

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 Fire Station No. 6
 Other names/site number KHRI #177-2601
 Name of related Multiple Property Listing NA

2. Location

Street & number 1419 NE Seward Avenue

NA

 not for publication
 City or town Topeka

NA

 vicinity
 State Kansas Code KS County Shawnee Code SN Zip code 66616

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 Applicable National Register Criteria: A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO Date _____
Kansas State Historical Society
 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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

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

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

_____ NA _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT – Fire Station

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT – Fire Station

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:
Collegiate Gothic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: CONCRETE, TILE, BRICK
STONE: limestone
roof: ASPHALT
other: _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary -

Fire Station No. 6 is located at 1419 SE Seward Avenue, within the Oakland neighborhood of Topeka. Designed by W. E. Glover of the Topeka architectural firm of Cuthbert and Suehrk in 1935, this 1 ½ story structure was designed to serve the single function of a single-engine fire station. This station was constructed to replace the original Fire Station No. 6 (1910-1935) which was located on the same site. While this station was being built, firemen from this station answered alarms from the Santa Fe fire station, located within the Santa Fe Railroad railyard five blocks to the west.

The building's footprint measures 65' x 42', and faces north, parallel toward SE Seward Avenue. Its Collegiate Gothic features were designed around a rectangular and "L-shaped" floor plan with the habitable portions of the firehouse placed to the east and to the south of the fire engine bay. The fire engine bay is located in the northwest quarter of the structure. The Station itself is constructed of a red brick veneer over poured concrete walls, floors, and ceilings. The walls were constructed above a concrete block foundation and partial basement under the south half of the structure. The most significant exterior feature is the turret placed between the station's main entrance and the fire engine bay door, both located on the north face of the building. This turret extends northward beyond the face of the entrance, and the engine bay door, and is the northernmost portion of the firehouse.

The south half of the station is constructed in a more traditional bungalow style of architecture, containing much less detailing. This portion of the firehouse uses the same red brick material in its veneer but lacks the quoining and gabled roof present in the northern half of the building. The building is in excellent condition. Its windows and engine-bay door were replaced, most recently in the early 1980s. Within the interior, drop ceilings have been added in several of the station's living spaces to cover the ductwork from the central air conditioning. All of these alterations, however, are minor and have not impacted the building's original historic integrity.

Elaboration

Setting – Fire Station No. 6 was built within the recently annexed town of Oakland Center. Oakland Center was originally incorporated in 1886 as a company town for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad, who's railyards borders the area's western and southern periphery. By the 1915, the population of Oakland Center had grown to 1,800, and it featured several amenities that were complimentary to the growth of Topeka, such as the rail yards of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, 4 churches, 8 grocery stores, a blacksmith, a drugstore, and a confectionary store, and a rail line connecting Oakland Center to Topeka and beyond to the Quinton Heights suburb to the south. In 1925, residents of Oakland Center voted 505 to 206 to allow their municipality to be annexed by the City of Topeka. The annexation was finalized on October 25, 1926 by unanimous vote of the Topeka City Commission.

The Oakland area has always been a working-class neighborhood, characterized by low-to-moderate density of single-family homes, predominately one-level bungalows, though two-level American Foursquare homes are also common. Fire Station No. 6 was built on Seward Avenue, which is one of two main streets extending through the Oakland Neighborhood, each running east and west. Seward is generally characterized as a mixed-use street, fully developed in a combination of modestly-sized institutional, residential, and commercial uses.

Building Description -

Fire Station No. 6 is an example of an early 20th Century "bungalow-type" fire station. As such, this building is comprised of two main components: the northern ell-shaped, gabled half, and the southern hipped-roof half. The north half of the building is an ornate example of the Collegiate Gothic style, with its front facing north onto NE Seward Avenue. The front

face of the building, in fact, contains the largest volume of Collegiate Gothic architectural elements. Each window and doorway within the northern half is surrounded with a quoined limestone trim. The southern half of the building is much more utilitarian in design and function, and lacks much of the ornamentation present in the north half. While all of the windows in the southern half of the station are built with limestone windowsills, they do not have the limestone quoining that is present around the windows in the northern, Collegiate Gothic half. Instead, a row of soldier brick is laid above each window within this southern half of the station. This differentiation provides a variation from the remaining running bond that dominates the remainder of the exterior walls. All windows in both halves of the station are 1980's era replacement single-pane, with aluminum-clad wood framing. However, the materials used in each half of the station remain the same, including the brick, roofing, and the configuration of windows.

North Façade – The north façade is broken into three sections: the main entrance, a large masonry turret, and the engine door. The main entrance to the Station is located to the east of the turret. The doorway is a Roman arch, constructed of heavy oak, and framed with Indiana limestone. This entrance features a small courtyard that is enclosed by a low wall, measuring approximately 10' (north) x 10' (west) x 3' in height. This wall shares the same Collegiate Gothic architectural style and materials as the remainder of the Station. Next is a large projecting turret that extends upward above the eaves, and matches the main building roofline. It is five-sided with four sides containing single first and second level windows. Each of the corners is accented with limestone quoining which also frames each of the windows.

The fire engine doorway is located to the west of the turret and under the forward-facing gable end. It is framed with a wide segmental arch, also composed of Indiana limestone. The doorway is approximately 10' x 10' in size and is flanked by two exterior sconces on either side. Above the arch doorway is the engraved limestone nameplate sign for "TFD Station No 6." The gabled point of the roofline extends another 5' above the engraved stone sign.

West Façade - The west wall of the station is divided into three portions: a five-foot portion under the front-facing gable, an engine bay under the ell-gable end, and a portion under the hipped roof. At the corner of the north and west facades is a masonry buttress accented with limestone quoining; this portion of the façade is a single-story and has a 12" eave with gutter and downspout. The main portion of the façade is approximately 28-feet in length and is centered with another gable-end. This portion of the station is anchored between two additional buttresses, each extending approximately 16" from the main exterior wall. There are three 9-sqft single-pane windows centered at the ground level. In the 2nd-level there is an opening for ventilation, which is approximately 3-sqft in size and centered below the gable end. The separation between the two northernmost buttresses is approximately 5 feet.

Extending south beyond the engine-bay is a one-story, 30' extension that is less ornate in design and style. For example, there is a single window centered within this façade that only contains a limestone sill and is otherwise not fully quoined as are the windows within the northern Collegiate Gothic half. The southern portion is under the side of the hipped roof and features eaves, extending approximately 12" beyond the exterior walls. The hipped-roof portion of the building is a single-story and measures approximately 30' (north/south) x 36' (east/west). The hose tower is located at the pitch of the hip and rises only a few inches above the ridge board, extending east and west to a height of 24". This hose tower is constructed of brick with a flat, rubber-membrane roof with limestone trim. Its measurements are roughly 5' (east/west) x 4' (north/south).

South Façade – The south face of the building matches the simple and unadorned design of the southern portions of the west and east façades. There are five bays including four windows and one rear-entrance door. Each window opening measures approximately 36" in height by 30" in width. The brick above each window is laid in a vertical soldier pattern to provide a variation from the remaining running bond. Although each window is a replacement, each opening is of the original size. Two windows on the left of the entrance are by approximately 60" spaced. The remaining two windows on the right of the entrance and are separated by roughly 1' spacing. The door is located approximately 1' to the right of center and is elevated approximately 18" above grade atop a stoop with three steps. The door itself is original to the building and features wood framing around six panes of glass, stacked two-over-three. There are also three window wells along the south wall allowing exterior light to the basement. Each window well matches the width as the window directly above. Two window wells are placed to the left of the entrance, consistent with the placement of each ground-level window. The third window well is located to the right of the doorway and is placed beneath the easternmost ground-level

window. Each window well is constructed of a clear acrylic panel, framed in a treated-pine box that extends approximately 18" from the building. Each box is set atop a poured concrete well that extends downward to the bottom of each basement window.

East Façade - The east façade of the station is divided into two sections: one below the hipped roof southern half, and one below the ell-gable end of the northern half. Four windows are placed within the hipped-roof of the east façade. These windows are evenly spaced along this section, beginning approximately 24" north of the southeast corner of the building, with a spacing of roughly 45". The gutter system runs under the eave, with one downspout between the first and second windows and a second downspout between the third and fourth windows.

Under the ell-gable end at the northeast and southeast corners are quoined buttresses extending roughly 18" beyond the face of the façade. A second-level opening for ventilation, approximately 3-sqft, is centered below the gable-end. There are two window openings. The smaller opening measures approximately 36" X 30" and is placed 40" above grade, and 24" north of the south buttress. The larger opening is located approximately 24" south of the north buttress. This window is a dual-pane casement, measuring 40" x 36", and is placed roughly 36" above grade. All openings on the east façade are quoined in limestone. An electrical conduit extends from the ground immediately below the ventilation opening and enters the building roughly 2-feet below the sill of that opening.

Interior – The interior floorplan of Fire Station No. 6 has remained unchanged since its construction in 1935. Walls in each room are constructed of a glazed concrete tile placed below a painted concrete surface finish. The rise of tile within each room is variable, but is uniform within each room. Floors within each room are a gray terrazzo, all featuring a darker-toned border extending 12" from the wall. The exception to the terrazzo floor finish is the engine bay, which is constructed of a smoothed finished concrete. The only change to surface finishes is the installation of drop-ceilings in the office and living room. This drop ceiling was added during the early 1990s to conceal conduit and electrical lines necessary for the provision of air conditioning and fluorescent lighting. Doors and associated hardware, such as hinges and door handles, all appear to be original. The floorplan is laid out with the habitable rooms for the firefighters on two-sides (east and south) of the main bay for the engine.

Living Room - The living room is the primary public entrance to the Station. This doorway faces north and is positioned in the northeast corner of the room, immediately east and adjacent to the turret. The room is positioned directly to the south of the Station office. A wall-mounted chalkboard and two recessed wall-mounted ventless radiant heaters are located on the room's north wall. This room features one window on the east wall. Within the wall on either side of the window opening are recessed shelves. These shelves are framed in hard yellow pine and measure approximately 36" x 48", each with a rounded-arch.

Office - The office and call-room are located within the turret in the building's northeast corner. Located within this office are all communications equipment for station operations and a retractable Murphy bed. The office features 1 single-pane, fixed window within each exterior wall. The Murphy bed is stored within a shallow closet located on the room's north wall, immediately east of the entrance to the room from the hallway. A doorway to the fire engine bay is on the west wall. The floor is the original terrazzo, complete with an 8" terrazzo baseboard. The ceiling is an acoustical foam-board drop-ceiling that is placed approximately 6" below the original concrete ceiling.

Hallway – Heading south from the living room is a hallway that accesses the kitchen, bathroom, dormitory, staircase, and partial basement. The ceiling in the hallway retains the original cement finish.

Kitchen - From the hallway, the kitchen is accessed by an arched doorway and has never had a functional door. This room is in its original configuration and retains all original finishes. The cabinetry and counters within the kitchen have been replaced with contemporary products. Centered on the east wall is a single window.

Dormitory - At the south end of the hallway is the dormitory. Beyond the doorway to this room, the floor slopes upward approximately 30" to the dormitory floor space. The rise in floor level offers additional window light to the rooms within the basement located immediately below. The floor is separated from the sloped entryway by a concrete barrier, finished with terrazzo baseboard and glazed tiles. There are four windows along the east wall and two windows on the south wall. This

room retains its original concrete walls, ceiling, and terrazzo floor, along with the structural tile below the windows. The dormitory is the 2nd largest room within the station, behind the main engine bay.

Bathrooms – Located to the west of the dormitory are two bathrooms. The smaller of the two is located on the north side of a hallway connecting the dormitory with the station locker room. This restroom is a single stall with sink and no other amenities. The larger of the two bathrooms is located on the south side of the hallway and consists of a urinal, toilet, shower, and a sink. Both bathrooms retain their original terrazzo flooring, structural tile, and concrete walls and ceilings.

Locker room – The station locker room is positioned to the west of the rear entrance in the building's southwest corner. Lockers are inset along the room's north and east walls, with additional lockers placed against the west walls. The west and south exterior walls each have one window.

Hallway #2 – located between the smaller bathroom and the locker room is a shorter third hallway, where the basement is accessed and the station's main engine bay. This hallway slopes downward to the north in the same manner as the long hallway that provides access to the main dormitory.

Main Engine Bay – The main engine bay is the largest room within the building. All doorways retain their original wood framing, doors, and hardware. Walls are approximately 13' and are exclusively finished with the structural concrete tile. Both the floor and ceiling are the original concrete. From the engine bay, doorways extend to the main office, the living room, the hose tower, the hallway to the dormitory, a storage closet, and the stairway to the station's second level. Located in the ceiling near the southwest corner of the room is a large hole directly into the conduit that provides ventilation for the station attic fan.

Second Level – The station's second level is an unfinished storage space that has never been occupied as a habitable room within the fire station. The roof joists are exposed, as are all of the electrical and HVAC conduits that service the station. This level is arranged with four separate heights to accommodate the mechanical and electrical services to the rooms below. The highest floor level culminates at the hose tower, which is accessed through an opening in the brick that exposes the tower pulley and hose drying racks.

Basement – The basement of Firehouse No. 6 is an unfinished, partial basement located below the hipped-roofed section. The basement is constructed of concrete block walls and a poured in place, structural concrete floor and ceiling. Windows below grade are two within the south exterior wall, and one within the east exterior wall. Located in the center of the basement is the building's furnace and water heater. The remainder of the basement area is used for storage, a workshop, and a space for exercise/weights.

Alterations - Fire Station No. 6 has been in continuous use since its original construction in 1935. Since this time, few changes have been made to the building to modernize and replace outdated features, or to modernize the facility for the safety and convenience of firefighters stationed within the building. A few of these changes include the addition of central air conditioning in the 1990s, the replacement of kitchen cabinetry and countertops, and the replacement of bathroom fixtures. Complete records of these changes are maintained at the City of Topeka Fire Department Headquarters, the Office of Facilities Management, and the City Engineer's Office.

The building remains in good condition and retains significant historic integrity and character-defining features. With the exception of the roof, windows, and the engine bay door, the building retains its original appearance. No structural changes have occurred that would have resulted in an altered floor plan, and no external additions to the original building footprint have been made. Within the interior, the changes made to the building are typical and minimal updates to the kitchen, bathrooms, the firefighter's locker room, and placement of a drop-tile ceiling in the living room, and office.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1935-1940

Significant Dates

1935

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cuthbert & Suehrk

Bowers Construction

Period of Significance (justification)

Fire Station No. 6 is significant relative to an era in Topeka's history and the development of Topeka's Fire Department, most notably dating between the time frame of 1926 and 1935. The period begins with the date of construction in 1935 and goes through the end of the Public Works Administration projects and city bond in 1940.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

Fire Station No. 6 is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion 'C' for its distinctive architectural characteristics relative to the utilization of Collegiate Gothic architecture in the early 20th Century construction of Bungalow fire stations. The building is also association with the expansion of the City during the early 20th century. The Station is an excellent example of the Collegiate Gothic style architecture in Topeka. Designed by the renowned Kansas architectural firm Cuthbert & Suerhk, Station No. 6 embodies the functionality of the "bungalow type" of professional fire stations while incorporating Collegiate Gothic influences in its appearance and choice of exterior materials.

Elaboration

The first fire station in the Oakland area was constructed in 1909 on the same site as the current Station No. 6. This date is prior to the area's annexation by the City of Topeka and was therefore established by the municipality of Oakland Center, which was officially incorporated as a city in 1886. At that time, the Oakland Center fire station was the last station built within the City of Topeka, or its neighboring suburbs, built specifically to accommodate the horse and pump-wagon.

Historical Fire Service in Topeka¹

The City of Topeka functioned without a dedicated fire service from its founding in 1854 until February of 1870. The first recorded fire was during the winter of 1854-1855 when flames from a small fire ignited the thatched roof of the cabin occupied by the City's founders. Being the only occupied "home" within the City at that time, City founder Fry W. Giles declared the City to be in "ruins."²

After this first fire, however, no other fires were recorded during the City's first decade. The absence thusly removed the impetus to establish a system with which to fight fires. This lack of need, however, changed on April 24th, 1867. On that date, an earthquake was recorded that centered near the City of Manhattan, Kansas. Tremors from this quake were reported as far east as Carthage, Ohio. This earthquake caused damage to much of the City, including the start of several fires to both homes and businesses.³

Two years later, in 1869, fires destroyed two prominent buildings, the S. D. McDonald Building, and the Ritchie Block. The loss of these prominent buildings convinced the citizenry and City leaders that the time had come to purchase firefighting machinery, and to begin the assembly of a system for firefighting at the municipal level. In 1870, the Topeka City Council authorized and funded the acquisition of a steam pump and fire wagon, which arrived on February 5th. These items were purchased, however, before the appointment of any official personnel to operate the equipment. Realizing this omission, City officials soon appointed Tobias Billings as the engineer of the steamer, and T. J. Anderson as his assistant. These two firefighters then comprised the Topeka Fire Department which, in addition to the steam pump and fire wagon, depended on volunteers in the close vicinity at fires.⁴

In October of that same year, two volunteer companies were organized, and all equipment was stationed in a converted blacksmith shop in the 500 block of SE Quincy Street.⁵ The companies were known as Steamer Company No. 1, Hose Companies Nos. 1 and 2, and "Safety" Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 (a new ladder truck had arrived in October from

¹ Some of this history is shared with previously listed Fire Stations No 4 and 7 in Topeka.

² Ripley, John W., Fire Service in Topeka, the Early Years, Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, 1986, p. 3

³ Lykins, W. H. R., 1867, Earthquake in Kansas: Am. Jour. Sci., 2d ser., v. 44, no. 130, p. 132

⁴ Ripley, John W., Fire Service in Topeka, the Early Years, Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, 1986, p. 7

⁵ National Register Nomination for Fire Station No. 2" (Topeka, Ks. Kansas State Historical Society, 2002) Sec. 8, p 7

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the factory). Collectively, these companies numbered a total of 65 members, one of whom was a paid firefighter on regular duty, and was a City policeman when not on duty⁶.

The converted blacksmith's shop served as the City's sole fire station until 1874 when Fire Station No. 1 was constructed across the Kansas River in North Topeka. Fire Station No. 1 was located at the southeast corner of N Kansas Avenue and N Gordon Street, originally platted in the Town of Eugene. Eugene was annexed into the City of Topeka in 1867.

The construction of Fire Station No. 1 marked the beginning of municipal firefighting in Topeka. Within the subsequent 15 years, four additional fire stations were constructed. Fire Station No. 2 was constructed in 1878 in the rear portion of the new City Hall, located at SE 7th Street & S. Kansas Avenue. The construction of Fire Station No. 3 followed in 1882 in the 300 block of NE Quincy Street, followed by Station No. 4 in the 700 block of SW Clay Street (1887), and Station No. 5 in the 600 block of SE Lake Street (1890). The construction of each of these fire stations in Topeka was a direct result of the growth of the City and the resulting demand by businesses and residents for reduced response times.

The establishment of Fire Station No. 6 resulted from the annexation of the town of Oakland Center by the City of Topeka in 1926. The population of this area grew modestly, parallel to the City of Topeka's population, until the town of Oakland Center was incorporated in 1886. By the 1915, Oakland Center featured several amenities that were complementary to the growth of Topeka, such as a population of 1,800, the rail yards of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, four churches, eight grocery stores, a blacksmith, a drugstore, and a confectionery store, and a rail line connecting Oakland Center to Topeka and beyond to the Quinton Heights suburb to the south. In 1925, residents of Oakland Center voted 505 to 206 to allow their municipality to be annexed by the City of Topeka. This was accomplished on October 25, 1926, by a unanimous vote of the Topeka City Commission.

The annexation of Oakland Center occurred during a time of rapid population growth for the City of Topeka, resulting in an increased demand for fire protection services. To address this demand, the citizens of Topeka approved a municipal bond in 1926 that was specifically intended to build new fire stations, and upgrade the conditions and apparatus of the City's existing fire stations. This bond was valued at \$250,000 and directly resulted in the construction of 6 new fire stations. These stations were: a new Station No. 2/Headquarters in 1927, a rebuild of Station No. 4 also in 1927, new Stations No.'s 5, 6, and 7, all built through the Public Works Administration (PWA) in 1935, and a new rebuild of Station No. 1 in 1940.

Fire House Designs:⁷

This period also coincided with the nationwide transition from the traditional horse-drawn pump-wagon method of firefighting to the emerging technology of the motorized fire truck. Topeka purchased its first motorized fire engine in 1912, which was housed at the Fire Department Headquarters at Fire Station No. 2. The transition to motorized equipment meant that stations would now be built to consolidate the housing of engine, hose, and ladder companies that had previously been all-volunteer, and scattered in several locations.⁸ Furthermore, stations no longer needed to be designed to accommodate a stable for the horse. One of the premier references to the evolution of fire stations built within the United States is Rebecca Zurier's *The American Firehouse, an Architectural and Social History*. Zurier notes a fundamental shift in the design of the American firehouse during the age of the transition from the horse and steam pump and wagon to the internal combustion engine. The new fire station was modeled in the same approach as the "bungalow," where all company living quarters were placed on the ground level. This change in design was in part to the wholesale adoption of the internal combustion fire engine, and also to a wealth of changes in firefighting apparatus, firefighting procedures, firefighter scheduling changes, and changes in city planning.⁹

As long as fire stations required horses to haul their firefighting apparatus, the traditional firehouse of the 19th and early 20th Centuries were essentially modified barns. The accommodation of the horse as a necessary component of the

⁶ Ripley, John W., Fire Service in Topeka, the Early Years, Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, 1986, p. 7

⁷ This history has been compiled based on two previously listed fire stations in Topeka, No 6 (2019) & No 7 (2020).

⁸ Rebecca Zurier, *The American Firehouse – An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: Abbeville Press, 1982) 89

⁹ Rebecca Zurier, *The American Firehouse, An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: Abbeville Press; 1982) p. 157

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firefighting apparatus required the firehouse to contain haylofts, feed rooms, stalls, hanging harnesses, and the high-ceilinged rooms that accommodated them. The inclusion of these necessary accommodations for horses within the traditional firehouse resulted in various health concerns for firefighters, chief among them was a condition referred to as the “ammoniacal vapors,” which was simply a reference to the unsanitary smells attributable to the horses on the main level. The removal of horses and their accommodations afforded both a cleaner environment for the firefighters and also the ability to place the living spaces of the firefighters closer to the fire engines.¹⁰

This “cleaner environment” manifested itself through several different means. These means can be characterized under the categories of building materials, firehouse floor plans, and the physical location of the firehouse itself.

In terms of building materials, the transition from the horse and pump wagon to the combustion engine fire truck was coincident with the widespread focus on the sanitation and cleanliness of fire stations. Enabling this focus on sanitary conditions was the adoption of poured concrete as a favored material for many public and municipal buildings. Many such projects resulted from the New Deal era Public Works Administration (PWA) programming. The local architectural firm of Cuthbert, Suehrk & Glover maintained these national trends in the design for Fire Station No. 6, utilizing poured concrete as its’ predominant and principal building material. The use of this material also enabled Fire Station No. 6 to replace wood floors with terrazzo, and window sills and walls with concrete and glazed tile. These hard, non-porous surfaces greatly facilitated the overall sanitation and cleanliness of the firehouse.

The second area of transformation for the American firehouse was the overall floorplan and design. Without the horse and stable, no longer was there a need for multiple levels to separate those spaces occupied by both humans and horses. All facilities necessary for the firefighters could be placed on the ground floor within easy access to the fire engine. This rearrangement of the floor plan eliminated the necessity for inclusion of the iconic, but dangerous “fire pole” that enabled quick access from the living quarters above to the fire wagon and horses below. Firefighters, themselves, welcomed the removal of the pole, primarily because of the injuries frequently incurred in its use. Night alarms that brought firefighters out of deep sleep were the primary cause, as awakening men often suffered hernias, broken ankles, and deep muscle sprains.¹¹

The rearrangement of the firehouse floorplan also brought with it the introduction of a kitchen for the in-house use of firefighters. Bungalow stations constructed at this time included a kitchen at the rear of the building. In older buildings, the now unnecessary stalls could be removed, leaving room for a cooking and eating area.¹² Upon the advent of the multiple-shift scheduling of firefighters, one member of the firehouse was appointed as the shift “cook,” while other firefighters adopted the job of cleaning and washing dishes.

Perhaps the most notable alteration to firehouse design was that without the horse and wagon and the space necessary to accommodate those living elements of the firefighting apparatus, fire stations could subsequently be placed further within residential neighborhoods. This change in the placement of fire stations relative to their surroundings consequently meant that the firehouse would need to reflect a more residential style of architecture to “blend in” with the developing suburbs of American cities. Firemen’s journals described “bungalow firehouses” as any one-story fire station designed to look like a house.¹³ Some of the first bungalow stations were designed by city architects to appease irate residents of exclusive neighborhoods who did not want an ugly, institutional building on their block.¹⁴

Architecture of Fire Station No. 6

Station No. 6 was designed by Topeka architects Cuthbert & Suehrk specifically to “blend in” with an assortment of low-to-moderate density residential and commercial uses. SE Seward Avenue is the primary east/west arterial road through the

¹⁰ Rebecca Zurier, *The American Firehouse, An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: Abbeville Press; 1982) p. 160

¹¹ Gerry & Janet Souter, *The American Fire Station*, (Osceola, WI, MBI Publishing Co. 2000) p. 136

¹² Rebecca Zurier, *The American Firehouse, An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: Abbeville Press; 1982) p. 163

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 159

¹⁴ Rebecca Zurier, *The American Firehouse, An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: Abbeville Press; 1982) p. 163

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Oakland neighborhood, and as such, has been historically dedicated to a mix of commercial, service, institutional, and residential buildings. This station is built in the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture and features a nearly identical floor-plan to Fire Station No. 5. Its numerous Gothic elements include steep-pitched gabled roofs, buttresses, arched doors and windows (mimicking a pointed arch), stone quoining, and a central turret that dominates the main entrance. The predominant building material is a red English brick, with Indiana limestone detailing around all windows and building corner seams.

Charles Cuthbert was a native of Topeka and served as the state architect for Kansas from 1925 until 1930 under Governor Ben Paulen. In 1927, he was joined in his practice by his classmate at Washington University School of Architecture William Suehrk. Architect Walter Glover later joined the firm, and together, they designed many Topeka buildings, including the 1928 Gem Building at 508 W. 10th Street and the 1951 Garlinghouse Building at 820 South Quincy Street, the Charles M. Sheldon Community House, the original Security Benefit Life Insurance Co. at 700 SW Harrison Street, the Stormont Hospital, and the Valley Park School.¹⁵ Other notable works designed by Cuthbert & Suehrk within the city of Topeka include East Topeka Jr. High School, Westminster Presbyterian Church, and Topeka Fire Stations No. 1, No. 5, No. 6, and No. 7.

The historical roots of Gothic architectural styles come from Western Europe during the High Middle Ages, emerging from the Romanesque and Byzantine forms in France, in the late 12th Century. Cathedrals are the classic representatives of this style, characterized by the pointed arch, rib vault, exterior flying buttress, and richly decorated fenestration.¹⁶ Collegiate Gothic is a secular version of Gothic architecture, prevalent at the beginning of the 20th Century in both the United States and England, particularly on college campuses. Introduced to educational buildings at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, Collegiate Gothic emerged as a dominant style on the campuses of Princeton, Yale, Duke, and the University of Chicago.¹⁷ Defining characteristics of the style include pointed arches, crenellations, quoining, and towers. Fire Station No. 6 is a classic example of this style by its original slate roof (since replaced with asphalt), red brick with stone detailing, quoining around doors and windows, stone quoining within building corners, and buttresses, and the central tower located on the building's north façade.

Summary –

Fire Station No. 6 is an excellent and enduring example of an early-period bungalow firehouse, constructed during a period in Topeka's, and the nation's history, where the traditional accommodations for horse and pump wagon in the firehouse were transitioned to the cleaner and more functional internal combustion fire engine. The changes to firefighting technology, and particularly the resulting accommodations for firefighters through the design of their fire stations was coincident with a general transformation in the image of the firefighter from a dirty volunteer to a brave public servant and hero. This elevation in public status meant that additional resources were afforded to the design and construction of new firehouses, resulting in significantly cleaner and more luxurious accommodations for the firefighters.

Fire Station No. 6 is constructed in a blend of Collegiate Gothic, and more traditional bungalow architecture, resulting in a fire station that has remained largely intact and true to its original form and function. This building retains all of its architectural details and features that date from its original construction. As such, it is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its architecture. Designed by the renowned architect Charles Cuthbert, this station is an excellent example of his work, reflecting a significant period of his career as an architect in Topeka. Together with the construction of Fire Stations No. 5 and 7 in the same year of 1935, these stations served as the foundation of a renewed emphasis on the provision of fire services for the City of Topeka.

¹⁵ Susan Jezak Ford, NRHP Nomination for East Topeka Jr. High School, Topeka, Kansas 2003

¹⁶ Cyril M. Harris, *Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1983) p. 254

¹⁷ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Fitzgerald, Dan. "Inventory of Records of the Topeka Fire Department." Topeka, Ks. 1986.

Krause, Keith S., *Impact of Water on the Development of Topeka, a History*, Topeka, Kansas, 1993

Motor Fire Apparatus, Fire and Water Engineering, Volume 51, 1912

Poppeleirs, John C. and Allen Chambers, Jr. and Nancy B. Schwartz. *What Style Is it? A Guide to America Architecture*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1983.

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Souter, Gerry & Janet. *The American Fire Station*, MBI Publishing Co. Osceola, WI., 2000.

Swayze, Oscar K. *Fire Service of Topeka, the Early Years*, Topeka, KS: Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, November 1986.

Topeka Capital Journal, September 21, 1952

Topeka Daily Capital, Nov. 28, 1954

Topeka Daily Capital, Dec. 19, 1954

Topeka Daily State Journal, Nov. 12, 1927

Topeka Daily Capital, Nov. 4, 1926

The Power Wagon, Fire Department Motors, No. 88, Chicago, IL, 1912

Zurier, Rebecca, *The American Firehouse, an Architectural and Social History*, Abbeville Press, New York, 1982

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
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.14

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.
(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>39.058623°</u> Latitude:	<u>-95.650676°</u> Longitude:	3	_____ Latitude:	_____ Longitude:
2	_____ Latitude:	_____ Longitude:	4	_____ Latitude:	_____ Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Fire Station No 6 is located at 1419 SE Seward Ave in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas. The legal parcel description is Lots 413-415, Bernier's Addition; Section 32, Township 11, Range 16.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary is limited to the entire parcel that has been historically associated with the function of the station.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tim Paris

organization City of Topeka date Winter 2019

street & number 620 SE Madison telephone _____

city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66607

e-mail _____

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name City of Topeka

street & number 620 SE Madison telephone _____

city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66607

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 100 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.

Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Name of Property: _____
City or Vicinity: _____
County: _____ **State:** Kansas
Photographer: _____
Date Photographed: _____

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include a description of view indicating the direction of camera:

Photo Number	View	Description
#1	S	Front elevation
#2	SW	Oblique with front and side elevations
#3	SE	Oblique with front and side elevations
#4	E	View of the turret
#5	W	East Façade of north Gothic portion
#6	NW	East façade
#7	S	Engine Bay
#8	SE	West facade
#9	N	South Facade
#10	--	Call room floor and walls
#11	--	Call room, doors to engine bay and living room
#12	--	Engine bay doors to call room and living room
#13	--	Living room
#14	--	Kitchen
#15	--	Bathroom
#16	--	Dormitory
#17	--	View of the interior spaces and finishes
#18	--	Hose Tower
#19	--	Locker room

Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

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Photo 1



Photo 2

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Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

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Photo 6



Photo 7

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Photo 8



Photo 9

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Photo 10

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Photo 11

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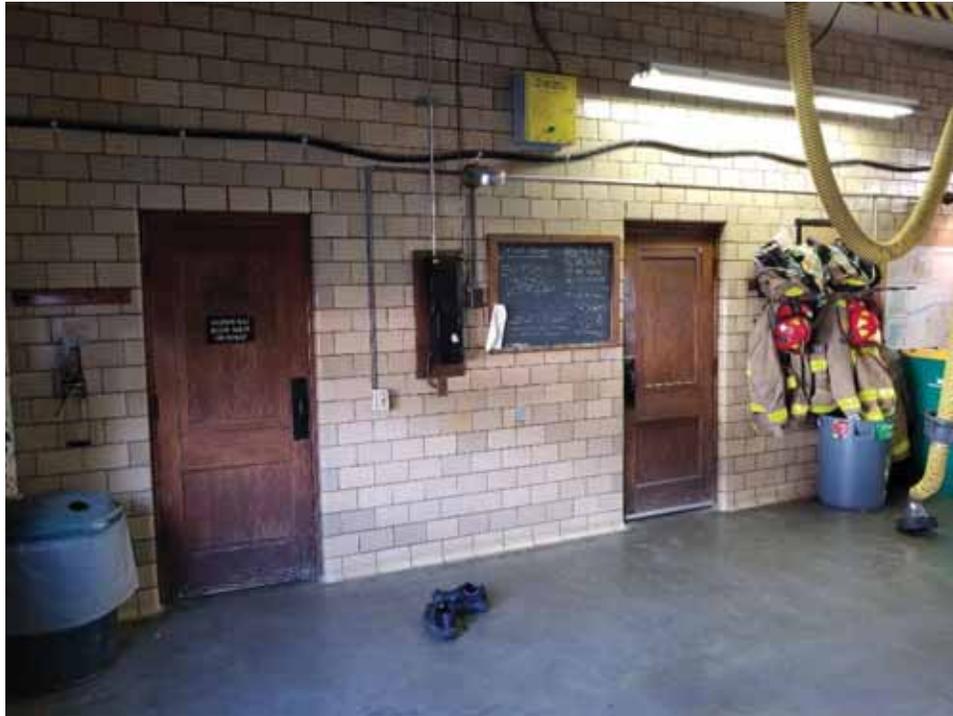


Photo 12



Photo 13

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Photo 14

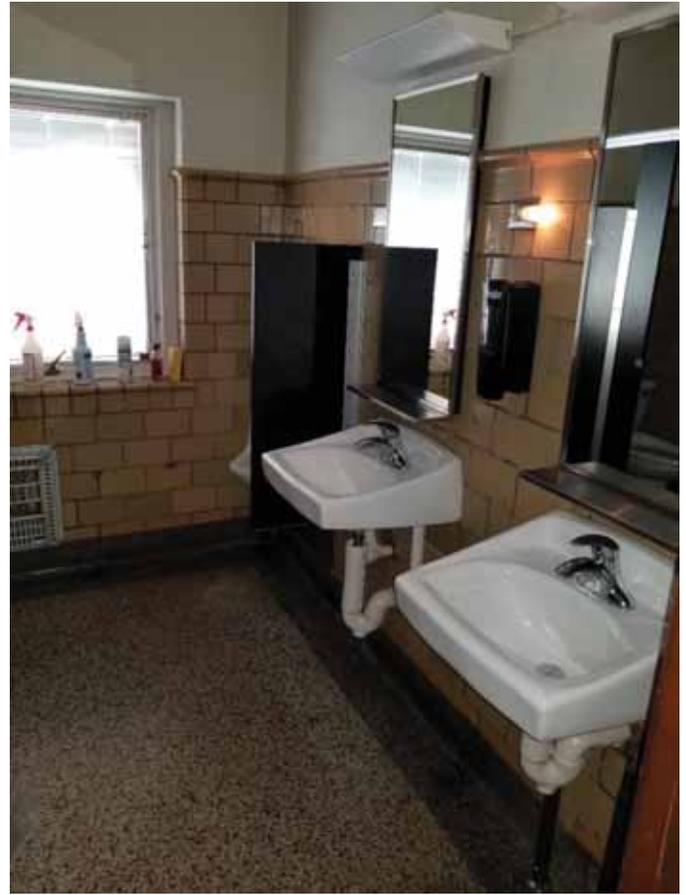


Photo 15

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Photo 16

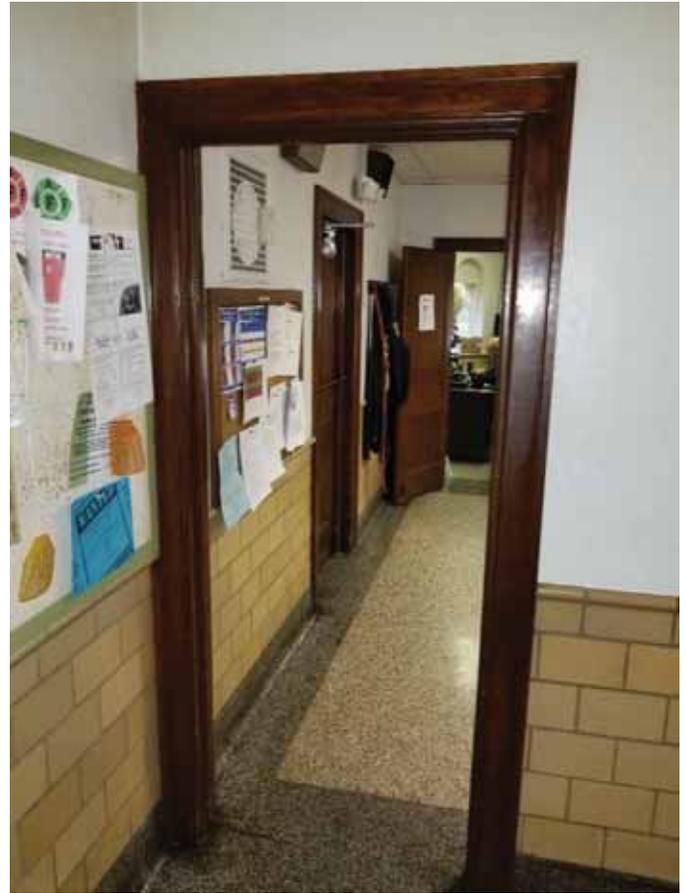


Photo 17

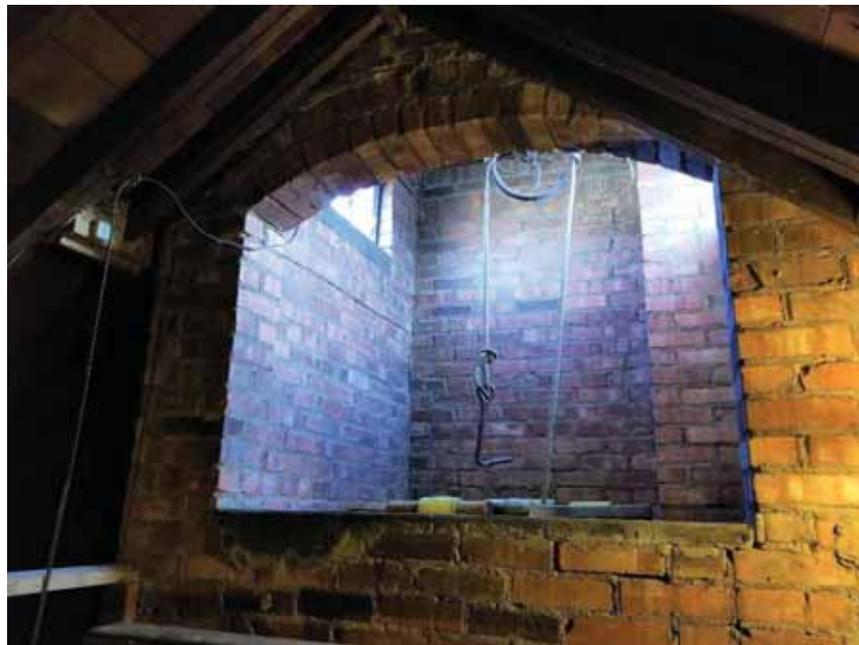


Photo 18

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Photo 19