United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic  The Young Women's Christian Association

and/or common  Akron YWCA Building

2. Location

street & number  146 South High Street  ____ not for publication

city, town  Akron  ____ vicinity of  14
            (John Seiberling)

state  Ohio  44308  code  039  county  Summit  code  153

3. Classification

Category  Ownership  Status  Present Use
____ district  ___ public  ___ occupied  ___ agriculture  ___ museum
____ building(s)  ___ private  ___ unoccupied  ___ commercial  ___ park
____ structure  ___ both  ___ work in progress  ___ educational  ___ private residence
____ site  Public Acquisition  Accessible  ___ entertainment  ___ religious
____ object  ___ in process  ___ X: yes; restricted  ___ government  ___ scientific
___ being considered  ___ yes: unrestricted  ___ industrial  ___ transportation
N/A  ___ no  ___ military  X other: Social

4. Owner of Property

name  R C Properties (Anthony Rodríguez & Steven S. Cohen)

street & number  1655 West Market Street

city, town  Akron  ____ vicinity of  state  Ohio  44313

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.  Summit County Recorder's Office

street & number  175 South Main Street

city, town  Akron  state  Ohio  44308

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title  Akron Historic Landmark Survey  has this property been determined eligible?  X yes  ____ no

date  July—September, 1978  ____ federal  ____ state  ____ county  X local

depository for survey records  Department of Planning and Urban Development

city, town  Akron  state  Ohio  44308
Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The ten-storey building of the Young Women's Christian Association is essentially Art Deco in style, but shows strong Neoclassic Revival influence. It is of ivory brick laid in common bond, and is divided visually into four horizontal sections by three sill courses: at the third floor, one at the seventh, and another at the tenth. The piano nobile (encompassing two floors) is of limestone, with an emphasized water table, from which rises a colossal round arch entry with five bas-relief panels set at intervals in the voussoirs. The entry doors and spandrel, however, have been drastically altered in recent modernizations. The entry is flanked on either side by six aligned windows, three each on the first and second floors. To the far right of the entry are three fan-lighted colossal windows, illuminating a 500-seat auditorium. Two series of out-size windows, spanning three floors, are positioned above these, the first for a 25' x 60' swimming pool, the other for a gymnasium. The three involved spandrels contain symbolic terra-cotta medallions. The architects' intent for these related windows has been diminished somewhat by the replacement of the pool openings with glass block.

The prominent terra-cotta sill course at the seventh floor employs a strong geometric design and perhaps symbolizes that the seventh floor and above are residence halls, while the six floors below are for public use. A lesser but stylistically related course is used at the tenth floor, and a pronounced but complementary terra-cotta cornice is found at the parapet. The third-floor sill course is of limestone and caps the stone facing of the piano nobile. Decorative terra-cotta lintels define the third-floor windows; escutcheoned lunettes dress the tenth-floor windows, except for trabeated lintels at the ends.

The YWCA, set on a corner lot, faces east on a major north-south artery, now one-way southbound, and is unusual in that all four elevations are in finished materials with matching detailing. Although less elaborate, the rear and formerly partly obstructed north side utilize the same brick and carry the same sill courses as the corner elevations. On the facade, corner side, and rear, wrought iron suggesting balconies was used at paired windows on the fifth, sixth, and ninth floors, all of it having been removed in recent years. There is a prominent two-storey penthouse with hipped barrel-tile roof above the tenth floor which houses a laundry as well as machinery.

The south elevation, completely exposed to the intersecting side street, features in the piano nobile a pair of two-storey bay windows sheathed in cast aluminum with symbolic emblems in both spandrels. The southwest corner of the building, somewhat less than a right angle, is boldly rounded, emphasized by vertical indentations at the adjoining walls. Because of the extreme slope of Bowery Street, an additional exposed floor is gained at the rear. The rounded corner on this extra floor embraces an entryway formerly leading to a coffee shop.
8. Significance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
<th>Specific dates</th>
<th>Builder/Architect</th>
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Akron YWCA Building is significant for its association, both architecturally and socially, with the period of greatest development in downtown Akron, the "rubber boom" years from 1910–1930. Architecturally, the building displays elements of the Art Deco style in its setbacks, ornamental geometric design terra cotta barding lintels and medallions. Through this style, the building serves as a vital component within downtown Akron, reflecting and complimenting the other major buildings built in this period in the area (YMCA, 1931; Mayflower Hotel, 1931; First National Tower, 1931). Socially, the YWCA Building is a physical manifestation of the humanitarian concerns of the mercantile interests developing in the growing city of Akron. At this time, the city increased in population from 65,000 to over 230,000 people. This growth produced a desire among businessmen to provide a location for organized religious meetings, recreation & accommodation for women with the growing urban area. The YWCA Building continues to largely define the visual character of the downtown Akron today, while at the same time physically linking the present downtown to the most important period in its development.

Organized on March 29, 1901, the YWCA occupied rented rooms until 1907, when it moved into the Grace House at 22 South High Street. The tremendous growth in Akron's population from 1910 and into the 1920's made Grace House increasingly unable to meet the YWCA's expanding program needs. The Akron YMCA was experiencing the same pressures, and in 1929 the YWCA and YMCA mounted a joint fund raising drive to raise $2,400,000 to erect new homes for both organizations. Seven thousand people subscribed, and in only ten days a total of $2,100,897 had been pledged. Work began on both buildings in 1930. The new YWCA building was built two blocks south of Grace House, on a site purchased in 1922. It was designed by Fichter and Brooker (J. Adam Fichter and Harry A. Brooker), a leading Akron architectural firm of the period and is the largest structure ever designed by the company. The Clemmer-Noah Construction Company received the construction contract for the building. Work began on February 7, 1930, and the building was dedicated on January 28, 1931. The cost was $857,000. A little over a month later, on March 10, the YMCA opened its doors to its new facility on Bowery Street.
9. Major Bibliographical References
AKRON AND SUMMIT COUNTY, Karl H. Grismer (1952), pp 431-434, p 619
Akron Historic Landmark Survey (1978), #SUM 380-16 (Michael H. Adams)
"Akron Topics" Magazine (December, 1929), p 5
Original Working Drawings, Fichter & Brooker, Architects (1929)
Interview with George Fichter, Son of J. Adam Fichter

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property  1/3 (14,300 sq. ft.)

Quadrangle name  Akron West

Quadrangle scale  1:24,000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification
Lot #6, 7, 8, & 9 (King Allotment), 143' x 100'

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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<tr>
<th>state</th>
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<th>county</th>
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title  James A. Pahlau and James Strider

organization  N/A

date  August 1980

street & number  465 South Portage Path

telephone  1/216/535-1120.

city or town  Akron

state  Ohio  44320

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national
state
local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature  

For NPS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date  9/23/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:  
date

Chief of Registration
Akron YWCA Building
Akron, Summit County

17 456/520 East

4547/680 North
November 26, 1982

Mr. Anthony Rodriguez
R.C. Properties
1655 West Market Street
Akron, Ohio 44313

Dear Mr. Rodriguez:

I am pleased to inform you that the Young Women's Christian Association has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

W. Ray Luce
State Historic Preservation Officer

146 South High Street
Akron, Ohio

WRL:dd

enclosure

X.c: Roy L. Ray, Mayor
    Summit County Historical Society
    NEFCO
    Senator Oliver Ocasek
    Representative Crossland
    Jeffrey Brown
National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Young Women's Christian Association
County: Summit

☐ Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form
☐ Multiple Property Nomination form
☐ Photograph(s)
☒ Photograph(s) (copies)
☐ USGS map(s)
☒ USGS map(s) (copies)
☐ Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)
☒ Correspondence

☐ Other ____________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

CES: 9/01