

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

MAR 11 1982

HISTORIC NAME: Nehemiah P. Clarke House

COUNTY: Stearns

CURRENT NAME: Thienens House

CITY/TWP.: St. Cloud

LEGAL DESC.: Northerly 165' of westerly 217.1' of Block Q, Wilson's Survey of St. Cloud

ADDRESS: 356 Third Ave. S.

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent <u>X</u>	Local <u>X</u>	Primary <u>Architecture</u>
Structure _____	Good _____	State _____	Secondary <u>Commerce</u>
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Others _____
District _____	Deteriorated _____		

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:	Yes ___ No <u>X</u> Restricted ___	PRESENT USE:
VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD:	Yes <u>X</u> No ___	
OCCUPIED:	Yes <u>X</u> No ___	Residence & apartments

DATE CONSTRUCTED: <u>1892-93</u>	ORIGINAL USE: <u>Residence</u>
ORIGINAL OWNER: <u>Nehemiah P. Clarke</u>	ARCHITECT/BUILDER: <u>Charles S. Sedgwick</u>

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: <u>Julia M. Thienens 356 Third Ave. S. St. Cloud, MN 56301</u>	ACREAGE: <u>Less than one acre</u> <u>X</u>
LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: <u>John W. Decker Stearns Co. Historical Society</u>	UTM REFERENCE: <u>15 / 410100 / 5045400 St. Cloud, MN Quad. 7.5</u>
FORM PREPARED BY: <u>Thomas Harvey</u>	
DATE: <u>September 1980</u>	

DESCRIPTION:

The Queen Anne style Nehemiah P. Clarke house is constructed of red pressed brick and red granite. The brick, shipped up-river from St. Louis, included numerous rock-faced bricks used to add texture to the exterior walls. Granite forms the raised basement, window sills and lintels, and decorative highlights on the front (west) facade. The two-and-a-half story house has an octagonal corner tower and a gable-roofed bay on the south side. A matching bay on the north side has a recessed porch in the gable. The hipped roof has a wall dormer located above a triple-arched window on the front facade. There is a hipped dormer at the southeast corner of the house. A frame carriage porch extends off the front verandah. The interior retains much of its original integrity. The upper floors have been made into apartments. The first floor abounds in oak and cherry woodwork. A decorative tile fireplace and stained glass windows contribute to the design. The house sits well back from the street on a large corner lot.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Nehemiah P. Clarke house is locally significant for its Queen Anne architecture and its association with a pioneer merchant of the city. For its use of stone and decorative brickwork, interior finishing, and overall design and integrity, the Clarke house is one of the city's finest residences. Clarke built the house after he made his fortune from several business interests. He arrived in St. Cloud in 1856 and opened the first general merchandise and hardware store. After the Civil War, he sold his merchandising interests and started a lumbering business which dealt with the manufacturing and shipping of pine trees. He was regarded as one of the leading lumbermen in the state of Minnesota during the 1870's and 1880's. Also in the 1880's, Clarke was a corporate director of several Red River Valley railroads associated with the Great Northern Railway. In 1881, he and T. C. McClure began the Clarke & McClure Bank which lasted until 1895. Clarke owned three large farms around the St. Cloud area totaling close to 4,000 acres and devoted his latter years to the raising of pure bred Shorthorn and Jersey cattle, Berkshire hogs, Cotswald sheep and Clydesdale horses. In 1893, he won the world championship prize at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago for his two best Clydesdale horses, Prince Patrick and Queen Lily.