

NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)



1072

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property: Thomas Commercial Historic District

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historic name: N/A

other name/site number: N/A

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2. Location

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street & number:

Roughly Spruce Street and East Avenue between First Street and one block north of Third Street; East Avenue west to the North Fork of the Blackwater River.

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Thomas

vicinity: N/A

State:WV code:WV county:Tucker code:093 zip code:26292

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 nationally statewide X locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Susan M. Purice

Signature of Certifying Official

6/29/98

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

Thomas Commercial Historic District Tucker County, WV

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of Certifying Official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

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4. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
- other (explain):

Edson A. Beall *8-14-98*
Signature of the Keeper _____ Date _____

=====
5. Classification
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Ownership of Property: Category of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply) (Check only one box)

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | | building(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | district |
| public-State | | site |
| public-Federal | | structure |
| | | object |

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITH PROPERTY
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
48	11	buildings
		sites
2		structures
		objects
50	11	TOTAL

Thomas Commercial Historic District Tucker County, WV

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 1; Cottrill Opera House; #40; listed 1979.

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6. Function or Use

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HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:

Commerce/Trade
Domestic
Social
Government
Recreation and Culture
Transportation

CURRENT FUNCTIONS:

Commerce/Trade
Domestic
Social
Government
Recreation and Culture
Transportation

=====

7. Description

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ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:

Mid-19th Century; Gothic Revival
Late Victorian; Italianate
Late Victorian; Second Renaissance Revival
Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals; Early Colonial Revival & Romanesque
Late 19th & Early 20th Century American Movements; Four Square and Bungalow.

MATERIALS:

Foundation:

Concrete
Concrete block
Stone
Brick
Terra Cotta block.

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Walls:

Aluminum siding
Asbestos shingle siding
Brick
Stucco
German siding
Asphalt shingle siding
Board & Batten siding
Prime siding
Clapboard siding
Concrete block
Molded concrete block
Wood siding
Metal

Roof:

Asphalt shingles
Roll roofing
Membrane
Metal
Slate

Other: N/A

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance
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APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

X 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:

N/A A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

N/A B removed from its original location.

N/A C a birthplace or grave.

N/A D a cemetery.

N/A E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

N/A F a commemorative property.

N/A G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Architecture

Commerce

Ethnic Heritage

Exploration/Settlement.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:

1884-1938.

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SIGNIFICANT DATES:
1884. 1938.

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:
Holmboe, E.C.S. - Architect
Lafferty, R.C. - Architect

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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BIBLIOGRAPHY
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- N/A preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- N/A previously listed in the National Register
- N/A previously determined eligible by the National Register
- N/A designated a National Historic Landmark
- N/A recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- N/A recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- X Other

Name of Repository:
New Historic Thomas
P.O. Box 116
Thomas, WV 26292

Thomas Commercial Historic District Tucker County, WV

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreeage of Property: Approximately 33 acres.

DAVIS QUADRANGLE

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
A. 17. 630210. 4335450. B. 17. 630040. 4335560.
C. 17. 630260. 4335960. D. 17. 630390. 4335920.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheets.)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheets.)

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/Title: Michael Gioulis, Historic Preservation Consultant

Organization: N/A

Date: December 18, 1997

Street & Number: 612 Main Street Telephone: (304) 765-5716

City or Town: Sutton State: WV ZIP: 26601

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PROPERTY OWNER
=====

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

Name: Multiple/List attached

Street & Number: Telephone: ()

City or Town: State: ZIP:
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Thomas Commercial Historic District
Tucker County, WV

The Thomas Commercial Historic District comprises the central business district of Thomas, Tucker County, West Virginia. It contains all of the historic concentration of the downtown commercial buildings in Thomas. The town is located in the north central portion of rural Tucker County. It is located at the junction of US Route 219 and State Route 32 and lies in a narrow canyon of the North Fork of the Blackwater River. The district is roughly rectangular in shape, bounded on the north by the intersection of East Avenue and Route 219; on the south by First Street; on the east by the rising terrain of the hillside; and on the west by the North Fork of the Blackwater River. This corresponds to the commercial section of Thomas.

The nominated area contains approximately 33 acres, approximately six square blocks of Spruce Street and East Avenue between First Street and Third Street, plus the dam on the North Fork of the Blackwater River. There are 61 resources in the district; 48 are considered contributing buildings; 11 are considered non-contributing buildings; and there are 2 contributing structures.

The terrain is relatively flat along East Avenue which faces the Western Maryland Railroad tracks and the North Fork of the Blackwater River and then rises rather sharply behind the buildings on East Avenue. The rear of the buildings on East Avenue are built right into the hillside and the alley behind these forms the next plateau. There is another sharp rise onto Spruce Street. The terrain keeps rising as you travel east up into the residential section. The beginning of the residential portion of Thomas marks the eastern border of the district. The boundaries of the district on the south begin at First Street. South of First Street is some new strip type development. Open areas flank the road to Davis. The northern boundary of the district is the intersection of Routes 219 and 32. New development and open spaces also dominate this landscape as it develops into a major north-south road. The western boundary is the east side of the tracks for the Western Maryland Railroad.

The district represents mostly 19th and 20th century commercial buildings. These are primarily two and three-story, masonry,

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Thomas Commercial Historic District
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buildings with storefronts on the first floor and housing above. The buildings abut one another for the most part and fill the entire lot. There are few side yards, etc. There is an alley behind both of the main streets. These were used historically as "yards" as well as being functional for services, etc. The older commercial buildings in the district include #24, ca. 1890; #44, 1899; #45, ca. 1890. Almost all of the buildings date from the "Great Fire" of 1901. Prior to this the buildings were wood frame construction. The extant buildings represent the second construction phase of the commercial district and the most prolific building period which occurred from 1901 up until about 1920. The construction dates also correspond to the historic development of the town.

The commercial styles represented in the district include the Second Renaissance Revival, Early Colonial Revival and the Italianate. These relate to the period of construction of the buildings. The predominate style in the commercial buildings is the Italianate Style which is related to the association with railroad development. Typically railroad related architecture contains Italianate detailing or styling.

The Frank Colabrese Building, #36, ca. 1902, is a wonderful example of the Italianate Style. It is a two-story, commercial building with an intact Mesker catalog metal facade on the upper story. The first floor has been modified somewhat with the addition of a metal awning but this is easily removable. The upper story has an oversized primary cornice with swag and garland detailing between large brackets. The brackets contain fleur-de-lis details. Below the brackets and above the two, second floor windows is a row of bullseye windows. The windows are flanked by round pilasters, paired on the ends, capped with Ionic capitals. The plinth blocks of the pilasters are decorated with recessed panels with rosettes in them. The storefront originally had a Mesker secondary cornice but only fragments remain. The storefront is a central recessed entrance with flanking display windows. The kickpanels are paneled wood.

Another example of the Italianate Style is #44, the Duncan Funer-

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al Home Building, 1899. This is a two-story, commercial building. There is a primary cornice with brackets. On the upper floor there are projecting, three sided oriels with enclosed porch between them. There is a secondary cornice with tall scrolled brackets. The storefronts have tall, divided transoms. Originally the kickpanels were paneled wood, a few are still extant, but the majority have been covered with permastone. The storefront framing is fluted and the pilasters flanking entrances are capped with bullseye blocks.

Another example of the Italianate Style is #5, ca. 1900. It is very similar to the Duncan Funeral Home, #44, in detailing. It is a three-story, commercial building with frieze band windows above the third floor and a primary wood cornice with brackets. The upper floors have vertical, 2/2 windows with simple surrounds. The siding on the upper floors is asbestos shingle siding on the front elevation and German siding on the side elevations. The second floor has a central enclosed porch with a bank of 3/1 windows flanked by vertical, 2/2 windows. The floor of the porch is incorporated into the secondary cornice and it has scrolled brackets. The two recessed entrances on the first floor have tall, divided transoms and display windows. The kickpanels are wood with beaded board panels. The central kickpanels have glass in them to light the basement.

Many of the buildings and the general ambiance of the town are derived from European influences. The immigrants which settled and developed Thomas are reflected in the architecture, particularly by the use of upper story balconies and porches. One of the most outstanding examples of this is #37, ca. 1902. This is a large, four-story, red brick, Renaissance Revival Style, commercial building. Decorative details include a corbeled brick primary cornice, a wood dentiled secondary cornice, arched windows on the fourth floor and the rusticated brick pilasters with corbeled Craftsman styled capitals of brick between each bay. The second and third floors have sets of windows and doors with each set having a fan shaped, filigreed, iron balcony.

The Cottrill Opera House, listed on the National Register of

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Historic Places in 1979, #40, 1902, is representative of the Second Renaissance Revival Style. It is a rectangular, red brick and stucco, theater building. It looks to be three or more stories high from the exterior but it is an open auditorium with balcony seating on the interior. The front of the building is dominated by three, two-story, arched windows with divided side lights and transoms which light up the lobby. The building is capped with a full story, stucco, parapet with two, small, Roman grille windows in it. The stucco replaced a large, oversized entablature with a cornice and paneled balustrade. Flanking the central recess with the arched windows are projecting end pavilions with brick quoins and circular brick panels. There is the typical theater entrance; two sets of double doors. On the south end of the building is another set of double doors with a brick arch. On the north end of the building is a central, recessed entrance with divided transoms.

The Renaissance Revival Style is also represented by the Miners and Merchants Bank, #33, 1902. It is a three-story, red brick, bank building with a slate, mansard roof. It has a dentiled entablature and paired, 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills. The first floor is rusticated and has white, glazed brick bands and a central stone arch entrance. There are glazed, white brick, quoins. There is a non-original metal canopy and a two-story, red brick addition on the side.

There are a few residences within the district. These represent the Gothic Revival, Four Square and Bungalow Styles. #26 was originally a residence but is now used commercially. It is a good example of a Gothic Revival Style residence. It is a two-story, hip roof residence with cross gables. The roof is standing seam metal. The gabled pediment on the front projects and has a pointed window at the top and paired, 2/2 windows below. The front porch has a hip roof and has been enclosed. The siding is asphalt shingle siding made to imitate brick.

There are several Four Square Style residences; #12, 18 and 19. All share the hip roof, some with hip dormers; the symmetrical plan; and hip roof, front porches.

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Building #20 is a good example of the Bungalow Style of residence. It is a two-story, side gable house with a large, central, gable dormer with large, end brackets and tripartite, 3/1 windows. The facade is tan brick. The enclosed front porch has a modified hip roof, 3/1 windows with divided transoms and a shingled balustrade on brick piers.

Buildings which represent later development in Thomas and which are representative of the early 20th century include: #22, Milkint's Garage Building, ca. 1905; and #46, City Hall, 1927.

Milkint's Garage Building is a two-story, molded block, garage building with a modern, two-story, wood sided addition on the side. There is a red brick chimney and a simple entablature with the words "Milkint's Garage" painted on it. The corner of the building is truncated. The mortar between the molded blocks is pink. There are large garage bay doors on two of the elevations with 6 lights of glass over diagonal panels in each door.

The City Hall Building, #46, 1927, represents later development in the town of Thomas and is a good example of government buildings of the early 20th century. It is a three-story, red brick, hip roof building with a gable dormer and an enclosed brick chimney. The windows are 1/1 with stone lintels and sills. The bottom floor has two large garage bay doors which serve as the fire department. Surrounding the garage doors are molded block walls.

There are two other resources within the town of Thomas which are rather unique. One is the Thomas Central Power Plant Dam, #23, which was constructed in 1911 to provide power to the Davis Coal and Coke Company who in turn provided power to the town. It is a simple concrete dam located at the very edge of the town's limits. The other resource is the WPA wall and stairway, #34, which was constructed in 1938 through the WPA project. The wall runs the length of Spruce Street between First and Third Streets with stairway access at Second Street above the Miners and Merchants Bank to East Avenue. It provided a retaining wall for Spruce Street, helped to define the alley behind East Avenue as a func-

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tional space and offered access from the lower East Avenue up to Spruce Street.

The following is a complete list of resources in the district. The numbers refer to the accompanying map. Including outbuildings, there are 61 resources in the district. 48 are considered contributing buildings; 11 are considered non-contributing buildings; and 2 are considered contributing structures.

LIST OF SITES

1. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1905

description: Two-story, front facing "L" residence. Central brick chimney. Asphalt roof. Vertical, 4/1 windows. Enclosed, one-story, front porch with aluminum siding and 2/2 windows. Asbestos shingle siding. Exposed block chimney on side elevation. Concrete foundation. 4 X 3 bays.

1 contributing building.

2. 24 SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Two-story, rear facing "T" residence. Exposed brick chimney on side. Asphalt roof. 2/2 windows. Aluminum siding. One-story, front porch with new square porch posts and new spindled balustrade. Small, side, entrance porch with square posts. Block foundation. 3 X 2 bays.

1 contributing building.

3. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Three-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Second floor has enclosed porch with stucco and multi-paned windows. Third floor has stucco siding. 2/2 windows. Storefront has double entrance doors flanked by display windows with divided transoms. Decorative arched scrollwork over transoms. Concrete foundation. 3 X 5 bays. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

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4. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: The Eagle's Nest. Three-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Wood, primary cornice with brackets. Asphalt siding on upper stories; clapboard siding on first floor. Three entrances on first floor. Upper stories have enclosed porches which overhang first floor and have wood and asphalt siding and windows. Far right storefront has display windows with transoms. Stone pier foundation. 3 bays wide. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

5. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1900

description: Three and one-half-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Wood, primary cornice with brackets. Vertical, 2/2 windows. Asbestos shingle siding on front; German siding on side. Enclosed porch on second floor. Two storefront entrances with wood double doors flanked by display windows with undivided transoms. Recessed entrances. Brackets over storefronts. Paneled kickpanels with beaded board in panels. Block foundation. 4 X 4 bays. Italianate Style.

1 contributing building.

6. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: Eagle's Nest II/G.J. Colabrese Building. Three-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Wood, primary cornice with brackets. 1/1 windows with exterior storms. Asphalt siding. Secondary cornice with end brackets. Non-original, shed roof over first floor with square posts. Two storefront entrances flanked by display windows. Non-original, permastone kickpanels. Center kickpanels have windows for light into basement. Concrete foundation. 5 X 3 bays. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

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7. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: Three and one-half-story, apartment building. Flat roof. Vertical, 2/2 windows. Aluminum siding. Second story has enclosed porch with aluminum siding and 1/1 windows with exterior storms. Two entrance doors on first floor. Block foundation. 4 X 4 bays.

1 contributing building.

7A. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1920

description: Shed roof outbuilding. Asphalt siding on east; board and batten siding on south. 6/6 windows on south. 4 bays wide. Deteriorated.

1 non-contributing building.

8. CORNER OF SPRUCE AND SECOND STREETS, residential

date: Ca. 1925

description: Three-story, end gable residence. Asphalt roof. 3/1 windows. First floor is red brick with a two bay garage with flat transom windows. Prime siding ; clapboard siding beneath prime. Enclosed, second floor porch with 3/1 windows. Brick and block foundation. 2 X 5 bays.

1 contributing building.

8A. CORNER OF SPRUCE AND SECOND STREETS, residential

date: Ca. 1970

description: Gable roof outbuilding. Aluminum siding. 6/6 windows. Concrete foundation.

1 non-contributing building.

9. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1920

description: One-story, end gable residence. Enclosed porch. 3/1 windows. Asphalt roof. Asbestos shingle siding. Terra cotta block foundation. 1 X 3 bays.

1 contributing building.

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10. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1980

description: Modern trailer with addition.
1 non-contributing building.

11. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1900

description: Three-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Asphalt siding on upper floors; brick on first floor. Vertical, 2/2 windows. Central entrance door flanked by storefronts with single entrance doors and display windows with undivided transoms. Central doors on upper stories. Stone foundation. 5 X 5 bays. Italianate commercial Style.
1 contributing building.

11A. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1980

description: Concrete well house.
1 non-contributing building.

12. 238 SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1920

description: Two-story, Four Square Style residence. Central hip dormer. Hip, asphalt roof. Dormer has three, small windows in it with 6/1 panes. 1/1 windows elsewhere. Aluminum siding. Enclosed entranceway. Brick foundation. 2 X 2 bays.
1 contributing building.

13. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: The Redwood Apartments. Three-story, apartment building. Shed roof. Paired, single pane windows. Center entrance on first floor with wood siding. Aluminum siding; concrete block on first floor. Concrete block foundation. 2 X 4 bays.
1 non-contributing building due to multiple modifications.

14. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: Ca. 1990

description: Telecom Building. One-story, red brick building.

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Hip, asphalt roof. Modern.
1 non-contributing building.

15. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Two and one-half-story, end gable residence with flanking gable wings. Central brick chimney. Roll roofing. Vertical, 2/2 and 1/1 windows. Asphalt siding. Enclosed, one-story, front porch with T-111 siding on right side and left side has decorative shingle siding and 3/1 windows. Stone foundation. 4 X 2 bays.

1 contributing building.

16. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1890

description: Two-story, flat roofed residence. Primary cornice with brackets. Aluminum siding. 1/1 windows. Exposed brick chimney on side. Enclosed, one-story, front porch with aluminum siding and fixed pane windows. Concrete block foundation. 3 X 1 bays.

1 non-contributing building due to multiple modifications.

16A. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Garage with several additions.

1 non-contributing building due to multiple modifications.

17. CORNER OF SPRUCE AND THIRD STREETS, residential

date: Ca. 1900

description: Two-story, cross gable residence. Asphalt roof. Brick chimney. Partial return cornice. Aluminum siding. 1/1 windows with simple surrounds. Wraparound front porch which has a central gable pediment, turned posts and shingled balustrade on front; porch is enclosed on side with 4/1 windows and shingled balustrade. Stone foundation. 4 X 3 bays.

1 contributing building.

17A. CORNER OF SPRUCE AND THIRD STREETS, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Two-story, side gable outbuilding. Asphalt roof.

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First floor and foundation is molded concrete block; asbestos shingle siding on second floor. 1/1 windows.
1 contributing building.

18. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Two-story, Four Square Style residence. Hip asphalt roof. Pressed weatherboard siding. 1/1 windows. Enclosed, hip roof, front porch with 5/1 windows. Block foundation. 2 X 2 bays.
1 contributing building.

18A. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Gable garage with German siding and block foundation.
1 contributing building.

19. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Two-story, Four Square Style residence. Hip, asphalt roof. Central brick chimney. Aluminum siding. 1/1 windows. Enclosed front and rear porches. Front porch has 3/1 windows and aluminum siding. Stone pier and block foundation. 2 X 2 bays.
1 contributing building.

19A. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1910

description: Garage. Gable roof. German siding. 6/6 windows. Concrete block foundation. 1 bay wide.
1 contributing building.

20. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1925

description: Two-story, side gable residence with large, end gable dormer in center with large, end brackets. Tripartite, 3/1 windows in dormer. Asphalt roof. Tan brick. 3/1 windows. Enclosed, one-story, front porch with 3/1 windows with divided transoms and shingled balustrade on brick piers. Enclosed, one-

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story, back porch. Concrete foundation. 3 X 2 bays. Bungalow Style.

1 contributing building.

21. SPRUCE STREET, residential

date: Ca. 1900

description: One and one-half-story, end gable residence with shed and end gable dormers on side elevation. Central brick chimney. Asphalt roof. Aluminum siding. 1/1 windows. One-story, hip asphalt roof, enclosed front porch with windows and siding. Concrete foundation. 1 X 4 bays. Early Colonial Revival Style.

1 contributing building.

22. ROUTE 32, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Milkint's Garage. Two-story, molded block, garage building with modern, two-story, wood sided addition on side. Flat roof. Red brick chimney. One bay garage door on end of two elevations. Pink mortar. Block foundation. 7 X 3 bays. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

23. NORTH FORK OF BLACKWATER RIVER, commercial

date: 1911

description: Thomas Central Power Plant Dam. Concrete dam over timbers. Spans the North Fork of the Blackwater River.

1 contributing structure.

24. EAST AVENUE, residential

date: Ca. 1890

description: Two-story residence. Side gable with flanking, projecting end gable wings. Asphalt roof. Exposed brick chimney on side. Aluminum siding. 4/4 windows. Stone foundation. 3 X 5 bays. Gothic Revival Style.

1 contributing building.

25. 21 EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: 1916

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description: DePollo Building/Body and Soul Cafe. Three-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof with stepped parapet. Brick chimney. Stucco over brick on side elevation. Primary cornice with center and end brackets. 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills. Flat roof canopy over first floor with decorative ironwork on roof edge and chamfered posts framing first floor. Two, single entrance door storefronts; both flanked by display windows with divided transoms. Brick kickpanels with louvers. Concrete foundation. 5 X 4 bays. Commercial Style.
1 contributing building.

25A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1920

description: Shed roof garage building. Four pairs of garage doors and one entrance door. Alley side has German siding; other sides have corrugated metal siding. 4 bays wide.
1 contributing building.

26. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Cooper Insurance. Two-story, hip roof residence with cross gables. Standing seam metal roof. Asphalt siding. 2/2 windows. Pointed arch window in gable end. Enclosed, hip roof, front porch. Stucco foundation with brick piers. 5 X 2 bays. Gothic Revival Style.
1 contributing building.

26A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: Shed roof garage in rear with asphalt siding and 6/6 windows.
1 contributing building.

27. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Three-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Primary cornice with brackets. Aluminum siding. 4/4 windows. First floor has central entrance door with flanking fixed display windows.

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Red brick kickpanels. Concrete foundation. 4 X 1 bays.
1 contributing building.

28. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: 1923

description: Two-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Molded block on first floor; tan brick on second floor. Quoins. 1/1 windows. Central entrance door flanked by storefronts with transoms and paneled kickpanels. Block foundation. 3 X 4 bays. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

29. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Christmas Shop. Two-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Primary cornice with fan brackets. Asbestos shingle siding. Oriels on second floor. 1/1 windows. First floor has a wood shingled, shed roof overhang with square posts. Wood shingles on first floor. 4 bays wide. Italianate Style.

1 contributing building.

30. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1985

description: Christmas Shop Addition. One-story, modern addition. Flat roof. Wood shingle siding. Shed roof awning.

1 non-contributing building.

31. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Two-story, shed roof, commercial building. Prime siding. 1/1 windows on second floor. Two storefronts on first floor with recessed entrances and tall transom windows. Recessed panels in kickpanels. Secondary cornice with brackets. 7 bays wide. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

31A. EAST AVENUE, residential

date: Ca. 1920

description: One-story, "T" shape, gable roof residence in rear

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with asbestos shingle siding and concrete block foundation and cellar.

1 contributing building.

32. 14 EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1902

description: Book Store. Three-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Primary cornice with brackets topped with a paneled parapet. 1/1 windows. Central entrance door flanked by storefronts with display windows with undivided transoms. Paneled kickpanels. Secondary cornice with end brackets. Shed roof overhang over first floor - non-original. Concrete, brick and block foundation. 6 bays wide. Commercial Style.

1 contributing building.

33. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: 1902

description: Miner's and Merchant's Bank. Architects - Holmboe and Lafferty. Three-story, bank building. Shed roof slate mansard roof. Dentiled entablature. Red brick with glazed, white brick quoins. Paired, 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills. Rusticated first floor with white, glazed brick bands and central stone arch entrance. Non-original canopy over first floor. Concrete foundation. 3 X 2 bays. Two-story, red brick, modern addition on west side with drive through. Renaissance Revival Style.

1 contributing building.

33A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1970

description: Concrete block outbuilding in rear.

1 non-contributing building.

34. SPRUCE STREET AND EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: 1938

description: WPA wall and steps. Large retaining wall which forms terraces for Spruce Street and the alley between Spruce Street and East Avenue. Walls are coursed rough-faced ashlar stone with stone caps. They run the length of Spruce Street along a north-south axis. At Second Street, there is a break in the wall for a

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set of monumental stairs to the lower level and East Avenue. The wall forms the back of the East Avenue lots and creates the garden or backyard public space behind the apartments.
1 contributing structure.

35. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Two-story, red brick commercial building. Flat roof. Corbeled brick primary cornice. Enclosed second story porch with asphalt siding and windows. Aluminum siding on side. Brick pilasters with brick shoulders. Central arched entranceway flanked by storefronts. Prism glass transom on left storefront. Turned posts on right storefront. Stone foundation. 3 X 1 bays. Romanesque Revival Style.
1 contributing building.

35A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: Two bay, shed roof garage with prime siding.
1 contributing building.

36. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1902

description: Frank Colabrese building. Two-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Cast iron and pressed metal Mesker catalog facade. Primary cornice with fleur-de-lis brackets and swag and garlands. Second floor has 1/1 windows with Corinthian pilasters; these are paired on the ends. Recessed storefront with paneled kickpanels. Non-original, shed roof canopy. Stone foundation. 1 bay wide. Italianate commercial Style.
1 contributing building.

37. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1902

description: Large, four-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Corbeled brick cornice with brackets. 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills: windows are arched on fourth floor; flat headed on second and third floors. Windows are also paired on fourth floor; pairs on second and third floors consist of a

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window and a door with a balcony with fan shaped iron balustrade on each. Building is 6 bays wide with rusticated brick pilasters with brick lattice work forming the capitals. First floor has four storefronts with the two center ones having recessed entrances. Storefronts have paneled brick kickpanels and tall, divided transoms. Entrance door to upper floors has non-original glazed, brick kickpanel and one of the storefronts has an original wood, paneled kickpanel. Concrete foundation. Renaissance Revival Style.

1 contributing building.

37A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: Rear, two bay, shed roof, storage building with board siding on alley, concrete on east side and asphalt siding on west side.

1 contributing building.

38. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1902

description: Hoss's House/Carmen Dibacco building. Four-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Brick quoins. Dentiled brick cornice. 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills. Rusticated brick pilasters separate bays. Corbeled and dentiled brick course in each bay and floor. Second and third floors have central iron balconies with doors. Two storefronts on first floor. Both have non-original aluminum framing and permastone kickpanels. Block and brick foundation. 4 X 9 bays. Renaissance Revival Style.

1 contributing building.

39. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1925

description: Three-story, red brick, commercial building with two-story, red brick wing. Brick is painted on first floor. Side elevations are concrete block. Flat roofs. 6/1 and 3/1 windows. One storefront in each wing. The right one has a divided transom with paneled brick kickpanels. The left one has same kickpanel but transoms are painted over. Block foundation. 6 X 5 bays.

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Commercial Style.
1 contributing building.

39A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1925

description: Dibacco Garage. Three-story, shed roof garage/cellar house. Two floors have two bays of garage; first and second floors are poured concrete; and the third floor has metal siding.
1 contributing building.

40. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: 1902

description: Cottrill Opera House. Three-story, red brick, opera house. Third floor has been covered with stucco. Flat roof. Rusticated brick pilasters. Third floor has two small windows with stone sills and Roman grille dividers; second floor has three, large, central, arched windows with divided sidelights. Central theater entrance has two sets of double doors. On right side is a set of double doors with an arched brick surround. On left side is a central, recessed storefront with divided transoms. Stone foundation. 5 X 6 bays. Contributing. Renaissance Revival.

Already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, individually.

41. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1955

description: UMWA Building. Two-story, red brick and block, commercial building. Flat roof. Metal casement windows. Glass block windows on first floor. Block foundation. 3 X 3 bays.
1 non-contributing building.

42. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: The Clothes Closet. Three-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Aluminum siding on side elevation. Iron balconies with doorways on upper floors. Decorative brick shoulders on end pilasters. Paired, 1/1 windows on upper floors. Storefront has divided transoms and brick kickpanels. 3 X 1 bays.

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Commercial Style.
1 contributing building.

43. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1905

description: Colabrese Brothers Furniture Store. Two-story, red brick, commercial building. Flat roof. Brick primary cornice with brick end brackets, corbels and dentils. Vertical, 2/2 windows with stone lintels and sills. Non-original metal canopy over first floor. Storefront has recessed entrance and non-original aluminum framing and permastone kickpanels. 5 bays wide. Romanesque Style.

1 contributing building.

44. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: 1899

description: Duncan Funeral Home. Large, two-story, Italianate Style commercial building. Shed roof. Primary cornice with brackets. Vertical, 2/2 windows. Projecting, three-sided oriels on second floor with enclosed porch between them. Prime siding. Secondary cornice has tall, scrolled brackets. Storefronts have tall, divided transoms. One recessed storefront; one central entrance door; one side entrance on west end (morgue); one flush, side entrance on east end. Permastone kickpanels. Windows in storefront are four panes with the bottom half covered with plywood. Side elevation has clapboard siding. 5 bays wide.

1 contributing building.

44A. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1910

description: Shed roof garage in rear with wood and asphalt siding. 6/6 windows.

1 contributing building.

45. EAST AVENUE, commercial

date: Ca. 1890

description: Sportsman's Club/Thayer building. Two-story, commercial building. Flat roof. Aluminum siding on second floor. Wood siding and permastone on first floor, non-original. Vertical, 2/2

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windows. Stone foundation. 6 X 4 bays.
1 contributing building.

46. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: 1927

description: City Hall. Three-story, red brick building. Enclosed brick chimney. Roll roofing. 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills. Hip roof with gabled dormer on side elevation. Lowest floor has two large garage doors which houses the fire dept. trucks. Concrete and molded block foundation. 4 X 3 bays.
1 contributing building.

46A. SPRUCE STREET, commercial

date: 1927

description: One-story, red brick, pump house which matches City Hall building. Hip, roll roofing roof with brick chimney. 1/1 windows with stone lintels and sills. Concrete foundation. 3 X 3 bays.

1 contributing building.

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The Thomas Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion A for its association with the settlement and development of the Town of Thomas; for its association with the development of Tucker County and the commerce of the region through the coal and timber industries; and for its association with ethnic heritage and people of European origin settlement in Thomas. The Thomas Commercial Historic District is also significant under Criterion C for its association with many of the architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th century.

Under Criterion A, the Thomas Commercial Historic District is significant for its association with the settlement and development of Thomas. Thomas was originally part of the vast tract of land Lord Fairfax was granted. The Fairfax Stone is located only three miles from Thomas. In 1747 Lord Fairfax hired George Washington to survey this tract. The first known settler in Thomas was Jacob C. Pase who came from Pennsylvania in 1880. During the next three years other settlers followed including Jacob's son, Levi. Other early settlers were John W. Bonnifield who opened the first store in town and Daniel Miller and David Arnold.

The West Virginia Central and Pittsburg Railway extended its line to Thomas in August of 1884. This was to serve the area coal mines that had opened in the winter of 1883-1884 and to transport the large timber reserves from the area in and around Thomas. At that time the town received its name in honor of Thomas B. Davis, then a member of the firm of the Davis Brothers. Thomas B., along with his brother, Henry Gassaway Davis, had established the firm of Davis Brothers as a mercantile store in Piedmont, WV. Following the Civil War, their business prospered and they branched out into coal, timber, and railroad development. A post office, a hotel, a general store and a bakery were quickly established. For the next ten years the little town grew and large mills were opened to process the timber. By the year 1892 a charter of incorporation was applied for and received. In 1899, a water system was installed. Electricity arrived in 1904, furnished from the Davis Coal & Coke Company's plant. The first newspaper, a weekly, was opened in 1900 called the Thomas Record. Several other newspapers followed, including "La Sentinella del West

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Virginia." This was an Italian newspaper published by R.D. Benedetto and edited by Vincenzo Procopio. It was the first Italian newspaper in West Virginia and its circulation peaked at 3,500 copies weekly.

The WV Central & Pittsburg Railway was the major factor for the growth of the town and the county. It established machine shops and a round house in Thomas. In 1901, the Western Maryland Railroad built a depot in Thomas. In 1906 Thomas had a peak population of about 4,000. The population of Thomas and the county began a slow decline from the 1920's to the present due to dwindling resources and the general decline of the railroad.

As with many towns throughout West Virginia, fire was a major factor in shaping the built environment. Early buildings were of wood frame construction. The most devastating fire in Thomas occurred in November 1901. Approximately 40-50 mile an hour winds fanned the flames. In only an hour and a half, eighty three buildings located in the commercial district were burned to the ground. Many of the buildings were rebuilt with masonry to preclude this from happening again. Consequently, many of the buildings in the district date from this post fire period.

The Miners and Merchants Bank, (#33), was chartered June 10, 1902 and still serves the community.

Churches were well represented in Thomas. By 1906, there was a Catholic church, a Presbyterian church, an Episcopal church, a Methodist church and a Baptist church which primarily served the African-American community. Henry Gassaway Davis was an ardent supporter of Catholic churches throughout the state and Thomas is no exception. The Davis Coal and Coke Company donated the lot to the Catholic Diocese for erection of the original church. This church was destroyed by the great fire of 1901 but a second church was built on the same lot.

The first school in Thomas was established in the fall of 1886. No school building was owned by the school district so rooms were rented for the next five years until a two room school house was

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built in 1890. Additions to this were made in 1895 and 1898 as the needs of the community grew. In 1903, again due to increasing needs, a second small, one room, school building was built in North Thomas and the Board of Education purchased the old M.E. Church and converted it to a school in South Thomas. By 1906, the Thomas school system had 450 pupils enrolled and employed nine teachers. The 450 pupil enrollment included the segregated one room school for African-American children.

Under Criterion A, Thomas is significant for its association with ethnic heritage by the many European immigrants who settled here, particularly Italians. Many immigrants came to Thomas as day laborers for the mine and timber industries. Others settled into service businesses. In 1884, the Geisberger, O'Day, Feely, McGan, Wilson and Jones' families were in the first tide of immigrants. William McGan became the first postmaster in Thomas and Feely and Wilson opened the second store in town. In 1887 Abraham Lincoln Helmick arrived. He was in the mercantile business until 1889 at which time he became the postmaster. In 1900 he served as a County Commissioner, in 1904 as Sheriff and then became a State Senator from 1920 until his death in 1945.

Phoebe Ellen and Thomas Thayer also arrived in 1887. Mr. Thayer was a coal miner and Mrs. Thayer ran a rooming house and tavern. She and Mrs. Mary Geisberger were two women involved in real estate and responsible for construction of the large building on the north end of East Avenue, #45, "Buck's Place", which was operated by her grandson, Stuart Thayer.

Hiram Cottrill also arrived in 1887. He worked for the Davis Brothers Company and then opened a saloon. After the great fire of 1901 he built the Cottrill Opera House, #40, which was completed in 1902. He also served as one of the Directors of the Miners and Merchants Bank.

By 1889, the one group who made the largest mark on Thomas was from Italy and Eastern Europe. This included many of the merchants of Thomas such as the DeCicco Brothers, R.D. Benedetto, the DiBacco brothers (#39A), the DePollos (#25), the DiMaio's, the

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Dilettos, the Gennantonios, etc. R.D. Benedetto became a publisher, merchant, broker and a realtor. Benedetto published the Thomas Sentinel and La Sentinella. La Sentinella was an Italian language weekly with a circulation of 3,500 copies weekly throughout the state. Joseph Ross, a linguist who spoke four languages, arrived in 1900 from Austria and had a dry goods store and a saloon. Wladyslaw Dackiewicz arrived from Poland in 1903 to serve as an interpreter for the Davis Brothers. He spoke eight languages. At one time eighteen different nationalities were present in Thomas. Due to the varied nationalities of the immigrants, the little town of Thomas had quite the cosmopolitan air.

The Colabrese brothers, Ernest, Felix, Frank and Charles, (#36, 43 and 6), arrived in Thomas in 1906 and have been involved in the mercantile business since 1936. There is still a Colabrese Brothers Furniture Store in Thomas today.

The Italians were the largest percentage of any white, foreign born immigrants in the state and particularly in Tucker County and Thomas. The overall population figures for the state from 1890 to 1900 had increased 24%; in Tucker County, it had increased 108%. In 1930, the United States had a foreign born population of 19% compared to 3% for West Virginia while Tucker County had a foreign born population of 4.5%. West Virginia, in 1920, had a foreign born population of 4.2% while Tucker County's population was 8.9%, more than twice the state average. There are no figures available for the town of Thomas specifically but the county figures are indicative of the town. All population figures in the state indicate that Italian immigrants are the largest group. In 1920, Italian immigrants in the entire state represent 22.9% of the total population. The group next in line is Hungarians, at 10%.

Some of the European cultural influences are reflected in the architecture of the buildings. Most of the buildings contain, or once had, balconies and porches, where people would sit on Friday and Saturday nights to socialize with passerby on the street. They also gathered here for weekly band parades, a significant social pastime. The porches are still extant on buildings #3, 4,

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5, 7, 35, 37, 38, 42, and 44. Also a very European feature is the use of the rear yard of the "flats", apartment buildings, #37 and 38, as a social courtyard. Here they would gather, socialize, play music and eat on the rear porches or at the fountain built into the retaining wall.

Also significant to the historic district is the WPA project which constructed the extensive retaining wall system and monumental stairs on Second Street, #34, in 1938. This was a major benefit to the stabilization and street system in town, and still influences the traffic patterns of this major state road.

Under Criterion A, the Thomas Commercial Historic District is significant for its association with the development of Tucker County and the economic development of the region through its coal and timber industries which were made possible by the railroad. Tucker County was formed on March 7, 1856. It was named for Henry Saint George Tucker, Sr., a lawyer who became counsel for the estate of Lord Fairfax and who was active in Virginia and national politics. Prospectors employed by the Davis Brothers discovered a coal seam in 1884 near Thomas. In 1886 the Davis Brothers purchased a mine and equipment from the railroad company and began operations. In the same year the Davis Brothers and Stephen B. Elkins formed a partnership for the purpose of opening the Davis coal mine which was located about a mile south of Thomas. By 1887 the company enlarged its operations and built two coke ovens.

In 1888, the Davis Brothers and Stephen Elkins reorganized and incorporated the company to better serve their mining and shipping interests. On January 17, 1889, the Davis Coal and Coke Company was organized with their principal offices being located at Piedmont, WV, and a sales office in Baltimore, MD. By February the company purchased the Davis No. 1 mine and all the equipment and leased all of the Davis coal in Tucker County. Improvements were begun with the building of worker's housing, tipples and coke ovens. By 1894, the Davis Coal and Coke Company had absorbed 4 to 5 other coal companies and owned over 100,000 acres of coal lands located along the railroad line. It established several

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large producing collieries and had an output of 8,000 tons per day. The town of Thomas was the hub of the company with the company offices being there. Within a one mile radius of the offices there were seven mines with an output of 4,000 tons per day and 570 coke ovens. Also located here was the massive company store of Buxton and Landstreet Company. The Davis Coal and Coke Company contributed to the town's development with construction of the dam, #23, at the north end of town for power generation and by providing electricity to the town from its plant.

The coal mining and timber industries were able to exist because of railroad transportation. Once again the Davis Brothers were at the forefront of this transportation empire.

The West Virginia Central and Pittsburg Railroad was formed by Henry Gassaway Davis and his son-in-law, Stephen B. Elkins. The first line of the WV Central & Pittsburg RR was completed to Gormanian in 1883; to Davis in 1884; and the line from Thomas to Parsons in 1888. The WV Central was sold to the Western Maryland RR in 1905.

In 1881 the West Virginia legislature granted a sweeping charter to the WV Central to build rail lines, link with any other line, buy and sell real estate, to mine and to manufacture lumber and haul timber. Consequently, Davis and Elkins were ideally positioned to profit from this charter. As owners of the railroad they controlled all of the natural resources in the region.

The Western Maryland acquired four other rail lines in 1905, thus virtually guaranteeing its monopoly in the northeastern section of the state.

Henry Gassaway Davis and Stephen B. Elkins were instrumental in the development of Thomas, Tucker County and indeed, the entire state of West Virginia. Davis combined his business career with a political one, as did Elkins.

Davis was elected to the House of Delegates of West Virginia from Hampshire County in 1865. Following his first term as a delegate

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he ran for the West Virginia Senate. He was elected to the US Senate in 1871, where he served for two terms. In 1904, he was the vice-presidential candidate on the Democratic ticket with Alton B. Parker. He was also active in civic projects, lending his name and financing to a number of schools, churches and clubs throughout the state. Henry Gassaway Davis died in 1916 having made a big impact on the development of the state.

Stephen B. Elkins, Davis' son-in-law, was also a contributor to the development of the state through his association with Davis and his own political career. Elkins came to West Virginia in 1878, after having served as Attorney General and US District Attorney in New Mexico. In 1895, he was elected US Senator from West Virginia and was twice reelected to that position, serving until his death in 1911. He and Davis founded the Coal and Coke Railroad in 1906 and continually expanded their land holdings, railroads and coal interests. Elkins served on several Board of Directors of railroads throughout the state. His contribution was as important to the state as Davis'.

Tucker County had vast untouched forests. Prior to the coming of the railroad very little timber was cut for manufacturing but once the railroad arrived this all changed. In 1834, the timber industry in Tucker County began in earnest with the rafting of timber down the Cheat River. This small beginning continued until 1852, when the B&O Railway was completed to Grafton. The Cheat and Tygart Rivers were heavily used until 1889, when the WV Central & Pittsburg Railroad reached Elkins; and floating logs down rivers became unnecessary.

In the town of Thomas the Bond Brothers of the firm of Dubois & Bond Brothers, Maryland, operated the major mills by 1906. They had established two mills in the Thomas area along the Western Maryland Railroad line. They installed a one mile tram railway which ran from the mill directly to the main line of the Western Maryland.

1909 was the peak year of the West Virginia lumber industry with eighty-three band mills operating and production soared to 1,483

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million board feet. By 1920, most of the virgin timber was gone and the lumber industry began a swift decline.

Tucker County's population increase is reflected in the growth of all of these industries. In 1870, the population of the county was 1,907; in 1880 it was 3,151; in 1890 it had doubled to 6,459; in 1900 it doubled again to 13,433; in 1910 it was 18,675; and in 1916 it was 21,971. By 1920, the population of the county had decreased reflecting the same decline as the town of Thomas itself. The natural resources had been mostly plundered and the boom period was on the decline.

The Thomas Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion C for its association with late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles.

The Italianate Style is represented by a number of commercial buildings in the downtown. These include #11, 29, 36 and 44. The Duncan Funeral Home building, #44, is a good example of the style and is in relatively intact condition. It has vertically oriented 2/2 windows, large cornice and large secondary cornice with decorative large brackets and oriels on the second floor.

The Renaissance Revival Style is also represented in the town, possibly attributed to some of the Italian residents, and their memories of the palazzos of Italy. The Opera House, (#40), is probably the largest and most recognizable of the style, though the Miners and Merchants Bank, (#33), also by the same architects as the Opera House, is a good example. It has a rusticated first floor with an arched opening, quoins on the corners of the building, various types and sizes of windows on all floors and a decorative cornice. The Opera House provided entertainment and cultural experiences for local residents.

The most common architectural style is the simple Commercial Style prevalent in West Virginia in the early 20th century. Buildings #3, 4, 6, 22, 25, 28, 31, 32, 39, and 42 are examples. They are masonry, two and three story buildings with simple brick detailing such as corbeled cornices, or corbeled brackets, and

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corbeled brick panels on the elevations.

Building #35 is a good example of the Romanesque Revival Style for downtown commercial buildings. It has a corbeled cornice at the parapet line that forms corbeled brackets in an arcade along the front of the building. There are also prominent brick pilasters and a large arched center entrance on the first floor.

The architectural firm of Holmboe and Lafferty is represented by two of the most prominent buildings in the town, the Opera House, (#40), and the Miners and Merchants Bank, (#33). The firms offices were located in Clarksburg, West Virginia.

In summary, the Thomas Commercial Historic District is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of Tucker County and the town of Thomas, as the location of the center of business, banking, and commercial activity for the industries that fueled the area's development. It was the location of the banks that served the natural resource industries of the county; the general mercantile and other commercial stores that serviced the population and businesses and industries of the region, and the location of social activity and recreation for those citizens. It is also significant for its relation to the immigrant settlement into West Virginia, being an example of the breadth of European, specifically Italian, settlement, and the social and physical influences of these people. It is also significant for its association with the settlement of the region, again due to the establishment of the commercial center of activity. It is finally significant under Criterion C for its association with architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, containing a number of representative buildings of these styles.

The period of significance, 1884 to 1938, relates to the arrival of the railroad in the town of Thomas in 1884 and the construction of the WPA retaining wall and steps in 1938.

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Section 10 Page 2

Thomas Commercial Historic District
Tucker County, WV

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundary of the Thomas Commercial Historic District is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying map titled "Thomas Commercial Historic District, Tucker County, Thomas, West Virginia" dated December, 1997.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The boundaries encompass the major business district of Thomas as it exists today, excluding recent non-significant strip development. The area east of the boundaries relate to residential housing, which is not part of the commercial district. On the west, the boundary is the east edge of the tracks for the Western Maryland Railroad. The hillside forms a natural boundary here. The northern boundary is defined by the junction of Spruce Street and East Avenue, forming Route 219. North of this is new construction. The southern boundary is the junction of Spruce Street and East Avenue, with new strip development to the south.

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Thomas Commercial Historic District
Section Number PHOTO

Tucker County, WV
Page 1

Name:	Thomas Commercial Historic District
Address:	Downtown
City:	Thomas, WV
County:	Tucker County
Photographer:	Michael Gioulis
Date:	March 1997
Negatives:	Michael Gioulis
Photo 1 of 11:	Southernmost edge of district; junction of Route 32 and Spruce Street. Camera looking north.
Photo 2 of 11:	East Avenue Camera looking north.
Photo 3 of 11:	WPA wall and steps on Spruce Street. Camera looking west.
Photo 4 of 11:	WPA wall lining Spruce Street; overlooking alley between Spruce Street and East Avenue. Camera looking northwest.
Photo 5 of 11:	Front elevation of building #36. Camera looking east.
Photo 6 of 11:	East Avenue. Camera looking northeast.
Photo 7 of 11:	East Avenue. Camera looking southeast.
Photo 8 of 11:	Spruce Street. Camera looking north.
Photo 9 of 11:	Spruce Street. Camera looking south.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Thomas Commercial Historic District
Section Number PHOTO

Tucker County, WV
Page 2

Name: Thomas Commercial Historic District
Address: Downtown
City: Thomas, WV
County: Tucker County

Photographer: Michael Gioulis

Date: March 1997

Negatives: Michael Gioulis

Photo 10 of 11: Spruce Street showing buildings #19-22.
Camera looking northeast.

Photo 11 of 11: Structure #23/Dam.
Camera looking northwest.