

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JAN 14 1986
date entered FEB 13 1986

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

1. Name

historic The Foster Hotel

and/or common n/a

2. Location

street & number Fourth and Terrace n/a not for publication

city, town Chama — vicinity of n/a

state New Mexico code 35 county Rio Arriba code 039

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	n/a in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	n/a being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Ms. Alice Nuño

street & number P.O. Box 676

city, town Chama n/a vicinity of state New Mexico 87520

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rio Arriba County Courthouse, Office of County Clerk

street & number n/a

city, town Tierra Amarilla state New Mexico

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

New Mexico State Register
title of Cultural Properties has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date January 10, 1975 federal state county local

depository for survey records New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Santa Fe state New Mexico

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>n/a</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Foster Hotel is an assembly of the original circa 1881 frame building plus two later major additions constructed of frame and adobe. All three sections have moderately pitched corrugated metal roofs, and are all in the Northern New Mexico vernacular style. The overall structural condition of the Hotel is good to fair. The condition of the interior ranges from good to poor, the latter condition being primarily where the original hotel guest rooms have been closed. The interior detailing and finish throughout the Hotel is simple and non-decorative. Following the Hotel's historic development pattern, each of the major building sections is described below separately.

SECTION 1 The original section of the Hotel (circa 1881, and shown as Section 1 on the attached Building Plan) is a two story structure with an unfinished attic. It is cement stucco over frame construction and has a pitched metal roof with an east/west ridge. The primary elevation of this section is on the south. This elevation has a covered porch running from the east end of the elevation to a projecting five-sided addition at the west end of the first floor. The first floor of the south elevation has two entrances, one into a restaurant, and one into the hotel lobby. The five-sided addition has one wood, double hung, two-over-two sash window on each of four sides, with a glazed panel door on the southeast side. Five irregularly spaced windows exist on the second floor. These windows are wood, double hung and have a two-over-two sash pattern. The second floor window frames are of simple lx construction with beveled trim at the heads.

The west and north elevations of Section 1 were originally constructed as secondary, or rear, elevations and have minimal detailing. The first floor of the north elevation is obscured by a shed roof addition running its entire length. The second floor of the north elevation has four wood windows matching those on the south elevation. A fifth window has been enlarged to provide access to Section 3.

The most major alteration to Section 1 occurs on the east, originally the front, elevation. Early photographs show a wood two story porch on this elevation which was removed to allow for construction of Section 2.

The first floor interior of Section 1 includes a kitchen, restaurant, hotel lobby, storage and rest rooms. A stairway leads from the lobby to the second floor at the northeast corner of Section 1, with an intermediate landing at the access hall to Section 3.

SECTION 2 Section 2 of the Hotel (added circa 1927 and shown on the attached Building Plan) is a two story structure with unfinished attic. It was constructed of cement stucco over adobe and has a pitched metal roof with an east/west ridge. The roof ridge of Section 2 does not align with that of Section 1. The primary elevations of Section 2 are on the east and south. The east (front) elevation has a full length two story porch supported by six heavy square tapered columns that rest on square bases. Four of these columns are free standing and two are engaged at the east elevation wall. Shallow stucco arches fill in between the columns at the second floor level. The second floor of the porch is covered with a corrugated metal shed roof that is probably an altered version of an earlier shed roof treatment. The first floor of the east elevation has two doors and a window which have been replaced with newer doors and sash. The second floor has two windows and a door all of which are original. The door has a single paned window with one horizontal wood panel above and three horizontal wood panels below. The second floor windows are wood, double hung and have a one-over-one sash pattern. The window frames are simple lx wood construction with no detailing of note.

continued

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–1932	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1881, 1927, 1932

Builder/Architect Thomas Catron, Henry Foster

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Foster Hotel is significant as one of the first commercial facilities in Chama, New Mexico, and as the only commercial survivor of several disasterous fires that have eliminated all other original commercial structures in town. The Hotel was constructed circa 1881 to help satisfy a sudden need in Chama for facilities to support the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad's construction, ongoing maintenance and operation. The railroad passed through the northern New Mexico Territory on route from Denver to Santa Fe, opening this portion of the country to trade and commerce for the first time. The Hotel stands today as the only commercial structure in Chama dating directly to the construction of the railroad and the settlement of Chama that is not directly part of the railroad yards. Since its construction, the Hotel underwent continuous improvement and expansion until 1932, when the last of a series of additions was constructed. While serving as a major community landmark in its present form for approximately 53 years, the original portion of the hotel has been a landmark in Chama for over 100 years.

The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad system of the 19th and 20th centuries (see NRHP listing for Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, 1/2/74) was the result of an ambitious project to connect Denver and Mexico City by rail. Although the southern terminus of the proposed system only reached as far as Santa Fe, New Mexico, the construction of the railroad opened the northern New Mexico Territory and southern Colorado to trade, commerce and visitors for the first time. Along the routes of the various branches of the railroad line, numerous small towns and villages were settled to accommodate the construction and maintenance needs of the railroad, in addition to providing services for railroad travelers. Chama was settled as one of these towns and the Hotel was established to help satisfy these needs.

The Hotel was one of two permanent hotels built during the original settlement and development of Chama. Records show that these two hotels initially provided housing facilities for the construction workers building the railroad. Prior to the construction of the hotels, workers lived in 'tent cities' provided by the railroad, and in privately owned cabins. Following the completion of the railroad and its associated yard facilities in Chama, the Hotel began providing more typical hotel accommodations and dining facilities for travelers on the railroad, in addition to continuing services to railroad personnel. A surviving previous owner of the Foster Hotel verifies that she maintained annual contracts with the railroad company to house and feed the railroad crews.

The Hotel property consists of Lots 1,2,3,4 and the south 18' of Lot 5, Block A of the Chama, New Mexico Townsite. The Chama Townsite falls within the original boundries of the Tierra Amarilla Land Grant, an area of 594,515.55 acres in the northern New Mexico Territory and southern Colorado, petitioned for by Manuel Martinez in 1832. The Tierra Amarilla Grant was recommended by the Surveyor General of the Territory of New Mexico on September 10, 1856, in favor of Francisco Martinez (and his heirs and assigns) as the son and heir to Manuel Martinez who died in 1844. The land Grant was subsequently confirmed by an act of Congress on June 21, 1860, and patented by President Rutherford B. Hayes on February 21, 1881. Francisco Martinez died in 1874 before the land patent was issued.

continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .063 ±

Quadrangle name Chama

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	3	5	9	3	8	1	0	4	0	8	5	2	1	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing							

B

Zone			Easting						Northing							

C

Zone			Easting						Northing							

D

Zone			Easting						Northing							

E

Zone			Easting						Northing							

F

Zone			Easting						Northing							

G

Zone			Easting						Northing							

H

Zone			Easting						Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and the south 18 feet of Lot 5, all in Block A of the Townsite of Chama, Rio Arriba County, New Mexico

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

state n/a code county code

state n/a code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James A. Caufield

organization Caufield-Caufield date August 16, 1985

street & number P.O. Box 36811 telephone 505-265-8590

city or town Albuquerque state New Mexico 87176

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 [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 12-26-85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] 2/13/86

Keoper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register

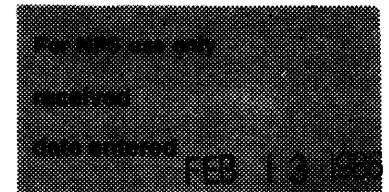
date 2/13/86

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet Description **Item number** 7. **Page** 1

The first floor of the south elevation of Section 2 has two large, two pane fixed windows. These windows are wood with a major horizontal mullion dividing the windows in an approximately 1/3 - 2/3 pattern. The second floor of the south elevation has four windows; three matching those on the second floor east elevation, and one small single pane sash. This second floor window pattern is repeated on the second floor of the north elevation. Two shed roof additions obscure the first floor of the north elevation. The west elevation of Section 2 abuts the east elevation of Section 1.

The first floor interior of Section 2 includes a bar, storage and restrooms. Six now unused guest rooms and two bathrooms off a double loaded corridor comprise the second floor plan. The corridors of Sections 1 and 2 meet at the stairway from the lobby.

SECTION 3 Section 3 of the Hotel (added in 1932 and shown on the attached Building Plan) is a two story structure with unfinished attic, and is attached to Section 1 by a narrow two story stuccoed frame passage way. Section 3 is of cement stucco covered frame construction and has pitched metal roofs with an east/west ridge on the rear portion, and a north/south ridge on the front portion. The east (primary) elevation has a covered porch extending the full width of the first floor. Two commercial offices open onto this porch. The second floor east elevation is composed of two double sliding wood windows (six panes per window leaf) flanking a simple wood door which opens onto the central portion of the porch roof. A small pitched roof gable interrupts the east roof slope over the door. The windows and doors are simply detailed with 1x wood trim.

The north elevation of Section 3 provides windows and access doors to apartments on the first floor and windows to hotel guest rooms on the second floor. An attic window is centered in the gable end. Window and door detailing matches that on the east elevation. A wood board sidewalk extends the length of the north elevation.

The first floor of the west (rear) elevation has one window and three doors, the center door having been obscured by a later non-contribution shed addition. The second floor has two small windows flanking a wood door that most likely was access to a now removed exterior exit stairway.

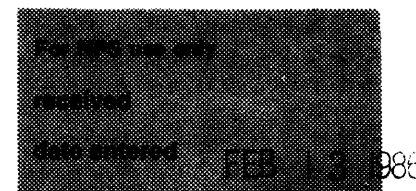
The first floor of the south elevation has two wood doors flanking a window to the west of the connecting passage, and two windows to the east of the passage. The second floor of the south elevation has two windows west of the connecting passage, and two windows east of the passage, all servicing hotel guest rooms. An attic window at the south gable matches that on the north gable.

The interior of Section 3 is composed of 4 apartments on the first floor. Nine hotel guest rooms and two bathrooms are positioned off a double loaded corridor on the second floor. Access to the connecting passage to Section 1 is located at the center of the corridor.

The Foster Hotel has maintained its existing appearance for over 50 years. In addition, each of its three major Sections continue to be readily distinguishable and allow easy interpretation of the systematic development and expansion of the Hotel between 1881 and 1932.

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Continuation sheet Significance Item number 8. Page 1

Records show that as early as 1876, after congressional confirmation of the Grant, a substantial amount of the property was being conveyed to Thomas Catron. The first specific reference to the Hotel property occurs in 1882 when Catron transferred "Chama Lots 1 through 26 of Block A" to Pascal Craig by quit claim deed. A year later, Craig sold the same property to William F. Thornton.

Because of the documented 1881 arrival of the D & RG Railroad in Chama; the existence of two hotels to serve the new Chama line; and the southwestern frame portion of the Hotel appearing in an 1886 Chama photograph, the construction of the Hotel can reasonably be attributed to Catron. The original Hotel was built on Lots 1 and 2 only of the 26 lot parcel sold in 1882.

Between 1887 and 1904 the various Block A Lots were separated into a variety of ownerships.¹ Lots 1 and 2 remained together since the Hotel had been constructed on both lots. In 1904, a Denver, Colorado corporation, The Chama Farm and Implement Company, began combining the Block A lots again, and by 1907 had purchased all 5 lots that now comprise the Hotel property. Warranty Deeds from 1920 and 1923 show the sale of Lots 1 through 4 and Lots 5 and 6 by the CFIC to Henry Foster. The 1920 deed refers to the "Gard Hotel and a Cottage", the latter evident to the north of the Hotel in early Chama photographs. Henry Foster changed the name of the Hotel to the Foster after his purchase of 1920, although the exact time of the name change is unknown. Servilia Johnson, the oldest surviving prior owner of the property, purchased the Hotel as the Foster from Henry Foster in 1947.

During the Foster ownership, the Hotel's two major additions were constructed. A major fire in 1925 destroyed many of Chama's early frame buildings including the Chama Station Lodge, a boarding house across 4th Street from the Hotel. The lodge had provided additional housing for the railroad workers. Within 2 years of the fire, Henry Foster had added the 2 story adobe section to the east of the existing hotel to expand his facilities to accommodate not only increasing railroad travelers, but also additional railroad workers. The adobe section added 6 guest rooms and 2 bathrooms to the Hotel. Still later, in 1932, Foster expanded further by adding the two story frame structure approximately 25' north of the existing hotel, connecting it to the existing hotel by a two story passage. The detached frame section added 9 guest rooms, 2 bathrooms and 4 apartments.

Between 1947 and the present, the property has been under four additional ownerships:

- 1947 - H. Foster to T.H. and Servilia Richards
- 1970 - Servilia Johnson² to Benny and Teresa Medina
- 1978 - B. and T. Medina to Fred Baker, dba Chama Hotel Corp., Inc.
- 1982 - F. Baker to Alice Nuño (present owner)

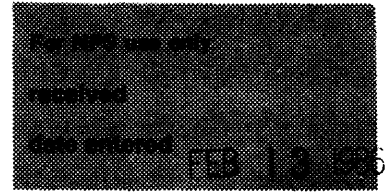
The original six Chama Townsite lots comprising the Hotel property since the Catron ownership were reduced to the existing Lots 1 through 4 and the south 18' of Lot 5 during the T.H. and Servilia Richards ownership. The 18' of Lot 5 was made part of the Hotel property because it constituted existing driveway access to the 1932 apartment addition.

Throughout its history, the Foster Hotel has managed to escape a series of disastrous fires that ultimately destroyed all of the original commercial core of Chama, perhaps because of its somewhat removed location at the northern edge of town. Increased demand

continued

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Continuation sheet Significance Item number 8. Page 2

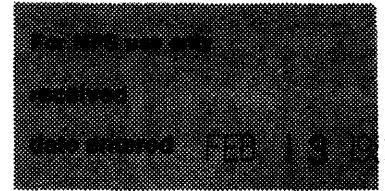
for hotel accommodations, particularly after the other hotels in town were lost to fire, resulted in a series of expansions to the Foster, the last occurring in 1932. After over 100 years of operation, the Foster is now witnessing a renewed interest and demand through increasing tourist and year-round recreational development in Chama and northern New Mexico.

- 1 Between 1882 and 1907, the following transactions occurred relative to Lots 3,4,5 and 6:
 Lot 3 - Craig to Millerson
 Lot 4 - Craig to Thorton, and Thorton to Murphy
 Lots 5 and 6 - Craig to Johnson and Johnson

- 2 Servilia Johnson was formerly known as Servilia Richards, Servilia Polaco and Servilia Clifton.

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Continuation sheet Major Bibliographical Ref. Item number 9.

Page 1

Title Abstract, prepared 1954, by Rio Arriba County Title Abstract Company, Chama, New Mexico.

Title Abstract, prepared 1954, by Tierra Amarilla Title Abstract Company, Rio Arriba County, Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico.

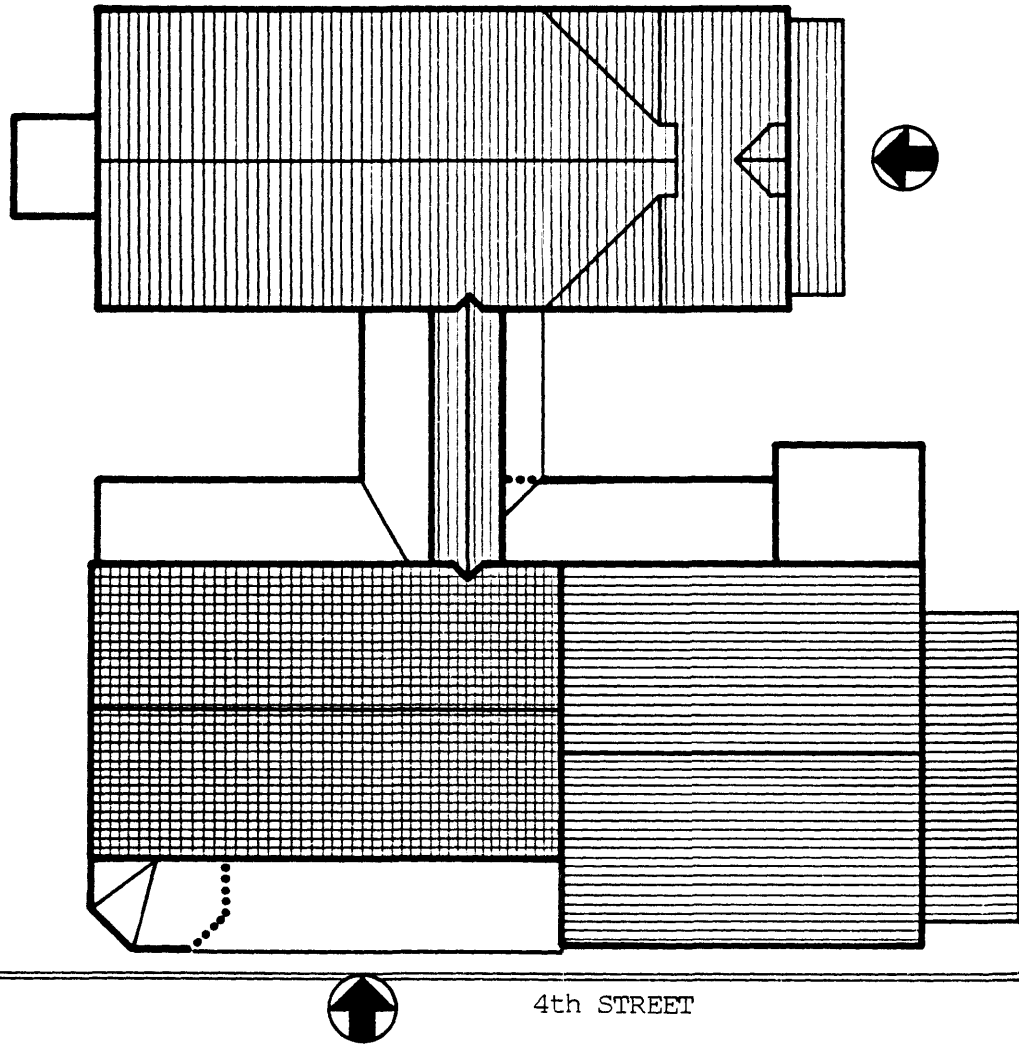
Supplemental Title Abstract, prepared 1977, by Northwest Abstract Company, Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico.

Medina, Benny. Private interview held June 28, 1985.

Johnson, Servilia. Private interview held August 1, 1985.

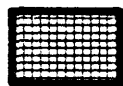
Daggett, Elanor. Chama. Albuquerque. Starline Corporation, 1973.

Chapell, Gordon. "To Santa Fe by Narrow Gauge, The D&RG's 'Chili Line'." Colorado Annual. 1969, n.d.



FOSTER HOTEL BUILDING PLAN

not to scale



Section 1: Original circa 1881
frame Hotel structure



Section 2: circa 1927
adobe Hotel addition



Section 3: circa 1932 frame Hotel/
apartment addition & connecting passage

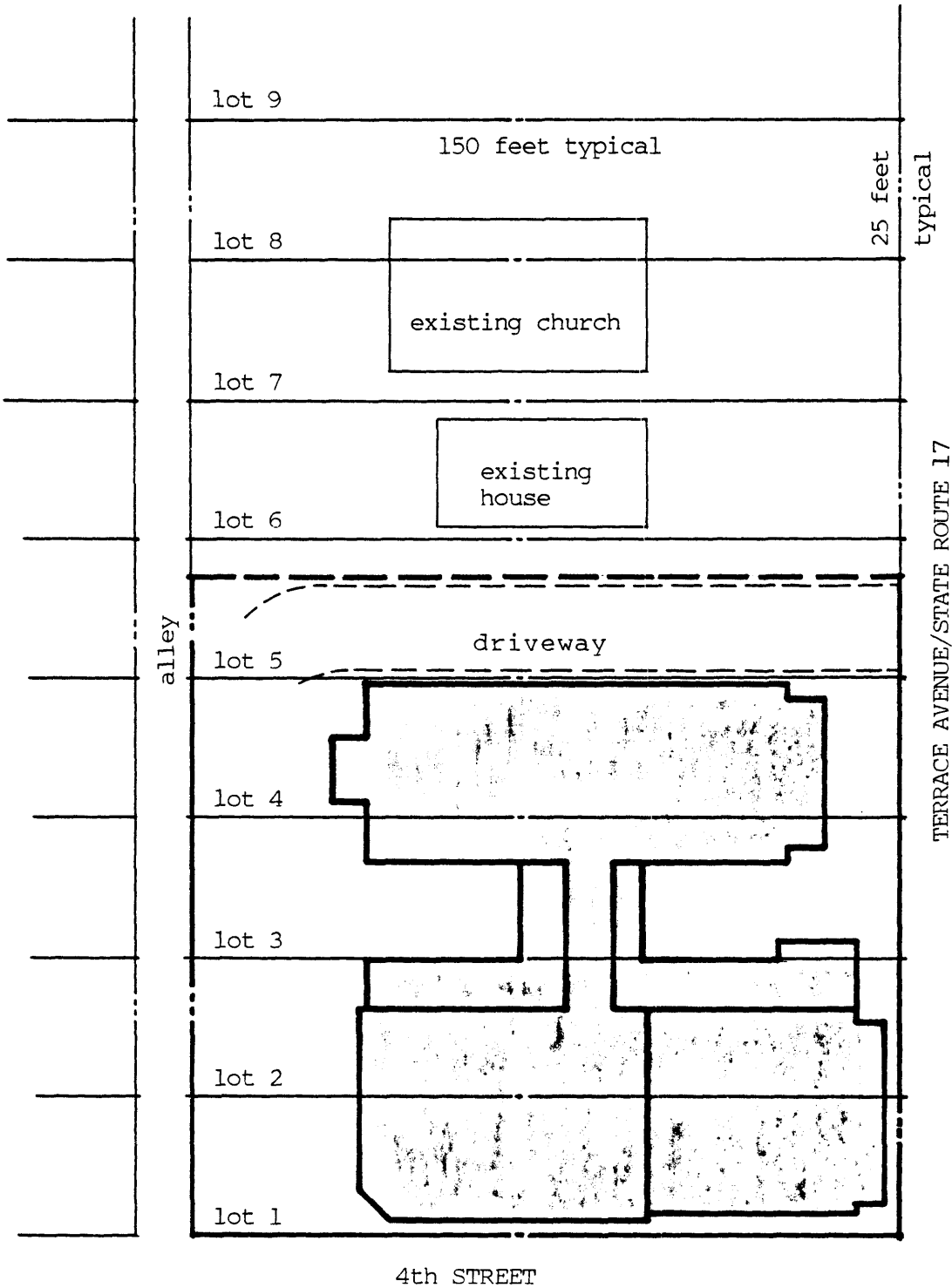


Later porch, storage and
entry additions



Locations of principal entrances





PARTIAL BLOCK A - CHAMA, NEW MEXICO
Showing Location of Foster Hotel

