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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Marion County Housing Committee Demonstration House other names/site number William Beckett House

2. Location

street & number 140 Wilson Street South city, town Salem state Oregon code OR county Marion code 047 zip code 97302

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: [X] private, [] public-local, [] public-State, [] public-Federal. Category of Property: [X] building(s), [] district, [] site, [] structure, [] object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0, Total 1.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. Date: July 7, 1988.

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: State or Federal agency and bureau: Date:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: [X] 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:). Signature of the Keeper: Nelson Byrum. Date of Action: 8-11-88.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Trade-specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

20th Century Revivals/Colonial (Cape Cod)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Wood/weatherboard

roof Asphalt shingle

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The Marion County Housing Committee's Demonstration House is a ca.1860 vernacular cottage remodeled as a 1934-35 Colonial residence in the Cape Cod vein. A one and half story wooden frame structure, originally five rooms with bath and unfinished upstairs, it was placed after the demonstration on a full concrete basement. At that time, a small back porch or stoop was added, and the last owner finished the upstairs as two bedrooms. Upon conversion to commercial use as an interior decoration shop and studio, the present owner added two studio rooms on a slab foundation at the back, utilizing for one room a pre-1935 garage.

Modernization for demonstration in 1934 began with removal of porches across the front gable and side wing. Doors and windows on the facade and probably elsewhere were changed or added. New clapboard siding, lath and plaster walls, knob and tube electrical work, and a redesigned interior covers the ca. 1860 origin of the house. Only the shape remains, a central block, with north south gables, and a wing on the front with an east gable. Without pictures of the 1860 sides and back, it is hard to know if anything else reflects the original cottage.

On the facade a bay with two side and three center eight light windows replaced a door and two long double sash windows. In the gable a second story six over six light double sash window was added with a broken pediment and louvered shutters. The wing facade originally was two long windows and a center doorway. It was redesigned with a six over six double sash window, louvered shutters, and a formal recessed entrance. The graceful Classical Tuscan architrave is complete with a rough base torus molding. The window in the door is nine lights above two recessed panels. The top three lights are ogee arched. Commercial use by the present owner required a sign, tastefully designed, and there is an added exterior carriage light, and two louvered shutters on either side of the bay.

On both east and west sides are two windows, six lights over six, double sashed, with louvered shutters. In the east gable and the south gable are nine light casement windows, swinging out, again with louvered shutters. The roof originally was shingle, painted black for the demonstration, and has since been resingled with asphalt. The roof from the wing was extended to the south with a shed roof over the south bedroom. An interior chimney where the gables met has been rebuilt, and a chimney near the end of the wing was eliminated. On the south, a three light dormer was added in the

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wing roof to light the staircase from the first floor. A sign under the wing gable window has been added to identify the present shop.

On the south side, first floor, there is a six over six double sash window on the west with only one louvered shutter. The first owner when he moved the house to its present site added a small screened porch to the back entrance, which the present owner has changed to an enclosed porch with double sash windows and a fifteen light wooden door. To the east is a high six light window with shutters over the sink, and in the wing is a matching window for the bathroom.

For the demonstration, the interior four rooms of the original house was changed to five rooms, plus bath, halls and closets. They provided 822 square feet on the first floor, to which was added the small back porch when the house was sited in its present location. A small rectangular entrance hall leads to the right through an arch to the 12 by 19 foot living room. There is the bay on the north with its five windows, a window on the west, and two doorways on either end on the south and the centered brick fireplace. The latter has a simple frame and mantel shelf. The far door leads to the dinette eight feet square, on the southwest with a window on both the south and west walls, and a southeast corner cabinet. Both rooms have the same architrave trim of the windows, plain trim doorways, and cornices. The living room had a creamy strippled painted wall surface and hardwood floor. The dinette was prepared in a green and yellow plaid. The bath was yellow and orchid.

The small kitchen on the south side was considered extraordinarily efficient. There was an alcove for an electric stove on the north, and one built into the kitchen cabinetry on the east for a "mammoth" refrigerator. The drainboard on the south was tiled in black and yellow with more built-in cabinets.

Circulation was achieved from the front hall by a door to the left to a front bedroom, and from the living room by a door to a back central hall. That hall provided doors to the kitchen, to the bath, to a small closet on the south, to the east bedrooms, and to steep stairs up and down placed in the center of the house.

The two bedrooms on the east, are 10 by 11, with cornices lowered to provide picture molding. Wallpaper in the front room was "colonial" with medallions, and the back a "pastel flower motif on a green background." Both rooms have shallow closets, as does the entrance hall.

Since the resiting on its present third of a lot, the last resident owner finished two second floor bedrooms. The present owner had to redo bathroom walls and plumbing.

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With the use of the property for commercial purposes interior changes have been cosmetic. Rooms have been carpeted wall to wall except for the kitchen and bath. The broken tile of the hearth was replaced. There are new electrical fixtures of design appropriate to the house. All walls, ceilings, and trim have been painted. The kitchen stove alcove has a shelf desk; the refrigerator alcove a small efficiency stove with an added shelf and cabinetry. The drain and splash boards are white formica, and the sink is stainless steel. Doors between rooms have been removed and stored.

Two studio rooms on a slab have been added to the house from the southeast bedroom. A double sash window was replaced by a door and steps down. The farther room is the pre-1935 garage turned half around and moved to the southeast corner of the property. Old garage doors were replaced with three wooden frame 15 light windows to the south, and a wooden door, also 15 lights to the north. A new room connects to the house, and has two wide wooden frame 15 light doors on the west, and two high 9 light windows on the east. The garage has original wide drop siding.

For the modernization, the house was painted white with green shutters and black roof. It was two shades of dark green when acquired by the present owners. It is now painted in non-historic gray lavender with antique white and mulberry trim. The modest signs are black with gold lettering.

During modernization and demonstration, the house stood on the north side of the Marion County Court House lawn facing Court Street. It was a prominent place selected between the eastern edge of the business district and the government buildings on the west. Its present site on a third of a lot on Wilson Street South, is on the south side of the street just off Commercial Street South, the original highway to California and now 99 Business route, one way south. In 1935, it was in a residential area, just beyond the small old almost suburban South Salem business district, extending four and a half blocks from Mission Street. South Salem was separated from Salem's industrial and business area by Gaiety Hill, then primarily the home of many upper class citizens.

Since 1935, business has extended miles along the corridor of Commercial Street to the south, and recently spread to Liberty Street to the east. Modern zoning, placed the lot within the commercial half block to the alley, parallel to Commercial. Zoning preserves for mixed or multiple residential occupancy two and half blocks to the west, and to the north to Mission Street. Beyond to the west and south are high class older residential areas, served often by the current business.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1934-1935

Significant Dates

1935

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Smith, Clarence L., and

Strubble, Frank S., designers

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Marion County Housing Committee Demonstration Project of 1934-1935 in Salem, Oregon was sponsored by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and Civil Works Administration (CWA) as one of many such public projects undertaken across the nation under authority of the Housing Act of 1934. The Federal legislation fostered by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration was aimed at relieving widespread unemployment and stimulating the economy at the height of the Great Depression.

Under the category of Community Planning and Development, the nominated property meets Criterion A as the sole, intact remodel demonstration house carried out under FHA and CWA auspices in the Marion County seat. To fulfill its function of demonstrating how older houses could be renovated economically to suit contemporary housing needs, a single-story vernacular Gothic cottage (thought to have been built for William Beckett about 1860) was moved to the Courthouse lawn, where it was transformed into a crisply-detailed, astylar Colonial house in the Cape Cod vein. After it had served its promotional purpose, the house was sold by bid to a private citizen and moved to a residential lot south of the business center. The house embodies the values and objectives of a Depression-era demonstration project. The fact that it was moved from its original location to a temporary exhibition site before reaching its current permanent setting is an integral part of the building's significance and thus overrides the normal exclusion of relocated properties.

Under the category of Architecture, the nominated property meets Criterion C as a locally significant example of publicly sponsored renovation in the Cape Cod style carried out by the city's leading designer of period houses, Clarence Smith. This Cape Cod renovation, involving reorganization of the interior to provide a hallway, bathroom, closets and a modern efficiency kitchen, demonstrated the ways in which small-scale houses could be improved economically. Annual demonstration houses have been used by real estate, construction, and durable good industries ever since the Depression and have affected architectural fashion. The survival of this "modernized" house virtually intact, although now adapted to commercial use, makes it important evidence of a community contribution to economic revival in the Depression era.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

City of Salem Department of
Community Development

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one Salem West, Oregon 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0	4	9	6	5	7	0	4	9	7	4	7	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area is comprised of the westerly 63.10 feet of Lot 1, Block 8, Southwest Addition to the City of Salem in Marion County, Oregon. It is otherwise identified as Tax Lot 7900 at said location.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The nominated area encompasses the entire parcel measuring 63.10 x 74 feet onto which the Marion County Housing Committee remodel demonstration house was moved in 1935, for private occupancy, all according to Federally-assisted plan under authority of the Housing Act of 1934. Because the Depression era garage which was built to serve the property was reoriented and attached to the rear elevation of the house in an adaptive use rehabilitation in 1986, the house and garage together make up a single contributing feature.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David C. Duniway

organization N/A date December 15, 1987

street & number 1365 John Street South telephone (503) 581-2338

city or town Salem state Oregon zip code 97302

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The Marion County Housing Committee Demonstration House project was part of a major National publicity program to unlock sources of credit through a modernization of houses and buildings everywhere. In Marion County it was hoped that at least \$500,000 in private funds would be put to work through the liberalized credit available through the FHA's loan insurance program. In Oregon alone, through the years 1934-1936, 16,273 modernization notes were signed to borrow \$5,221,789.50. What additional amounts were spent through conventional mortgages or without borrowing from a lending institution were not reported to Congress. As of November 1934, approximately 30 cities across the nation were reported to have demonstrations in progress. They were one phase of a National publicity campaign under the Federal Housing Act, enacted in June, 1934. Credit by banks and other lending institutions was liberalized to unfreeze money hoarded by individuals and those institutions.

Initially the crisis of unemployment had been met by the short term public works program of the temporary Civil Works Administration, which between November 8, 1933 and March 31, 1934, provided only impermanent employment in the construction industry. One-third Federal matching grants benefitted public building projects throughout the country under this program. The Federal Housing Act of June 28, 1934 was designed to change the economics of private capital, loans and mortgages, banking, and the character of other loan institutions. The aim was to encourage the use of private capital through loans and private ventures unfreezing funds held by individuals and institutions of all kinds. A second aim was to improve houses and buildings in areas where neglect and deterioration had occurred, and where properties were considered salvageable. The goals of the modernization program were accomplished through:

- a) Demonstrations and extensive publicity from the FHA office with ideas as to what might be done to improve a house.
- b) Making available loans to property owners with adequate income who proposed modernization projects. \$200 to \$2,000 could be borrowed without a mortgage from a bank or other lending institution on a note at 5% instead of the traditional \$100 at 90 days.
- c) Federal insurance of such loans by qualifying banks and lending institutions. In addition, similar insurance was extended to mortgages.
- d) Volunteer county committees which secured publicity and funds for demonstration projects. In addition, the local committee compiled data on available construction contractors and suppliers.

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The FHA home modernization program was designed to improve neighborhoods as well as stimulate construction and banking. Among its long term effects were:

- a) Promotion of home modernization through loan agreements encouraging the involvement of professional architects.
- b) Encouragement of the personal use of extended credit.
- c) Development of lending institutions (such as the Salem Savings & Loan Association), founded specifically to utilize the insurance provisions of the loan and mortgage programs.
- d) Paving the way for publicly sponsored Urban Renewal, Community Development and Housing Rehabilitation programs of the present day.

Older houses selected for demonstration purposes inevitably lost their original design characteristics as they were changed by (continued next page)

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architects to match current fashions. As in the case of the Beckett house, porches were often removed. They were hard to replace if deteriorated and the age of motor cars ended casual evening visiting that went on between neighbors' porches in the age of simple entertainment. Magazines and news propaganda of the FHA recommended use of architects whenever there were structural changes. Interior design was influenced by the desire for efficient and usable kitchens for mechanical servants. As households shrank to families, society reformed around social groups of similar interests.

The William Beckett House used for the demonstration originally stood on the northeast corner of Union and Liberty, occupying a whole lot. In 1935 it was identified on the testimony of old timers as being built in 1849, but Beckett does not appear in Oregon Territorial records until 1853 in Polk County. He purchased the lot in Salem in 1859 from Mrs. Chloe A. Willson, proprietress of the plat of Salem. No house is mentioned in the quit claim deed or the tax rolls. The 1860 date is derived from its style with long double sash windows, the shadow of a second floor porch door on the front gable, and the fact that a house appears in the deed from William and Jane Beckett to Michael Myers, March 8, 1862. The house was occupied by owner residents, a blacksmith, a millwright, and others, and in 1885 was acquired by former Governor Stephen F. Chadwick as a rental property. By 1934, the house had been reduced in size to four rooms, and turned half around and placed on the back of its property at 415 Union Street. When acquired by the County Housing Committee the owner said that the original house was nine rooms. We know from the 1890 Sanborn Insurance map that the rear portion was single story rather than a story and half.

The Demonstration proposal was announced in the Capital Journal of September 22, 1934, a few days after the appointment of the Marion County Housing Committee under Sheldon F. Sackett, Managing Editor of the Oregon Statesman. Expertise in publicity and advertising was represented by Sackett, the marketing of furnishings was represented by J.N. Chambers, manager of J. C. Penney, and military and political connections by Brigadier General Thomas Rilea, Executive officer of the Oregon National Guard, and the newly liberalized loan requirements by Keith Powell, President of the just organized Salem Savings and Loan Association. Culyer Van Patten, contractor, and chairman of the Planning Committee, and Keith Powell, banker, and member of the Steering Committee, searched for "a little old house to use in the better housing drive. . .". October 4, 1934, the Capital Journal reported the acquisition, and October 13, its picture and a longer article detailed plans. It reported that "A similar demonstration was conducted in Portland attracted 157,000 persons during the 46 days it was open for

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inspection . . .". The same edition included a "Section Two, Salem Modernization Campaign, Rebuild, Remodel, Redecorate." There were many suggestions on improvements with interior and exterior pictures, as well as significant articles.

The Demonstration was carried out by moving the house to the Marion County Courthouse lawn. Eight unions provided labor: Painters, Carpenters, Sheet Metal Workers, Plumbers, Electrical Workers, Lathers, Plasterers/Plasterers Helpers, and Brick Layers. Drain tile was laid and floors sanded by individuals who had experience in their construction specialty. Materials furnished by retailers were: lumber and mill work, plumbing, hardware and paint, brick, sand, steel, cement, lime and plaster, sheet metal and heating, and electrical wiring and electrical fixtures. Workers and firms involved were listed in a booklet for visitors, and the May 19, 1935 Oregon Statesman, along with pictures. The Women's Committee under Mrs. David Wright arranged for club volunteers to staff openings, weekends during construction, and when furnished from May 4 to 19. The Committee obtained furnishings from retail businesses: furniture, window shades, drapes, paintings, decorations, and wallpaper. The project cost about \$2,800 raised from industry and banks. The house sold on bid for \$1,295 to Larry Grote, accountant, who moved it May 20, 1935 to the back third of the lot on the southwest corner of Commercial and Wilson Streets South. His own home occupied the front two-thirds. Thus ended the demonstration. More than 12,000 people inspected the complete house, and more than that number must have visited the house during the construction when it sat on the lawn of the Marion County Courthouse.

Architects for the modernization (the house was described as "renovized" in local newspaper accounts of the day) were Clarence L. Smith and Frank H. Strubble. A suggested facade and a floor plan by Smith was published October 20, 1934, the day after the house arrival at the Courthouse. As first proposed, there would have been a brick entrance rather than the Tuscan architrave built in the modernization. The closet in the front hall was on the east side or left and bedroom closets were reversed in Smith's original plan from the plan as it is today. Other detail changes are not immediately obvious.

Clarence L. Smith (1894-1951) was in mid career. His houses in the Salem area, from 1923 to 1942 represent many styles, built for clients whose demands he met. He had two years at Cornell University School of Architecture, and served as apprentice and draftsman twice in Portland, Oregon, three cities in New York, and in Salem. Although he used the title of architect for at least ten years, he only qualified for license by senior examination in 1940, but failed to pay his fee after that year. On the National

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Register are his Curtis and Barbara Cross and the Dr. Charles and Mildred Robertson houses, as well as at least six 1932-1942 houses in the Gaiety Hill/Bush's Pasture Park Historic District in Salem. A hallmark of his houses is the fine handling of historic period detail in a traditional plan.

Frank Howard Strubble (1889-1970) who assisted, had three years architectural work in college, and practiced in Corvallis, Klamath Falls, Medford, and Salem. He redesigned the store fronts of the Chemeketa Lodge No. 1, Odd Fellows buildings in process of Nomination at this time.

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Capital Journal, Salem, Oregon. More than 43 articles and advertisements, June 28, 1934-May 18, 1935 re: FHA and Housing Committee, includes:
Housing Bill to Stimulate Building Law-June 28, 1934, p. 1 and 4.
Federal Drive to Renovate Homes Begins-August 8, 1934, p. 7.
Directors of Housing Act Drive Named-September 18, 1934, p 7.
Modern Home Part of Plan-September 22, 1943, p. 7.
Moving of Old House to Start-October 9, 1934, p 1 and 8.
Watch This House Become Modern-October 13, 1934, P. 1, illustrated.
 & Section Two: Rebuild, Remodel and Redecorate.
Old House Placed Court House Lawn-October 19, 1934, p. 12.
How Court House Lawn House Will Appear After Its Modernization.
 October 20, 1934 p. 7.
House Dates Back 85 Years-October 27, 1934, p. 10.
Home Exhibits in Many Cities-November 10. 1934 p. 7.
Court Lawn House Oldest In City, by Hal Cuffel-November 17, 1934 p. 10,
illustrated.

Capital Journal articles continued:

Court Lawn House To Be Furnished-April 9, 1935, p.7
Public Asked to Renovized House Parties-May 1, 1935, p.7
Rehabilitated House On Courthouse Lawn Called Model Home-May 2, 1935
 p. 14.
Grote Payes \$1,295 for Renovized House on Courthouse Grounds-May 15,
1935, p. 1.
Renovized House Effective in Boosting Local Home Building-May 18, 1935,
p. 3. Illustrated.

Oregon Statesman, 4 articles noted, May 5-19, 1935, includes:

Today Final Chance to Inspect Renovized Home-May 19, 1935, p.12.
 Illustrated.

William Beckett House records:

Oregon Territorial Government. Documents and Assessment rolls, indexed
(Oregon State Archives, 1853-1859)

Oregon Statesman, Index. William Beckett marriage to Jane Thompson,
1, December 1853. Dec. 6, 1853, p.2:7 (Oregon State Library).

Title records, Block 26, Lot 5. 1859-1927 (Salem Title Co. Records,
Ticor Corporation).

Salem City Directories (R.L. Polk & earlier)
1872, 1874, 1880, 1886, 1905, 1921, 1934.

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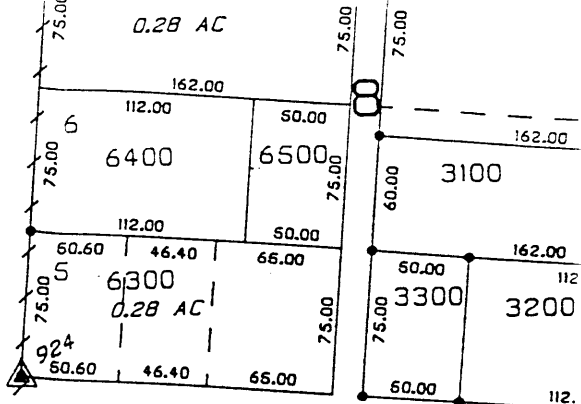
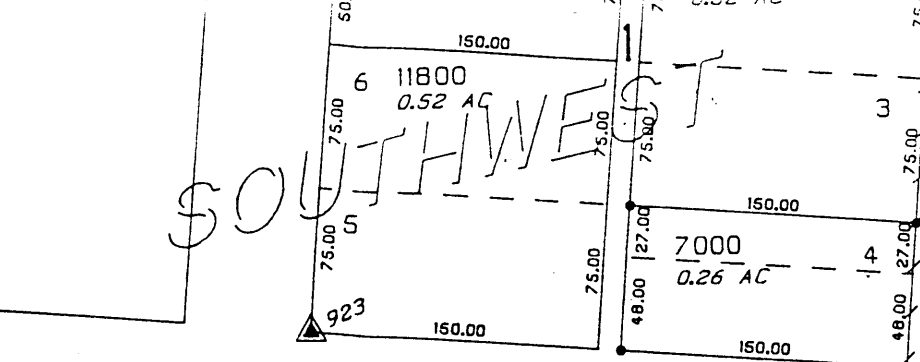
U.S. Federal Housing Administration

Architects, Contractors, Building Supply and other Merchants, Your
Opportunity- Your Responsibility under the National Housing
Act . . . Better Housing Program 28 p. (Sept. 1934) F.H.A. 103(a)
Community Planning in Relation to the Modernization Phase of the
National Housing Act . . . 12 p. (Sept. 5, 1934) F.H.A. 106
Statement (on achievements) by Stewart McDonald . . .
in Congressional Record, June 1, 1936. p. 8523-8526.

Palmer, Burton E. The CWA in Oregon, in The Commonwealth Review, July
1934, vol. 16, p.134-139. (Reprinted from Oregon State Public Welfare
Commission. Outline of Civil Works Administration Activities between
November 8, 1933 and March 31, 1934. . .).

Interviews with Nancy Gormsen who had interviewed previous owners, etc. and
Denver Young, who bid for the tile contract.

Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Salem, Oregon, July 1890, p.12 (Beckett House)



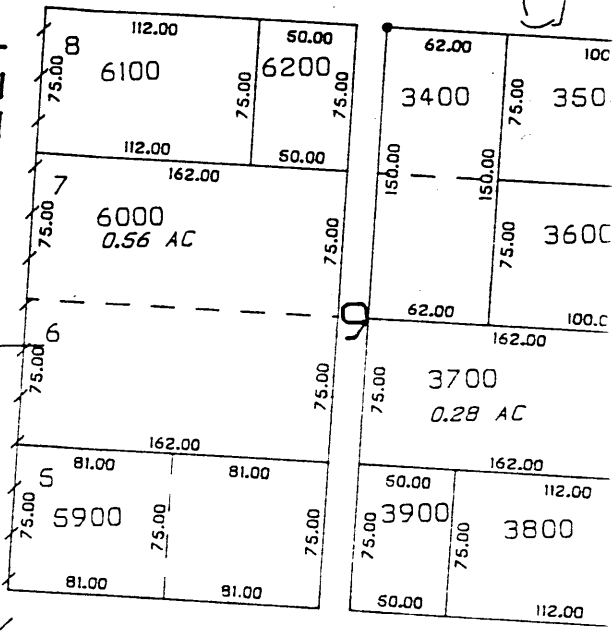
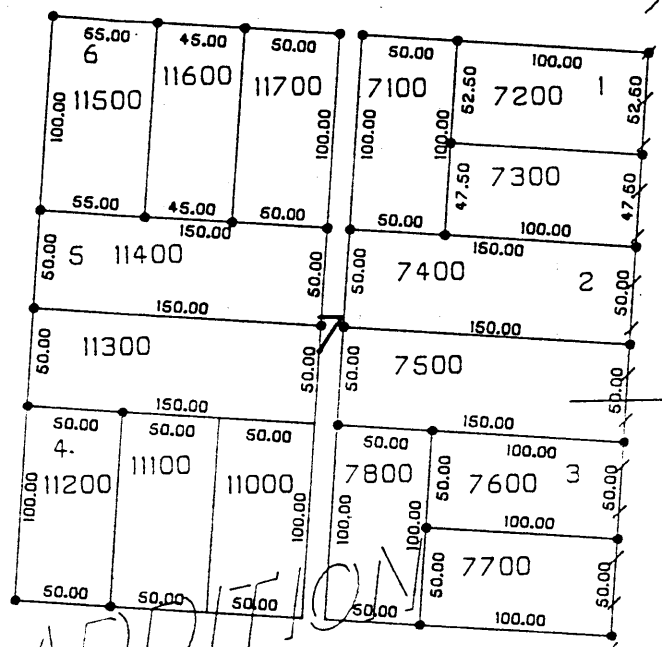
SOUTHWE

MILLER

STREET

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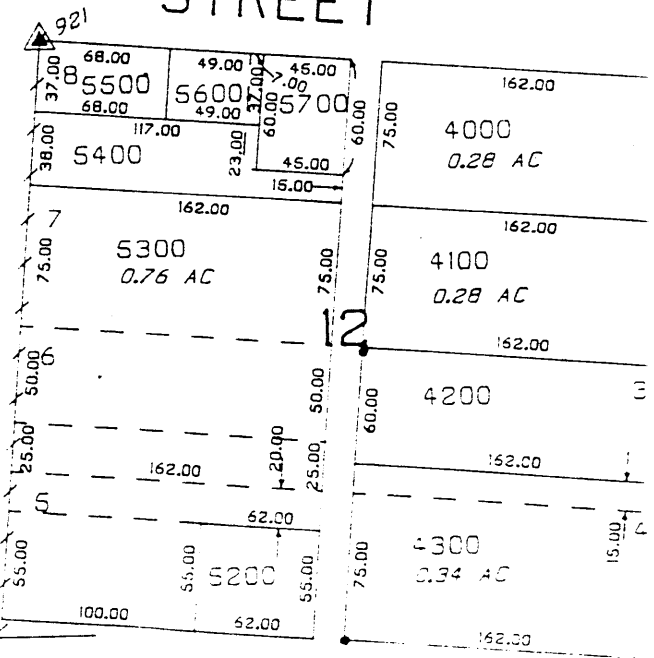
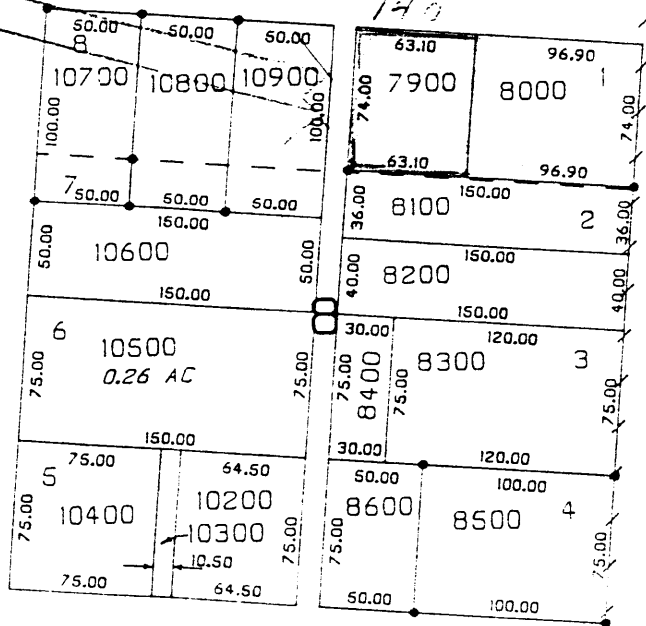


ADDITION
WILSON

STREET

SAGINAW

COMMERCIAL



MYERS

STREET

