Shaw, Metz and Dolio) was built immediately next door to the Belmont Apartments. This was a significantly taller residential high-rise and like 320 Oakdale, it was targeting a high-end market. Unlike 320 Oakdale, with its emphasis on horizontal lines, the 38-story 3150 Lake Shore Drive, accentuated verticality on the exterior with masonry-clad verticals, set between windows, running the full height of the main facades. At 3150 Lake Shore Drive six elevators served residences, allowing for elevator foyers to be shared by only two dwellings...privacy nearly at the level of a single-family home, but more urbane and luxurious.

Conclusion

When 320 Oakdale opened, it occupied a fairly small niche at the very top of the Chicago residential market. Because Milton Schwartz aimed at the high-end market, he had the luxury of designing startlingly innovative apartments in the Modern Movement's International Style which had been interrupted by the war. Finally, there was significant demand from a segment of the housing market with both the economic wherewithal and the confidence to fulfill pent-up desires regarding the style in which they wished to live. 320 Oakdale offered a designed environment, rooms of size, central air conditioning and a heightened visual experience for high-rises such as 1550, 3150 and 3180 Lake Shore Drive to meet, but Oakdale's floor-to-ceiling windows set in its 15-foot bays, combined with volumes of space and marvelously fluid interiors were unmatched.

Schwartz went on to complete a number of other important projects, concentrated mainly in the Chicago area, including the 3-story modern glass and aluminum Chicago Airways Hotel near Midway Airport (demolished); the Executive House Hotel on Wacker Drive by the Chicago River (which was the tallest reinforced concrete structure in the U.S. at the time of its construction in 1958-1959); the Constellation Apartments on North Dearborn Parkway, and The Statesman at 5601 N. Sheridan. Schwartz's most famous construction and design project was the Dunes Hotel in Las Vegas (demolished). Until his death in 2007, Milton Schwartz lived with his family in one of the two penthouses at 320 West Oakdale Avenue.

Architectural historian Robert Bruegmann, also a resident, has written, "The 320 West Oakdale Avenue Building defines the optimistic American 1950s in the same way as the stylish automobiles designed by

[15] Milton Schwartz incorporated color in the facades of the Chicago Airways Hotel and the Executive House. The exterior of Belli and Belli's St. Joseph's hospital, visible from 320 Oakdale, is noted for the distinctive blue diamond shapes on its exterior.

Harley Earl in Detroit, the furniture designed by Charles and Ray Eames and George Nelson or the clothing of Ceil Chapman or Norman Norell. This was an optimistic, democratic design tradition, one that aimed to bring luxury to the masses. 320 West Oakdale Avenue is an authentic historic artifact from a period that can lay claim to one of the most extraordinary bursts of creative energy the world has seen."[16]

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Bruegmann, Robert. "Some Notes on 320 W. Oakdale, Architect Milton M. Schwartz." (June 2008).

Choldin, Harvey M. "Interview with Milton M. Schwartz." *Chicago Architects Oral History Project.* Department of Architecture and Design, Art Institute of Chicago, May 2007.

Commission on Chicago Landmarks. "Draft Preliminary Summary of Information, 227 East Walton Place Apartment Building," November 2011.

Commission on Chicago Landmarks. "Reconnaissance-Level Survey of Architectural Post- 1940 Resources in Chicago, Interim Report," Fall 1999.

Peters, Linda. "Meekerville Historic District." *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (March 28, 2006).

Whiffen, Marcus and Frederick Koeper, *American Architecture Volume 2: 1860 – 1976.* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981.)

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 # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
x___Other
Name of repository: **Art Institute of Chicago**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

[16] Robert Bruegmann, "Some Notes on 320 W. Oakdale, Architect Milton M. Schwartz" (June 2008), p. 5.

320 West Oakdale Avenue
Name of Property

Cook, IL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

SEE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION FOR LATITUDE/LONGITUDE COORDINATES ON LOCATIONAL MAPS

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

1	Zone	Easting	Northing	3	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	Zone	Easting	Northing	4	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The 320 Oakdale Condominium, As Delineated On A Survey Of The Following Described Real Estate:

That Part Of Lot 8 In The County Clerk's Division of Lots 2, 3 And 4 And The South 33 Feet Of Lot 1 In The Assessor's Division Of Lots 1 And 2 In The Subdivision By The City Of Chicago Of The East Fractional ½ Of Section 28, Township 40 North, Range 14, East Of The Third Principal Meridian, Bounded By A Line Described As Follows:

Commencing At A Point In The South Line Of Said Lot 8, 198 Feet West Of The West Boundary Line Of Lincoln Park As Established By A Decree Of The Circuit Court Of Cook County, Illinois, On October 31, 1904 In Case No. 256886 Said Point Being On The North Line Of Oakdale Avenue And On The West Line Of An 18-Foot Public Alley; Thence Running North On The West Line Of Said 18-Foot Public Alley (Same Being A Line Parallel With The West Boundary Line Of Lincoln Park)140.34 Feet To The South Line Of An 18-Foot Public Alley; Thence West On The South Line Of Said 18-Foot Public Alley (Being A Line Parallel With The North Line Of Said Oakdale Avenue) 116.8 Feet To A Point 314.8 Feet West Of The Said Boundary Line Of Lincoln Park (Said Point Being 314 Feet East Of The West Line Of The East Fractional ½ Of Said Section 28 And 274 Feet East Of The East Line Of Sheridan Road As Now Located); Thence South Along A Line Parallel With The West Line Of The East Fractional ½ Of Said Section 28, 140.33 Feet More Or Less To The South Line Of Said Lot 8 (Which Said Last Mentioned Line Is Also The North Line Of Oakdale Avenue); Thence East Along The South Line Of Said Lot 8 (Said Line Being The North Line Of Oakdale Avenue) 118 Feet The Point Of Beginning, All In Cook County, Illinois; commonly known as 320 West Oakdale Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundary includes the building, the carport, and the land historically associated with it.

320 West Oakdale Avenue — Cook, IL
Name of Property — County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Irene Falconer
organization — date December 15, 2013
street & number 320 W. Oakdale telephone 773-871-5093
city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60657
e-mail iffalconer@gmail.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 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.

Name of Property: 320 West Oakdale

City or Vicinity: Chicago

County: Cook State: IL

Photographer: Robert Bruegmann

Date Photographed: 2009 - 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photo 1 of 10, Exterior from North Pond, Lincoln Park, camera facing north
Photo 2 of 10, South and east facades, camera facing northwest
Photo 3 of 10, North and West facades, camera facing north
Photo 4 of 10, Exterior from Commonwealth Avenue, camera facing north
Photo 5 of 10, Exterior, camera facing north
Photo 6 of 10, Canopy and entrance, camera facing northeast
Photo 7 of 10, Car port, camera facing west
Photo 8 of 10, Lobby, southern side, camera facing west
Photo 9 of 10, Kitchen of Unit 503, camera facing east

320 West Oakdale Avenue
Name of Property

Cook, IL
County and State

Photo 10 of 10, Living room of Unit 801, camera facing southeast

Property Owner:

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

name Multiple

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 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Figure 1: Conceptual drawing of 320 West Oakdale Avenue, drawn by the building's architect, Milton M. Schwartz, c. 1953-55. Collection of the Art Institute of Chicago, Department of Architecture and Design.

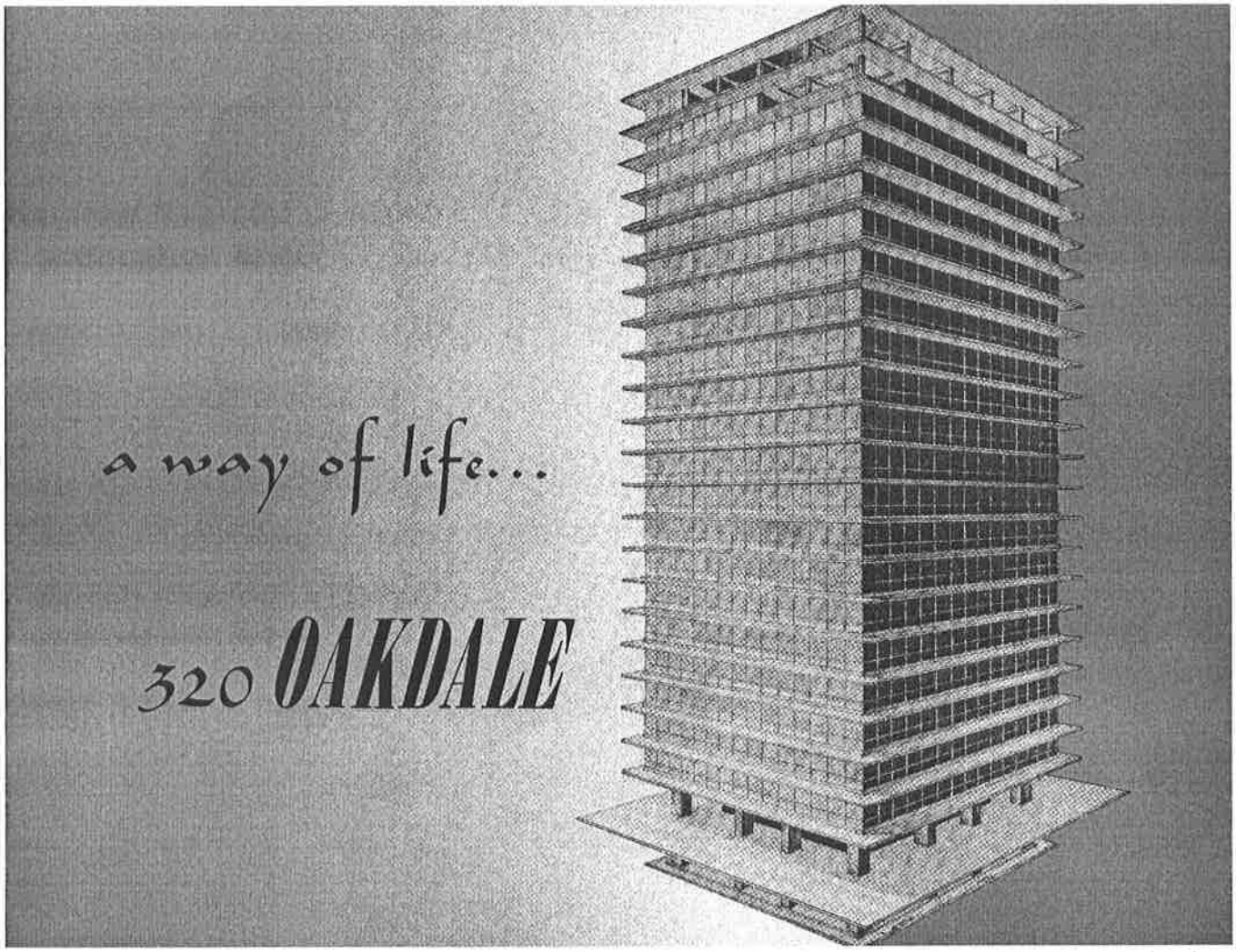


Figure 2: *320 Oakdale, a way of life.* Cover, illustrated sales brochure advertising 320 West Oakdale Avenue produced by Milton M. Schwartz, the architect, and Jay L. Frankel, The Solar Management Company, 2709 West Roosevelt Road, Chicago, c. 1954. Collection of Mrs. Audrey K. Schwartz.

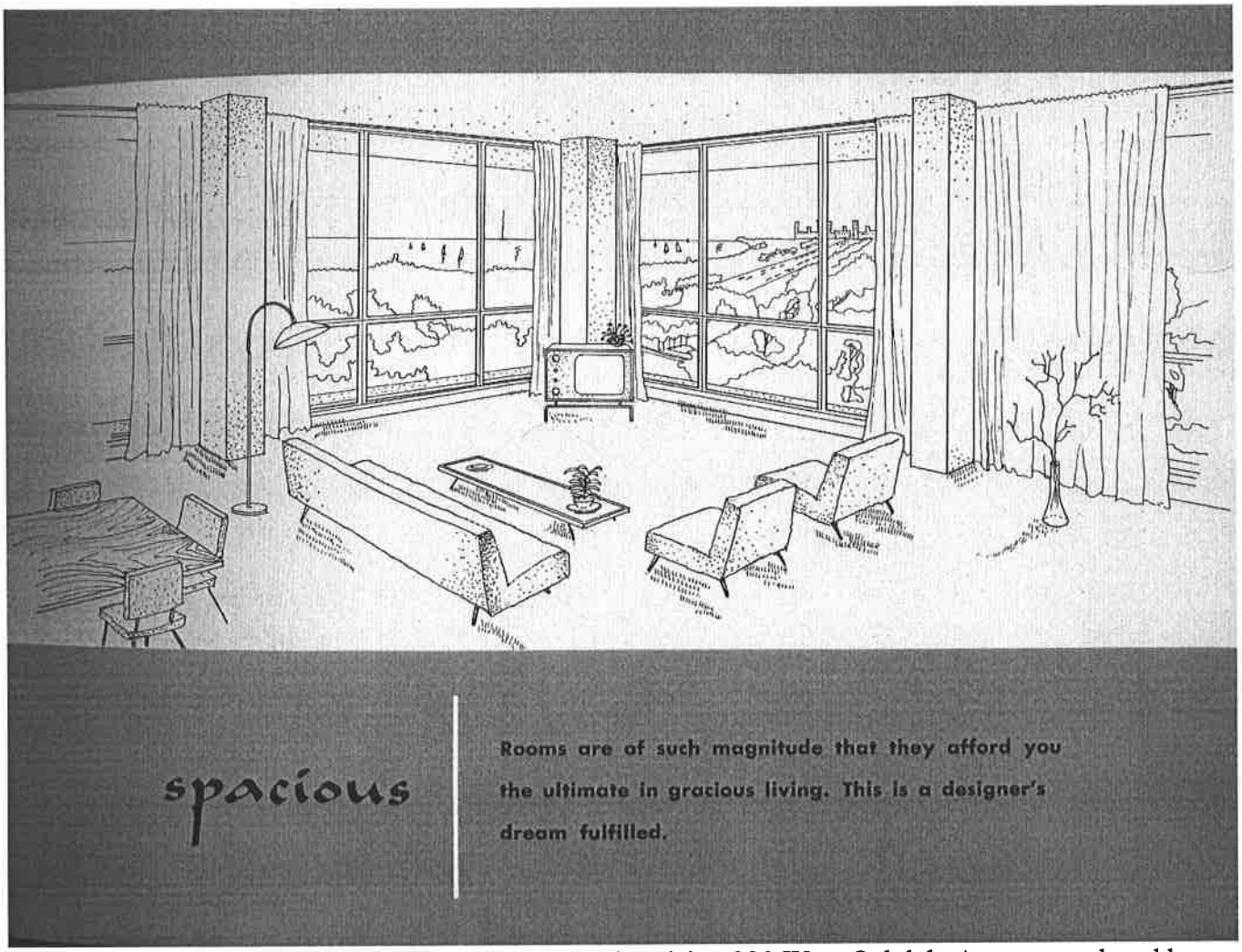


Figure 3: *320 Oakdale, a way of life.* Brochure advertising 320 West Oakdale Avenue produced by Milton M. Schwartz and Jay L. Frankel, c. 1954, page 5.

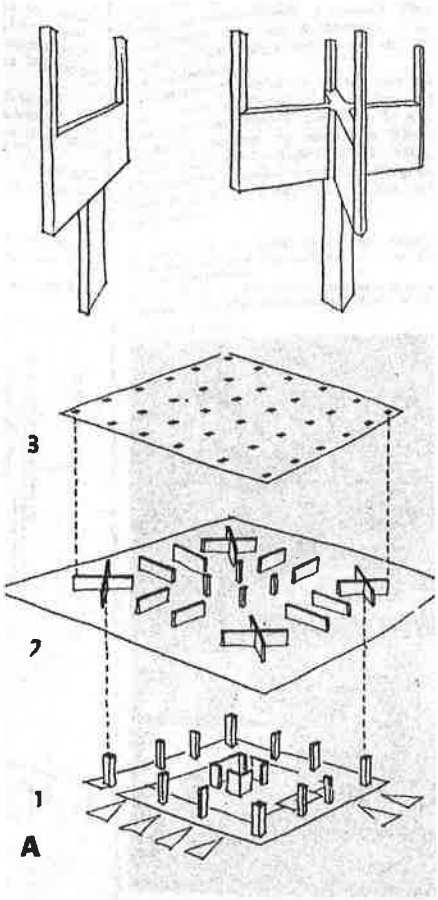


Figure 4: Diagram of transfer girders, "Eight Chicago Apartment Projects," *Architectural Forum*, November 1955. Collection of Robert Bruegmann, architectural historian and resident of 320 West Oakdale Avenue, and thence to Irene Falconer, the nominator.

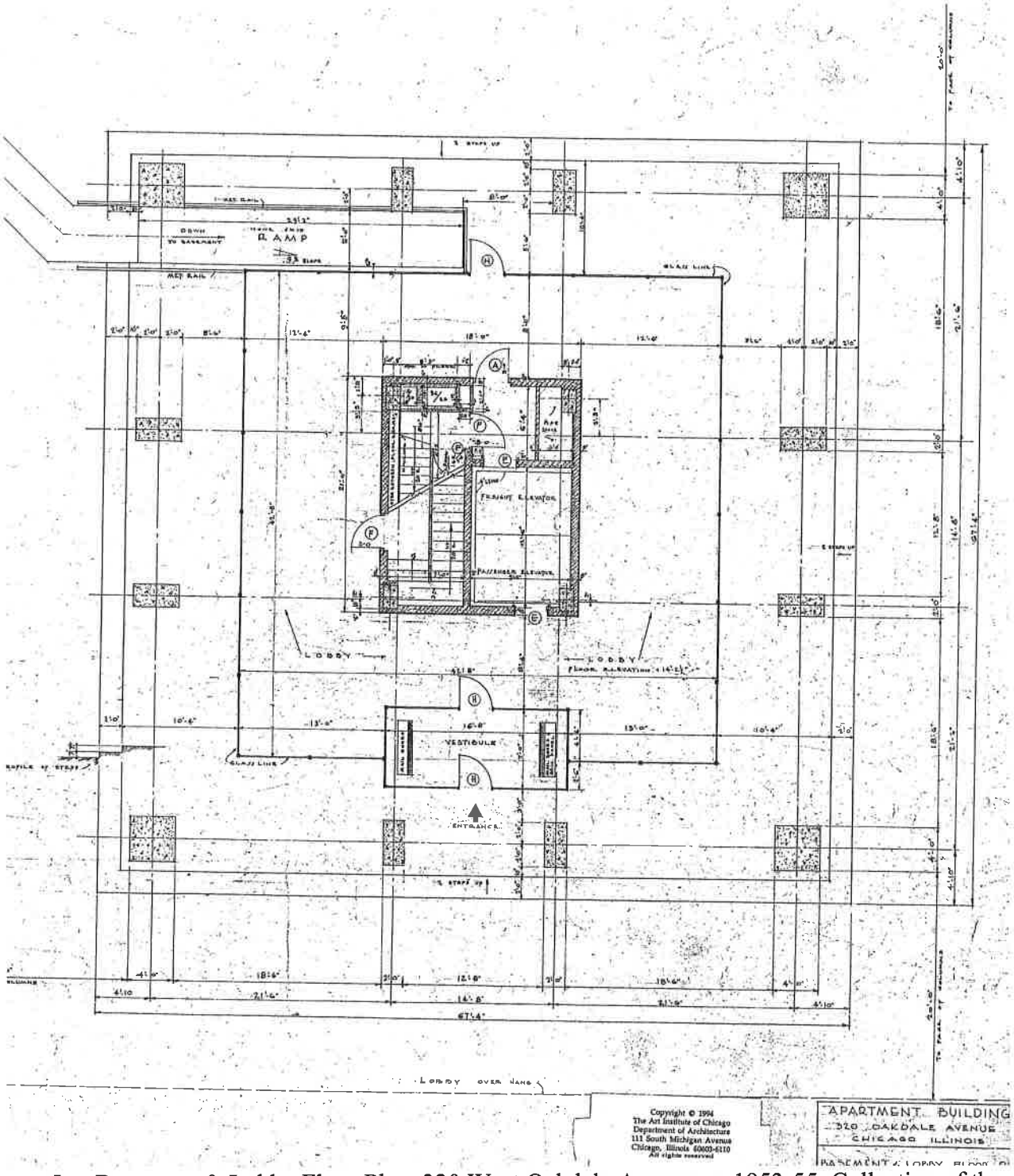


Figure 5: Basement & Lobby Floor Plan, 320 West Oakdale Avenue, c. 1953-55. Collection of the Art Institute of Chicago, Department of Architecture and Design.

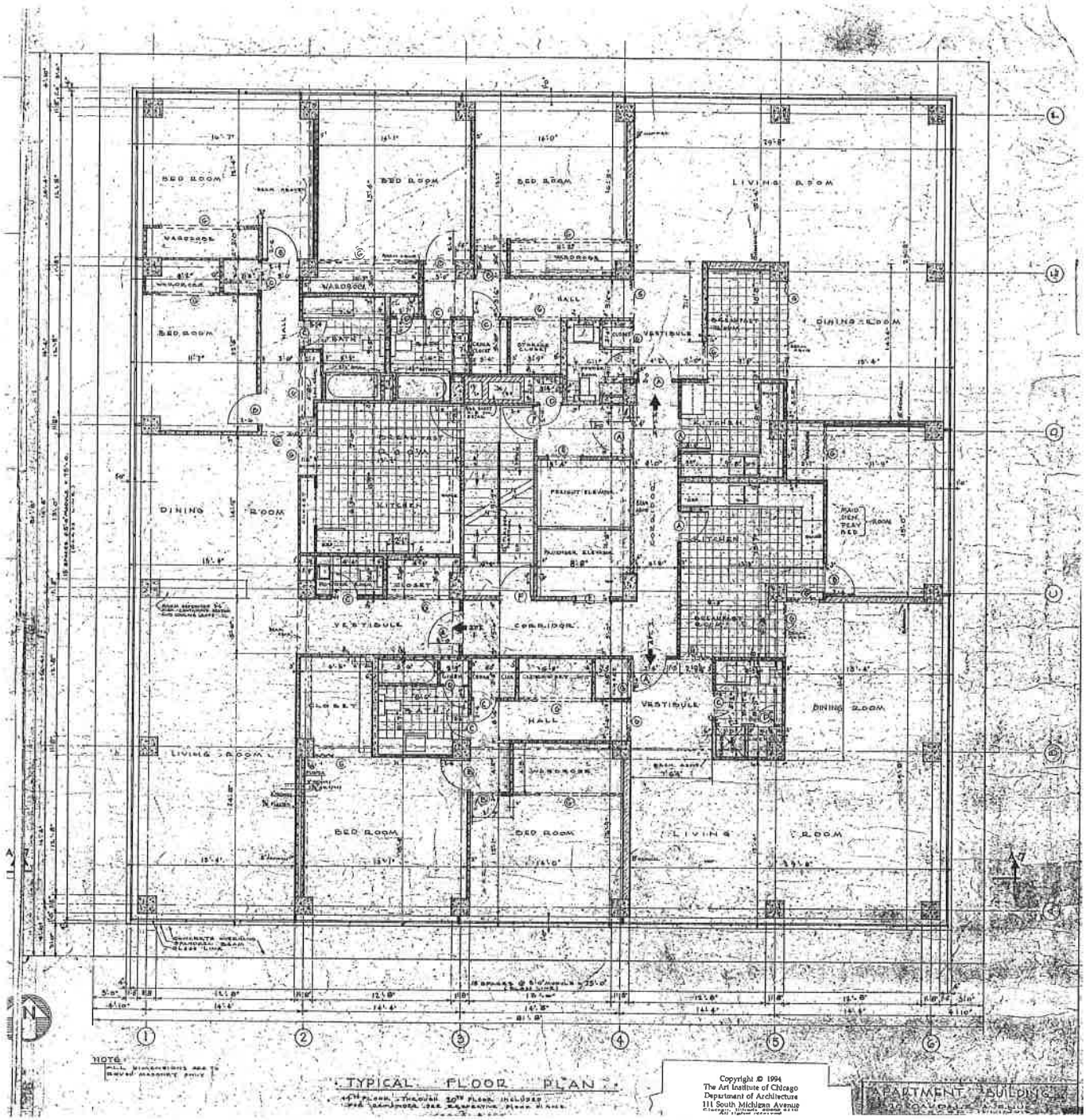


Figure 6: Typical Floor Plan, 320 West Oakdale Avenue, c. 1953-55. Collection of the Art Institute of Chicago, Department of Architecture and Design. Gift of Milton M. Schwartz, the architect.

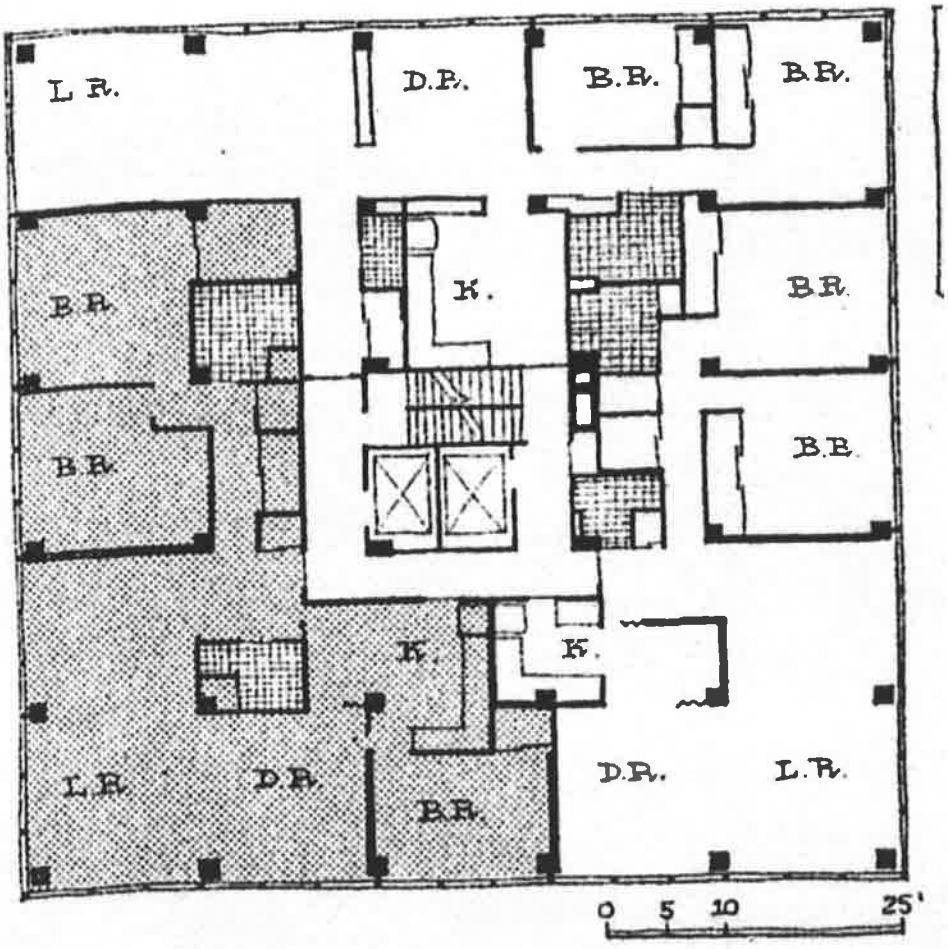


Figure 7: Sketch of typical 320 West Oakdale floor plan. Collection of Robert Bruegmann, architectural historian and resident of 320 West Oakdale Avenue, and thence to Irene Falconer, the nominator.

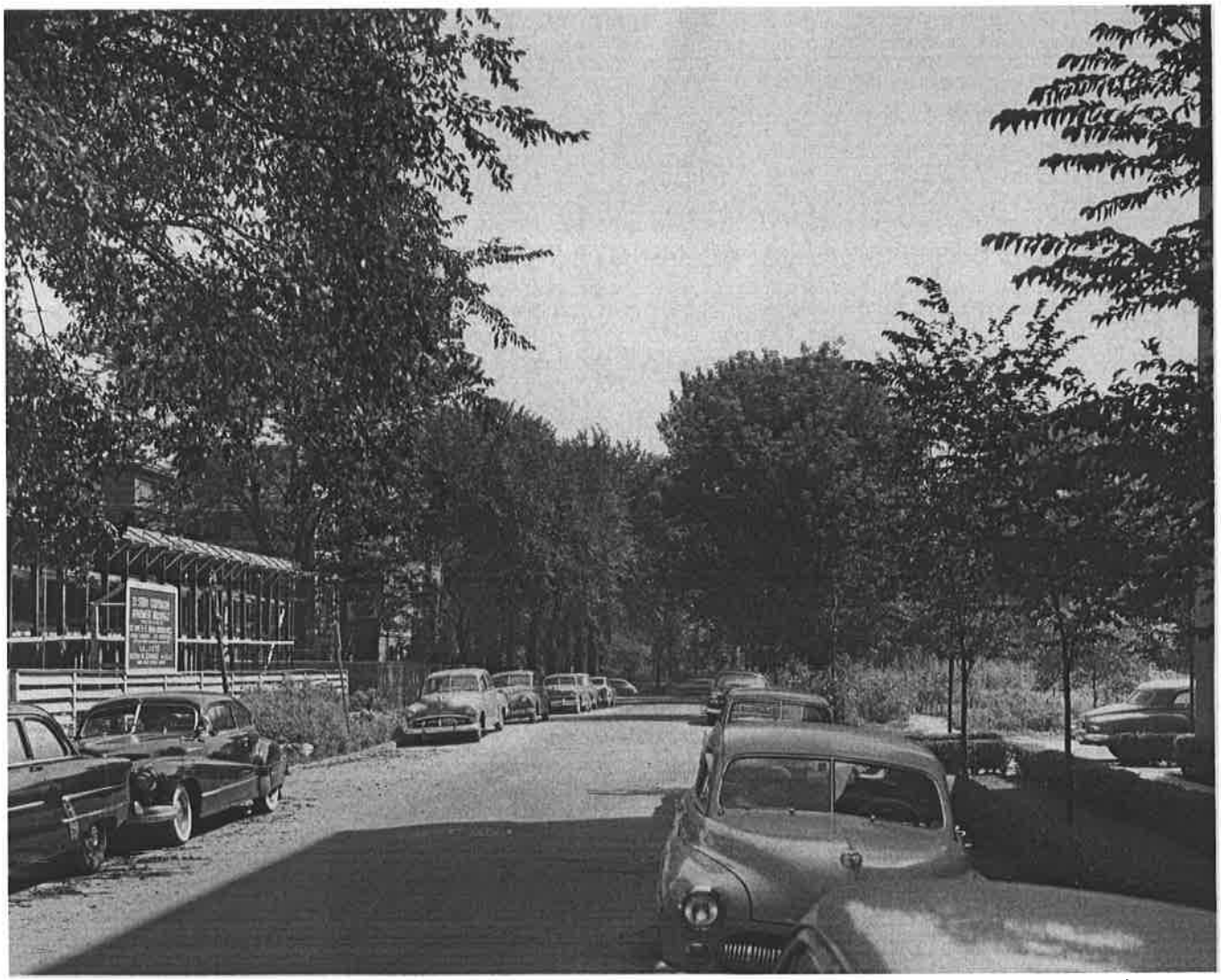
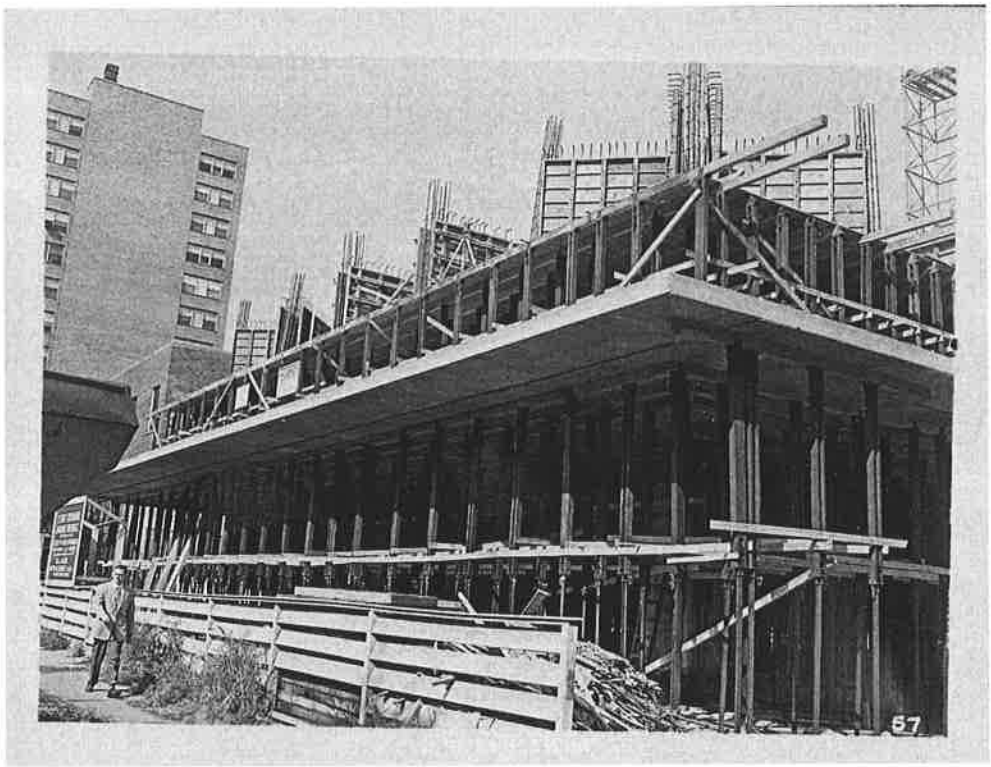


Figure 8: View of 320 West Oakdale, looking east toward Lincoln Park, prior to construction. Photography by Coburn Studio, c. 1953. Collection of Robert Bruegmann.



Figures 9: 320 West Oakdale under construction. Photography by Coburn Studio, c. 1953. Collection of Robert Bruegmann.

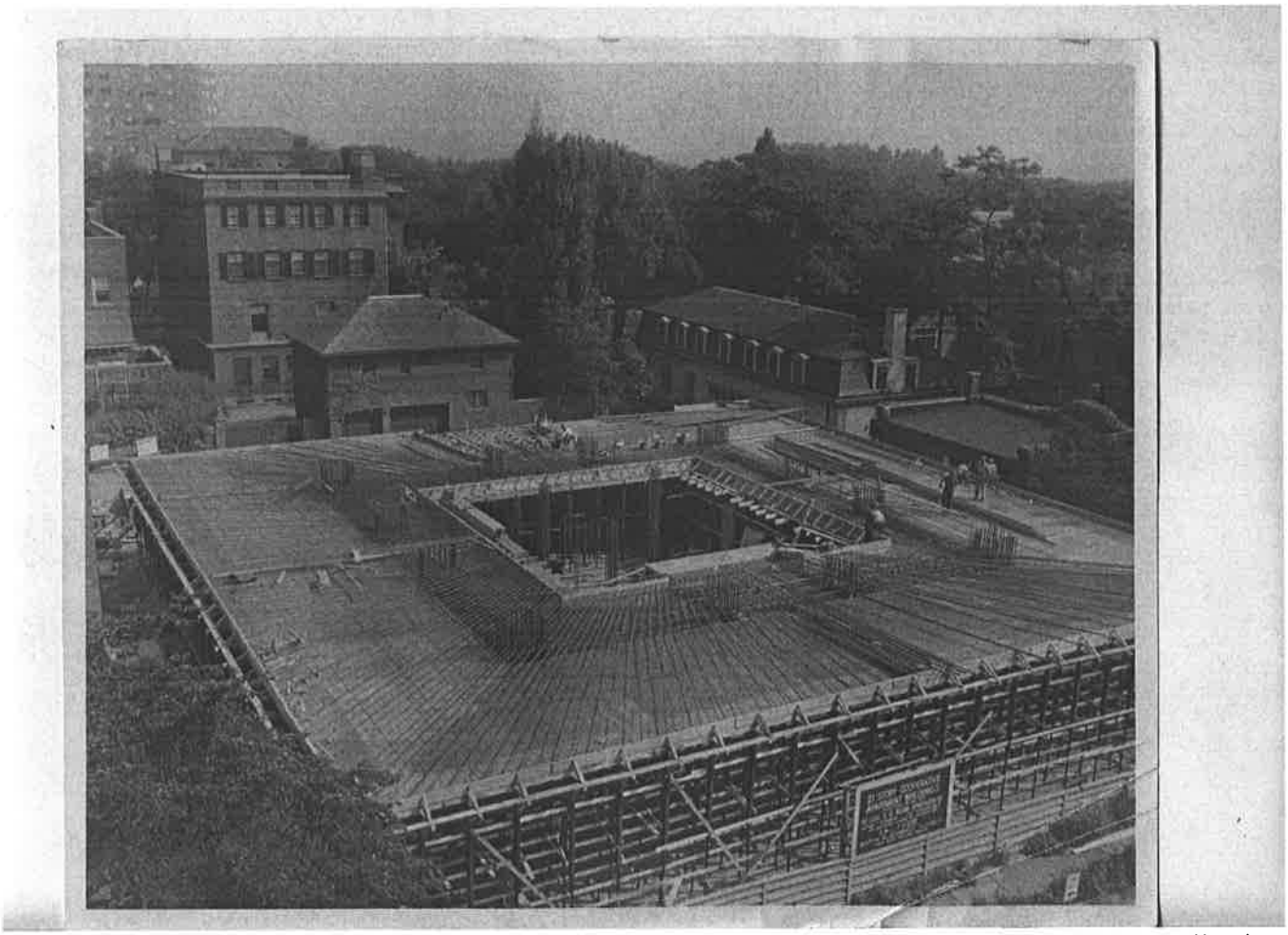


Figure 10: 320 West Oakdale under construction. Photography by Coburn Studio, c. 1953. Collection of Robert Bruegmann.

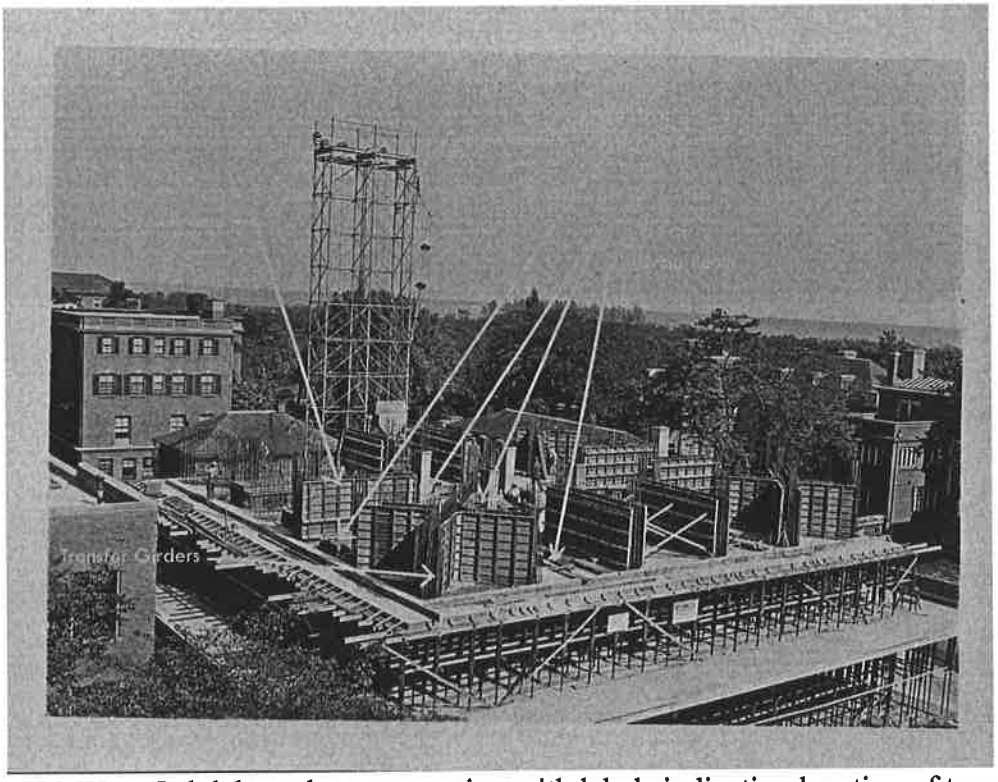


Figure 11: 320 West Oakdale under construction with labels indicating location of transfer girders. Photography by Coburn Studio, c. 1953. Collection of Robert Bruegmann.

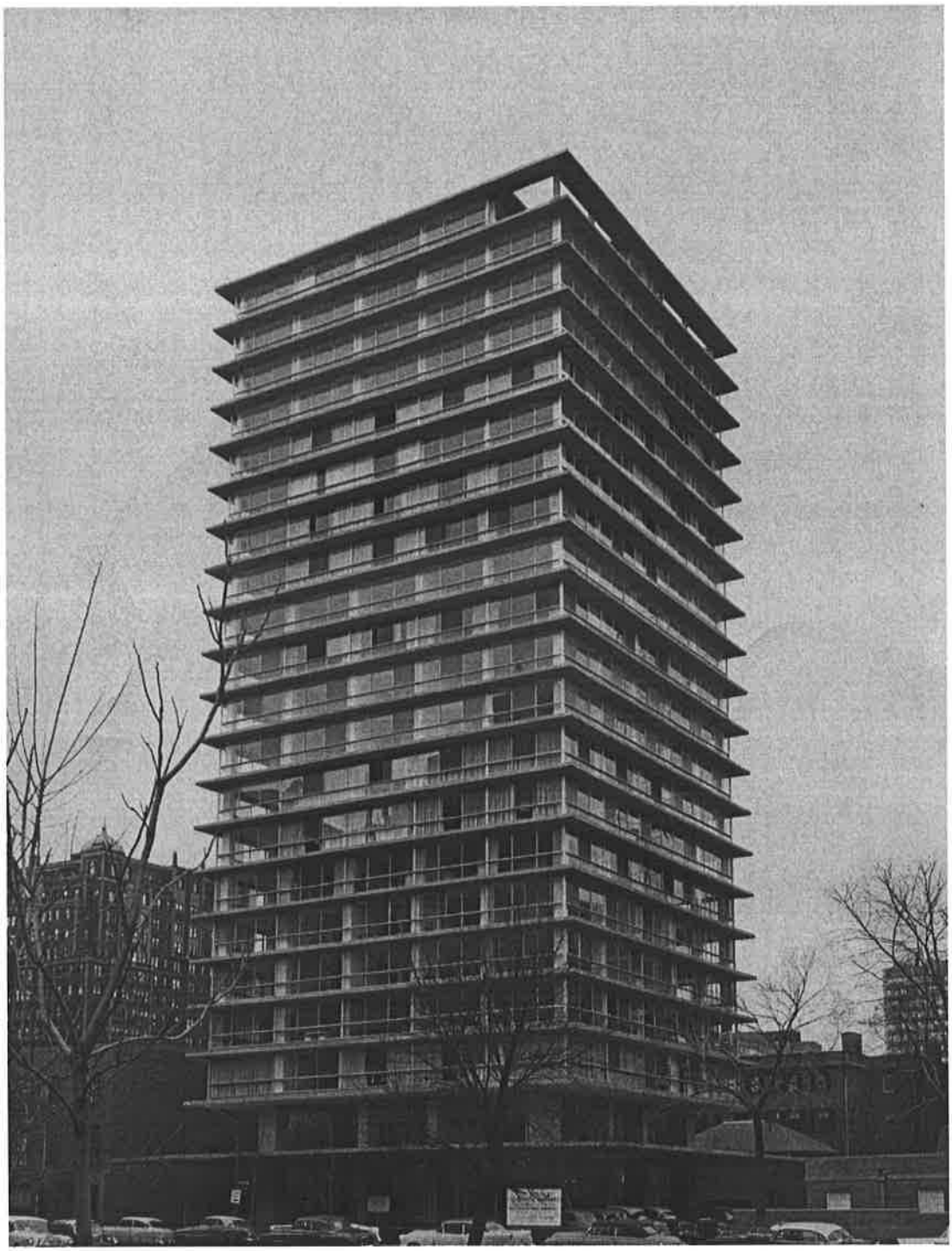


Figure 12: 320 West Oakdale upon completion. Photography by Coburn Studio, c. 1953. Collection of Robert Bruegmann.

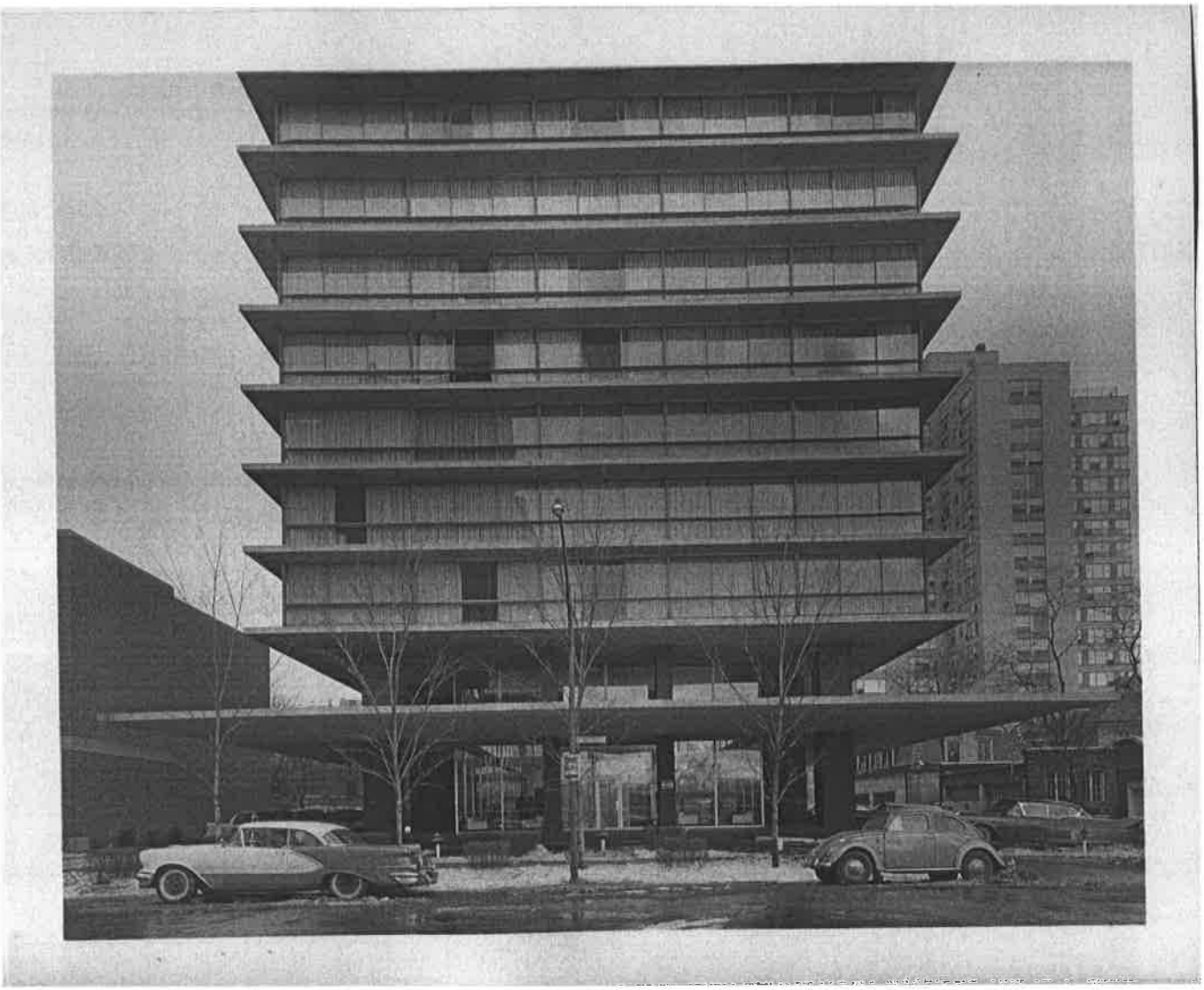


Figure 13: 320 West Oakdale after completion. Photography by Hedrich-Blessing, c. 1956. Collection of Robert Bruegmann.

320 W. Oakdale, Chicago, IL
320 W. Oakdale Chicago, IL Cook County 41.935873° -87.637995°

G63 4645
STOP

OAKDALE

WARNING
773-561-4433