

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS HISTORIC RESOURCES

Resource No. 12

1. Property name, present Vacant

Property name, historic The Francis Hotel;
Excelsior Institute; St. Joe Hotel

2. Address/location
105 E. Broadway
Excelsior Springs, MO

3. Owner's name and address
Excelsior Springs Historical Museum
101 E. Broadway
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024

4. Building Structure
 Site Object

5. Use, present Vacant

Use, original Commercial, hotel

6. Location Map



7. Date of construction (or estimate) ca. 1920 & 1907

8. Changes
 Altered Addition Moved

9. Architect/engineer/designer

10. Contractor/builder/craftsman

11. Style: High Style
 Elements Italian Renaissance
 Vernacular

12. Plan Shape Rectangle & square

13. Number of stories 2

14. Roof type and material Mansard/tile; Flat

15. Type of construction

16. Exterior material(s) Brick

17. Foundation material(s) Not visible

18. Porch(es) Not applicable

19. Additional physical description

The former Francis Hotel is composed of two structures -- both are two part commercial blocks constructed of brick. 105 E. Broadway is a rectangular structure with a red tile mansard roof. The overhanging boxed eaves are supported by wood knee braces. A stone course separates the 1st floor from the 2nd, and another serves as a continuous lintel above the 2nd story windows. The 2nd story windows are 1/1 and have simple stone sills. On the 1st floor, the entry is recessed. The wood frame windows appear to be original, and have a single, large fixed pane flanked by smaller 1/1 sidelights. The transoms above, however, have been closed. The windows have simple stone sills. The Bank Museum to the west is set slightly back from the sidewalk, leaving a small portion of the west elevation of the Francis exposed. There are windows here on both the 1st and 2nd stories, similar to those on the front (north) elevation.

The south structure, at the northeast corner of S. Main and Spring Street, is square in shape. The 1st story of

the west facade has been recently refaced with brick. There are two recessed entries on this elevation, and two signs remain from the Francis Hotel. A mansard roof encircles the west, south and east side between the 1st and 2nd stories. The 1st story of the south facade has been covered with stucco, as has the east elevation. The upper story windows are 1/1 and have simple stone sills. There are rectangular designs in the decorative brick corbeling at the roof cornice line. There is a dead-end alley on the north between the Bank Museum and this portion of the Francis, as well as a one-story connecting hall which leads to the building on E. Broadway. The two buildings are not connected on the 2nd story however, except by a balcony porch with iron railings on the east side facing the Hall of Waters. This arrangement gives windows and light to several rooms on the 2nd story.

20. Description of environment and outbuildings.

The Francis Hotel is on a block of two-story commercial block structures with the exception of the adjoining Bank Museum to the west (which is vault type of commercial structure). The east facade of the rear adjoining portion of the Francis Hotel faces a circle drive next to the Hall of Waters.

21. History and significance

For several years, the site of 105 E. Broadway served as the grounds surrounding the Excelsior Hotel. In the early 1900's, the north side of this portion of E. Broadway had commercial structures, as did much of the south side. However, this particular lot remained vacant until the current structure was built between 1917 and 1922. No hotel is listed at 105 E. Broadway in the city directories, however; it appears that the main entrance was through the adjoining building to the rear (south) of 105 E. Broadway. The extant sign for the Francis Hotel points to the rear (south). When combined with the south structure, the Francis Hotel had 30 rooms. The 1st floor commercial enterprises in 1922 were Don Shelton Shoes in 105 E. Broadway, and Broadway Clothing Company in 107 E. Broadway. By 1930, only Don Shelton Shoes remained.

The rear (southern) portion of the Francis Hotel was constructed earlier, sometime between 1905 and 1909. It was known as the St. Joe House in 1917, and had four commercial offices on the first floor, and rooms on the 2nd. 109 S. Main contained the offices of Dr. C.C. Thomas, dentist, as well as Dr. J.T. Rice and Dr. W.S. Wallace. 111 S. Main was Rowell & Dykes Drugs; 115 S. Main was Dr. J.E. Musgrave's office, and 117 S. Main was the office of the Salax Water Co. and the K.C. Post. 115-1/2 was the addresses for the upstairs rooms, and there were at least six boarders in 1917. In 1922, the upstairs rooms were called the St. Joe Hotel. 111 S. Main contained the Commercial Club; 115, the St. Joe Barber Shop; 117, offices for C.M. Clevenger, J.H. Morrison, and the Salax Water Co. By 1940, the upper boarding rooms were referred to as the Hotel Francis.

A historic postcard (of an artist's sketch, not a photograph) indicates that the two structures were once part of the Excelsior Institute, but no further information was found to verify this.

105 E. Broadway retains a great deal of architectural integrity, with most of its historic building fabric intact. It was constructed fairly late compared to the other hotels surveyed in this phase. It seems to have been an addition to the St. Joe Hotel at 115-1/2 S. Main. For an addition, however, it received a great deal of architectural detailing, undoubtedly due to its location on E. Broadway, the main commercial street in downtown. For visitors to Excelsior Springs however, the emphasis was not on local commercial businesses, but on the mineral waters. The structure at 115-1/2 Main was more strategically located for this type of traffic then. However, this structure has suffered a greater loss of integrity, and by itself would not be eligible for listing in the National Register. 105 E. Broadway however, would be eligible for the National Register as a contributing building in a potential historic district. As 105 E. Broadway and 115-1/2 S. Main are connected, the latter building could possibly be included in such a nomination. Both buildings are strategically located and would be key elements worthy of protection in a potential local historic district.

22. Sources of information.

Sanborn maps. City Directories. Historic photography, post cards, Excelsior Springs Historical Museum.

23. Prepared by
Deon Wolfenbarger
Three Gables Preservation
9550 NE Cookingham Drive
Kansas City, MO 64157

24. Date of survey July, 1991

25. On National Register
Eligible for listing
Individual
 District
Local designation
 Eligible for local designation

23B. Prepared by
Excelsior Springs HPC
City of Excelsior Springs
201 East Broadway
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024

24B. Date of survey January, 2005

25B.

