

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 15 1980
DATE ENTERED JUN 17 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Franconia Historic District

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

off MN 95

CITY, TOWN

Franconia

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
8th

STATE

Minnesota

VICINITY OF

CODE

22

COUNTY

Chisago

CODE

025

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCES
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple - List attached

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Chisago County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Center City

STATE

Minnesota

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway Survey of Historic Structures

DATE

June 1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Minnesota Historical Society, Bldg. 25 Fort Snelling

CITY, TOWN

St. Paul

STATE

Minnesota

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Franconia is located on the St. Croix River $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Taylor's Falls. It was built on the flat land of the old river bottom below the bluff. The Franconia Historic District covers roughly four square blocks of the town and includes ten residences which comprise about half the total number of houses existing in Franconia today.

Of the ten residences, seven were built prior to 1885 and were homes of Franconia's pioneer families. They are considered historically significant and are designated as "pivotal" buildings in the District. Two of the houses are summer cottages built in 1935 and 1938 but are considered "compatible" buildings because of their similarity in size and shape with the pioneer houses of Franconia. One house is considered an "intrusion" in the sense that it is neither historically or architecturally compatible with the character of the District.

The houses that comprise the Franconia Historic District are listed here by numbers which correspond with those on the District map.

1. Paul Munch House (Pivotal)

The Paul Munch House, built in the Greek Revival style, is the most imposing of the houses remaining in Franconia today. Constructed in the 1850's, it was moved to its present site about 1867. It is a wood frame building of T-shaped plan sided in clapboard. The main axis of the building is two storeys in height. The rear kitchen wing was an early addition to the house. The roof is gabled and the gable ends feature broken pediments. Classical Doric pilasters decorate the corners of the house. The main entrance is centrally located on the long side of the main axis. The door has a transom and sidelights. The front porch which extends the full length of the front facade has thin posts supporting low Gothic arches. The windows throughout the house are six over six and feature shutters. The house has been fully restored since 1968 and is listed on the National Register.

2. Eric Ostrom-Charles Vitalis House (pivotal)

This house built prior to 1870 is a wood frame building sided in clapboard. Originally rectangular, it now has an L-shaped plan due to three early additions. The original section of the house and the southeast addition are two storeys in height. The two northwest additions, which reportedly housed a saloon, are $1\frac{1}{2}$ storeys in height. The intersecting gable roof has three brick chimneys. The windows on the corner facades have shutters.

3. Diane Vitalis House (intrusion)

The Diane Vitalis house is a one-storey, modern frame building constructed in 1967.

4. William Vitalis House (compatible)

This building is a one -storey, log-sided summer cottage constructed in 1938.

5. Adolph Vitalis House (compatible)

This cottage built in 1935 is one storey in height and sided in horizontal lap.

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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1850-1885

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Franconia Historic District contains seven houses of early pioneer families which date between the 1850's and 1880's. The District is significant because it retains the character of a pioneer community and represents early settlement along the St. Croix River.

Franconia was first settled in 1852 by Ansel Smith, a teacher in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. In 1854 Smith and three brothers named Clark who were lumbermen from Maine formed a company to build a sawmill and exploit the timber resources so abundant along the St. Croix River at that time. With this economic base the town began to grow.

Franconia was platted in 1858 by Ansel Smith and was named, according to one source, after a village in New Hampshire. Another source states that Smith named the town after his daughter, Francis.

During the 1860's Franconia drew settlers of Scottish, English, Irish, Swedish, and German descent. A flour mill was started and a steamboat building business was established. A hotel and saloon and various stores and shops were also built at this time to serve the needs of the townspeople and area farmers.

The following are pioneers of Franconia whose houses are located within the District.

Paul Munch, a native of Germany, settled in Franconia in 1865 and built the Franconia flour mill, reputed to be one of the best in Minnesota. The mill has since been removed, but the Paul Munch House still stands on Summer Street across from the old mill site. The house was reportedly built in the 1850's and was purchased and moved by Munch to its present site about 1867. It remained in the Munch family until 1968 when the present owner bought and restored it. It is now listed in the National Register.

Eric Ostrom was a blacksmith in Franconia. He lived in the house on the south corner of Summer Street and Cornelian Street from 1872 to 1876. Charles Vitalis lived in the same house from 1887 to 1895. He came from Sweden and settled in Franconia in 1868. He was employed for several years as a clerk in Jonas Lindall's store. When Lindall died, Vitalis took charge of his store and wood business.

Jonas Lindall operated a cordwood business and general store and was also a state senator in the 15th & 16th legislatures. He lived in the house on the east corner of Summer and Henry Streets until his death in 1872. His house was subsequently owned by Elof Vitalis who was the proprietor of the Merchant's Hotel and Saloon in Franconia. The house remained in the Vitalis family until 1974 when the present owners purchased it.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Dunn, James Taylor, The St. Croix: Midwest Border River, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1965

Folsom, William Henry C., Fifty Years in the Northwest, St. Paul, Minnesota: Pioneer Press Co., 1888

Foote, C.M. and E. C. Hood, Plat Book of Chisago County, Minnesota: Mpls, Mn. C.M. Foote & Company 1888

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 7 acres

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	5
---	---

5	2	4	0	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

5	0	2	4	0	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B

1	5
---	---

5	2	4	0	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

5	0	2	3	0	7	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

C

1	5
---	---

5	2	3	0	9	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

5	0	2	3	0	7	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

D

1	5
---	---

5	2	3	0	9	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

5	0	2	4	0	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet Item Number 10 Page 6

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Peggy Lindoo
ORGANIZATION

10/3/77
DATE

Minnesota Historical Society Bldg. 25 Fort Snelling
STREET & NUMBER

612/726-1171
TELEPHONE

St. Paul,
CITY OR TOWN

Minneapolis
STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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

Russell W. Fridley

TITLE

Russell W. Fridley, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/6/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Luce

DATE

6/17/80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Kristin J. O'Connell

DATE

6/10/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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6. Jonas Lindall-Elof Vitalis House (pivotal)

Built around 1867, this house is a wood frame building sided in clapboard. The original section of the house is rectangular in plan. The one-storey rear addition which was moved in and added to the house in the late 1800's was once the office for Charles Vitalis' cordwood business. The house has a gable roof with a brick chimney at either end. A one-storey porch with low railing extends across the front facade of the house. The present owners have plans to restore the house.

7. Hans Hanson House (Pivotal)

The Hanson House, now in deteriorated condition, was built prior to 1870. It is a small one-storey frame building sided in clapboard. The roof is gabled with a centrally placed brick chimney. The windows are six over six although there are few glass panes remaining. The house has stood vacant for many years.

8. Olof Swanlund House (pivotal)

Built about 1876, this house has a two-storey main section which is square in plan with hipped roof and central brick chimney. The rear section of the house is 1½ storeys in height, rectangular in plan with a gable roof and centrally placed chimney. The building is sided in clapboard and has a screened enclosed porch which extends across the front facade. All of the original windows have six over six panes.

9. Nelson Fuller House (pivotal)

The Nelson Fuller House, built around 1885, is a two storey, wood frame building sided in clapboard. The house plan is T-shaped with an intersecting gable roof and central brick chimney. A one-storey screened porch is located on the east corner of the house. The addition found on the northwest side of the building is one storey in height and has a tall brick chimney.

10. Peter Glad House (pivotal)

The Peter Glad House is a T-shaped building which was remodeled in 1944. Newspapers removed from the walls during remodeling indicate that the building was constructed in 1856 making it the oldest documented building in the District. It appears that it was moved to its present site about 1875. In 1944, the rear axis of the house was enlarged and the ceiling in the front, 1½ storey axis was removed to expose the log beams and roof line. The windows throughout the house were changed, and it was sided in cedar shingles.

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Hans Hanson began living in the house on Henry Street between Summer and Wolf Streets about 1876. He came from Sweden and farmed land near Franconia. His widow lived in the house until the early 1900's. The house has not been occupied for years and is in deteriorated condition.

Olof Swanlund was a tailor in Franconia and later a blacksmith. He built his house on the east corner of Wolf and Edward Streets about 1876. The house remained in the Swanlund family until 1967.

Nelson Fuller built a house on the west corner of Edward and Wolf Streets around 1885. The census report listed him as an engineer. Fuller also lived for a time in the house on the corner of Summer and Cornelian Streets.

Peter Glad, a carpenter and laborer, lived for many years in the house on the east corner of Wolf and Cornelian Streets. This house was remodeled by the present owners in 1944.

During its most prosperous years in the 1870's, Franconia's population reached five hundred. However, in 1878 the railroad company laid tracks and built a station a mile west of Franconia on top of the river bluff. This changed the river transportation patterns and seriously affected the economy of Franconia. Many businesses and private residences were taken down and moved to towns closer to the rail lines.

The saw mill continued to operate, however, until the end of the century when all the timber had been cut. After 1900 the population dropped significantly, and many of the houses were either moved out of Franconia or abandoned as year-around residences.

In the 1940's, due to the proximity to the Twin Cities and improved highway transportation, some of the old houses in Franconia were purchased by individuals who wanted them as summer residences. Within the next twenty years new houses were constructed for year-around residence.

Today, the residents of Franconia are showing an interest in preserving the heritage of their town. The Paul Munch House has been completely restored, and there are plans to restore the Jonas Lindall-Elof Vitalis House.

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ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

Neill, Rev. Edward and J. Fletcher Williams, History of Washington County and the St. Croix Valley, Minneapolis, Minnesota: North Star Publishing Company, 1881.

Vitalis, Lucille, personal interview, Franconia, Minnesota, August 11, 1977

Vitalis, Vendla and Lillian Nelson, personal interview, Linstrom, Minnesota July 28, 1977

Wahlquist, Judith, The History of Franconia, Minnesota, 1958,
(20th Annual Meeting of the Franconia Old Settler's Association).

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John Vitalis 2189 Lilac Lane White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55074	Block 14, Lots 8-10
Gary Noren Route 1 Box 119 Shafer, Minnesota 55074	Block 8, lots 4 & 5
Rich and Debby Jorgenson Route 1 Shafer, Minnesota 55074	Block 14, lots 4, 5, 6, 7, $\frac{1}{2}$ of lot 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ of lot 8
Father Wm. Gamber 651 Virginia Street St. Paul, Minnesota 55103	Block 21
Wm. Ingemann c/O Judy Seymour 12 Summit Court St. Paul, Minnesota	Block 16, lots 1-3
Oscar Willius 805 Fairmount St. Paul, Minnesota	Block 17, lots 1, 2, 9, 10
Diane Vitalis 460 South Robert Street St. Paul, Minnesota	Block 16, lots 9-10
Ken O Johnson 802 Sandollar Rockport, Texas 78382	Block 16, lots, 4, 5, 6, 7
Wm. Vitalis 400 Military Road Taylor's Falls, Minnesota 55084	Block 14, lots 1, 2 and half of 3 Block 15 lots 6, 7
A.H. Vitalis River Front Apts. Taylor's Falls, Minnesota 55084	Block 14, lots 1, 2 and half of 3
Harland Vitalis Route 1 Shafer, Minnesota 55074	Block 15, lots 4, 5.

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Lois Berkebile
877 Dawn Avenue
Shoreview, Minnesota 55112

Block 16, lot 8

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

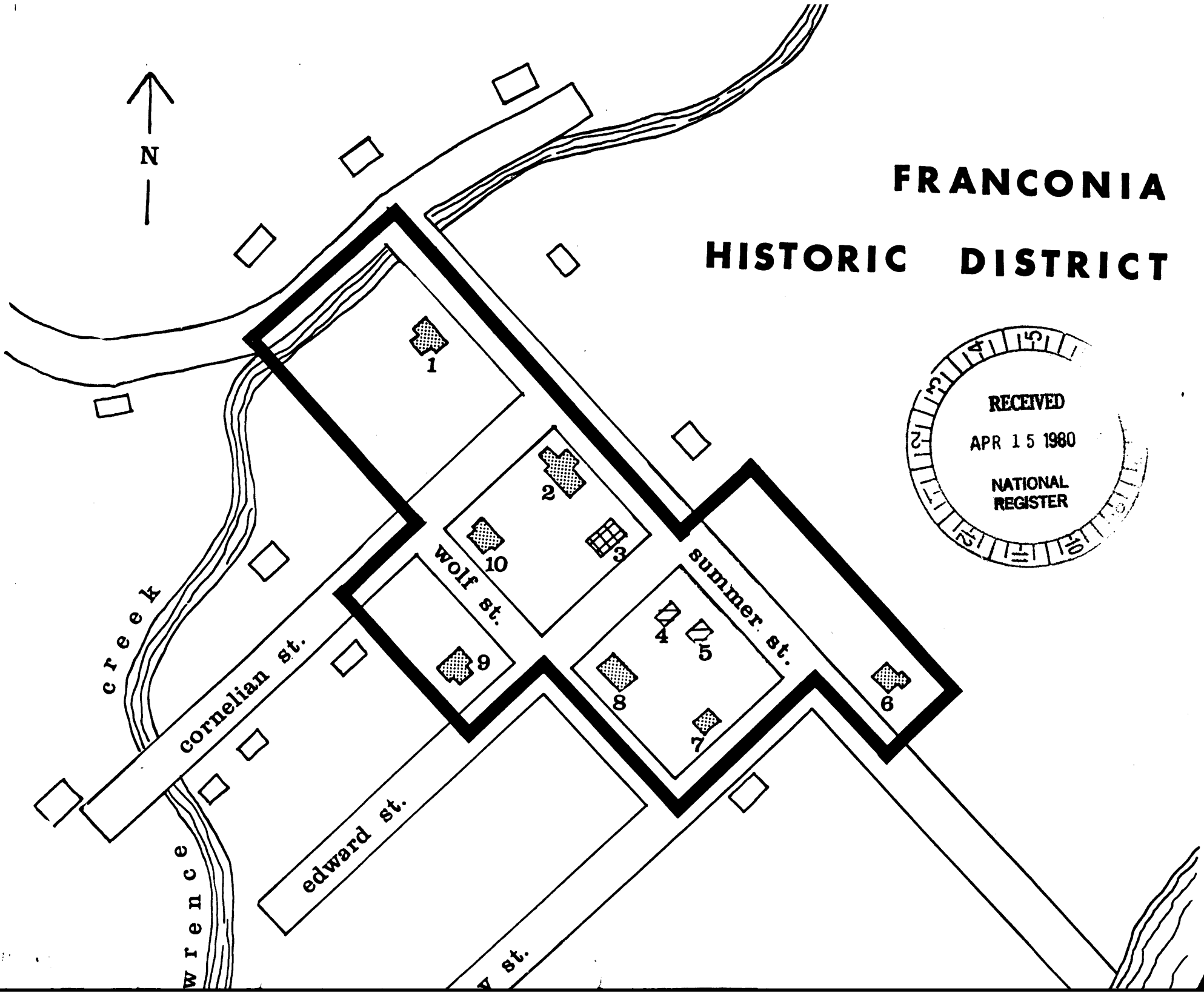
PAGE 6

The District is included within the plat of Franconia in Sections 2 and 3 of T33N R19W. The boundaries are as follows:

Starting at the intersection of the center line of Summer St. and the center line of Francis St., proceed SW along center line of Francis St. to the intersection of said center line with the center line of Wolf St., thence SE along center line of Wolf St. to intersection of said center line with center line of Cornelian St., thence SW along center line of Cornelian St. to the intersection of the NWly extension of the SW line of lot 2 block 17, thence SEly along the SW line of lots 2 and 9 Block 17 to the interesection of the extension of said line with center line of Edward St., thence NEly along center line of Edward St. to the intersection of said line with center line of Wolf St., thence SEly along center line of Wolf St. to the intersection of said line with the center line of Henry St., thence NEly along center line of Henry St. to the intersection of said line with center line of Summer St., thence SEly along center line of Summer St. to the intersection of said line with the SWly extension of the SE line of lot 5 Block 8, thence NEly along the SE line of lots 5 and 4, Block 8, to the east corner of lot 4, Block 8, thence NWly along the northeast lines of lot 4, Block 8 and lots 7 and 4, Block 15 to the intersection of the extension of said line with the center line of Edward St., thence SWly along the center line of Edward St. to the intersection of said line with the center line of Summer St., thence NWly along the center line of Summer St. to point of beginning.

FRANCONIA

HISTORIC DISTRICT



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

**Note: These changes apply to
Franconia Historic District in
Chisago County, Minnesota.**

REFERENCE NUMBER: 80000406

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Chisago

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):

CITY:

VICINITY OF: Taylors Falls

ADDRESS: vicinity of Cornelian, Summer and Henry Sts.

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

Nina M. Archabal

Nina M. Archabal
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988

Date