



# ADSW PRESERVATION CASE STUDIES

## SEDGWICK GARDENS

ADSW assisted with the actions shown in *Italics*.



**Location:** 3726 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC

**Originally Constructed:** 1932

**Original Use:** Rental Apartment Building

**Original Architect:** Mihran Mesrobian

**Current Use:** Rental Apartment Building

*LANDMARK DESIGNATION WAS GRANTED BY THE DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD IN 2015. WE WORKED COLLABORATIVELY WITH THE BUILDING OWNER ON LOBBY PRESERVATION MATTERS AND TO ENSURE THAT LOBBY IMPROVEMENTS WERE SYMPATHETIC TO MESROBIAN'S ORIGINAL DESIGN INTENT.*

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Sedgwick Gardens continued the building boom of the 1920's to help make Connecticut Avenue the premiere residential address in Washington DC for most of the twentieth century. Furthermore, Sedgwick is a masterpiece of Art Deco design and eclectic sensibilities and deserves to be considered at the top of the list of innovative, fascinating and beautiful Art Deco buildings in Washington.

## DESCRIPTION

Occupying the southwest corner of Connecticut Avenue and Sedgwick Street in Northwest Washington, Sedgwick Gardens was built as a rental apartment house and was one of Mesrobian's first commissions after starting his own practice. It is well regarded as one of his masterpieces. Sedgwick Gardens combines many wonderful Art Deco ornamental details inside and out. The brick and limestone exterior has some wonderful stylized motifs, including male and female figures accentuating a striking entrance porte cochere, a Byzantine-inspired rosette medallion on the central elevator penthouse tower as well as more moderne touches like the polychrome horizontal brick banding.

## THE SEDGWICK GARDENS LOBBY

The pièce de résistance of Sedgwick Gardens is the fine entrance lobby. Drawing from more Greco Roman influences but still resplendent with Art Deco touches, this lobby is nothing short of over the top and wonderful! This palatial space features a central skylit atrium with working fountain and is flanked by two generous arcaded seating galleries still outfitted with the original furnishings. Finishes and materials include decorative scagliola plaster on the walls and columns, marble terrazzo floors and plaster bas reliefs and decorative wrought iron grilles and railings.

## ARCHITECT

Noted Washington DC architect Mihran Mesrobian was also responsible for many other great landmarks in the metropolitan area, including the Dupont Circle Building and Hay Adams hotel in the District and the Calvert Manor garden apartment building in Arlington. Of Turkish-Armenian descent, Mesrobian immigrated to the States in 1920 and had a prolific career working for noted developer Harry Wardman. When Wardman went broke after the stock market crash of 1929, Mesrobian started his own firm and continued to practice independently well into the 1950's.

## BACKGROUND

While Sedgwick Gardens had been reasonably maintained over the years, there was select evidence of water damage and minor structural settling in parts of the lobby that led to visible damage on the interior's unique and irreplaceable finishes. Also, the beautiful ornamental light fixtures were in need of new glass shades closer to the originals, which had all been lost and damaged over the years. The ornamental plaster was also in need of cleaning and repair in some areas. Also, some steam heating pipes concealed behind ornamental plaster columns in the lobby had experienced leaks. Emergency repairs were undertaken, and damage plaster was repaired.

## ADSW PRESERVATION

The DC Historic Preservation Review Board granted landmark designation in May of 2015. ADSW worked collaboratively with the building owner on lobby preservation matters and to ensure that lobby improvements were sympathetic to Mesrobian's original design intent. In addition to ADSW's efforts and sponsorship, thanks go to the Designation's Co-Sponsor, the Cleveland Park Historical Society, plus Sally Berk and Dr. Caroline Mesrobian Hickman, who both put in a great deal of effort and advocacy to help secure this Designation.