

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Name of Property
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____ 1

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100004230


Date Listed: 08/06/2019

Property Name: Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

County: Polk

State: IA

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation



Signature of the Keeper

8/6/19

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Significance:

The Period of Significance should read: 1904--1937, with an additional Significant Date of 1917 [incorporation of Urbandale]. [While the two dates mark high points in the history of the property, the house did not appear and disappear on those two dates, but rather it existed throughout the entire period as a witness to the evolution of the surrounding community from isolated farmsteads to increasingly suburbanized community. The broad period also recognizes the continuing contributions of the Olmsted family and their role in the settlement, planning and development of the local community during the historic period. (Daughters of Ceres, school system development, platting, etc.)]

Geographic Data:

The Latitude and Longitude coordinates should read: 41.633417 -93.713069. [All coordinates should be provided in decimal degrees rather than degrees, minutes, seconds, as per NR standards.]

The IOWA SHPO was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

other names/site number Olmsted-Urban House

Name of Multiple Property Listing n/a

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 4010 70th Street not for publication

city or town Urbandale vicinity

state Iowa county Polk zip code 50322

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Steve King 18 Jun 2019
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

State Historical Society of Iowa
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

[Signature] 8/6/2019
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1	1	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION & CULTURE/facility

EDUCATION/research facility

SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Brick

walls: Wood

roof: Asphalt

other: _____

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse is a large, 2-story, frame, single-family dwelling situated on a spacious lot in a residential section of Urbandale, Iowa. Built in 1904 as an American Foursquare with Colonial Revival styling, the house is older and larger than any other dwelling in the neighborhood. This reflects its original function as the home place for a large family and working farm, its surroundings subsequently having grown up around it over the years. The property retains very good historic integrity today. As a showplace residence when originally built, it is now owned and operated by the Urbandale Historical Society as a house museum, community social center, and local history depository.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the property in a **Statement of Integrity**, and any future plans for the property under the subheading **Future Plans**.)

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse stands today on 1.515 acres of level upland in a residential neighborhood filled with smaller homes built mostly after World War II. The farmhouse originally stood on 40 acres of land and functioned as the home place for a working farm. This farmland was subsequently subdivided in 1937, including one tract known as Olmstead Place Number 3, on which the farmhouse now stands. The large size of the farmhouse and its lot — much larger than others in the plat — distinguishes the property from its surroundings and calls attention to its earlier period of construction. The siting of the farmhouse on the northwest corner of 70th Street, an important traffic corridor in Urbandale, and its deep setback from the right-of-way add to its striking appearance in the streetscape.

SITE

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse is situated about midway along the east side of the property and well set back from the street. A concrete public pedestrian walk edges 70th Street and Airline Avenue on its southerly boundary. A concrete vehicular drive from Airline provides access to a paved parking lot on the south side of the house. Concrete pedestrian walks from the public sidewalk on 70th Street and from the parking lot provide access to the farmhouse itself. A recently constructed wood fence separates the property from its neighbors to the west and north. Two rows of coniferous trees stand east-to-west on the north edge of the property. A modern wood pergola stands at the western edge of a flower garden situated in the northwestern area of the property. Other trees, shrubs, and decorative plantings landscape the property. The rest of the property is planted in well-maintained lawn.

A nonextant barn and nonextant garage once stood on the west side of this site. An historic photograph pictures (slightly) the front gable of the barn. There are no known images of the garage. A concrete pedestrian walk leads from the kitchen porch to the site of a nonextant privy. A concrete storm cellar is situated northwest of the house.

The 1.515-acre farmhouse grounds include four areas: east lawn, south lawn, backyard, and north lawn. A network of pedestrian walks articulates these grounds, improved with shrubs and mature trees.

The east lawn provides an expansive stage for the presentation of the Olmsted House from the street. Concrete public pedestrian walks edge the property on the east and south. A network of private pedestrian walks articulates

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the house and grounds. Two brick paver walks, built around 1999, provide access to the property from the east and south public walks. When the wrap-around porch was rebuilt circa 1995, the grade on its east was raised, obviating the need for steps between the grade and the porch deck and facilitating compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Evergreen shrubs edge the east front of the wrap-around porch.

The south lawn features an open area in its southeastern section. A modern poured concrete parking lot occupies most of the rest of the area. Two curb cuts on Airline Avenue provide vehicular access and egress to and from the parking lot. This configuration differs from an earlier one. According to a circa 1989 description, a

gravel drive enters the property from the south-east corner and crosses diagonally past the south side of the house to a small garage to the west of the lot and just south of the house. On-site parking is limited. (Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects: 2)

Today, a concrete pedestrian walk leads from the parking lot to the backdoor of the farmhouse, a brick paver walk leads from Airline Avenue to the farmhouse. These features formed part of the concept plan prepared for the development of the property. (Figure 13) At one time, a nonextant hand pump was situated a little to the south of the backdoor. (Figure 5) At another time, the dooryard on the southwest side of the building was embellished with glacier boulders, likely found while plowing nearby farm fields. (Figure 5) Two street lamps stand today on the north edge and two street lamps on the east of the parking lot, and a flagpole to its southeast. A modern board fence separates the entire Olmsted property from neighboring properties to the west.

Because of the farmhouse's deep setback from the street, the backyard is the smallest area on the farmhouse grounds. The Wayne Robbins Barn occupies most of this area. This was not always the case. Before the platting of Olmsted Place Plat No. 3, the backyard of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse was much larger. After the Olmsted Family Farmhouse was constructed in 1904:

The men moved the first house Grandpa had built up to the back yard of our "new house." (McKinney: 2)

The earlier house referenced apparently stood farther to the northwest near the present site of the Olmsted Elementary School. At its new site, the first floor of this house provided a workshop for Leander and Millard. Its second floor provided a playhouse for Leander's children. (*Ibid.*: 6) This house was torn down in the 1930s.

The north lawn stands on the north side of the farmhouse. The north lawn features a modern pergola and flower garden, two rows of evergreen trees bordering the north property line, a masonry storm cellar, a concrete capped cistern, and various plantings. According to Ruth Olmsted McKinney, who lived in the Olmsted House for 24 years:

The cistern on the north side of the house was for the kitchen and bathroom. The kitchen stove heated a tank of water so we had hot water. We did not drink the soft water from the cistern. (*Ibid.*: 3)

A concrete pedestrian walk leads from the kitchen porch to a nonextant privy. According to McKinney:

We had an unusual "outhouse." It was lath and plaster. It had a window that opened and closed, with a screen on the window. (*McKinney*: 4)

McKinney's lively description of her childhood home makes no mention of the property's storm cellar. Had it been used for an emergency during her tenure, would not her account have mentioned such a memorable event?

In the late 1980s, the DeBord-Dunbar Partnership, a landscape architecture firm of Des Moines, Iowa, prepared an ambitious concept plan for the development of the Olmsted property. (Figure 10) The thrust of this plan was to improve the property as an imagined early 20th century farmhouse and dooryard. Portions of this plan were implemented, including the construction of the parking lot, barn, pergola, flower garden, and stand of trees along 70th Street. There are no plans now to implement other components of this concept plan.

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FARMHOUSE

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse is a 2-story, frame edifice with full basement and attic. The footprint of the house is roughly configured in plan view as a 27 x 40-foot rectangle with a 2-story 31 x 14-foot wing attached on the south side. Two smaller wings are attached to the west elevation of the building. Their footprints measure 9 x 6 foot.

The farmhouse can be said to have two primary facades. The east elevation serves as its "published facade," that is the elevation chosen for a formal view of the house. (Photograph #1) The south elevation, which also includes a public entrance to the building, also serves as a primary facade, particularly when the farmhouse is viewed from the south in conjunction with the east facade. Trees and other plantings tend to obstruct the north elevation so that it is commonly seen when standing in the yard and not from the street. The building's massing, setback from the street, and large site create an impressive viewshed when seen from the street. The wrap-around porch, which abuts the farmhouse on its east and south elevations, accents the massing of the building and lends further weight to its image of comfort and well-being.

Foundation and Walls

The Olmsted House rests on a brick foundation. The brick is red, and the mortar is natural colored laid in concave joint profile. Only about 11-inches of foundation brick is visible on the south elevation and about 14-inches on the north elevation. The structural configuration of the foundation remains undetermined. According to a circa 1989 architect report:

The brick foundation, in some instances, appears to extend less than two feet below grade, and apparently does not rest on any footing. This is very inadequate construction practice. (Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects: 10)

As noted below, poured concrete benchings were constructed in the basement many years ago to help support the inadequate brick foundation.

The farmhouse walls are constructed of narrow clapboard siding. Corner trim is situated on each corner of the house. The exterior walls of the house remain plumb. (*Ibid.*) The clapboard remains in excellent condition and is painted white.

Roof and Chimney

The main block of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse is covered with a moderately pitched hip roof clad with red asphalt shingles. Another hip roof covers the 2-story south wing of the house, tying into the west plane of the main roof and sharing a roof ridge height with that roof. The dormer windows on the east, south, and north are also covered with flared hip roofs of moderate pitch, matching those covering the house. All of these roofs flare at their bases, creating wide eaves. A brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge.

West Wings

Two wings are attached to the west elevation of the farmhouse. A 2-story wing, original to the building, centers the west elevation. It is covered with a flat roof. It features a kitchen pantry on the first floor and a bathroom on the second floor. A 1-story wing, constructed circa 2000, is attached to the south corner of the west elevation. It is covered with a low-pitch hip roof. On the interior, it features an entrance hall and a restroom. (Figure 8) This wing replaced an early wing known as the "sink room." The sink room contained a hand pump fed from a downspout from the roof and cistern on the south side of the farmhouse. (Figure 6) The sink room was

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where the men washed up. It was also the cloakroom. It had two rows of hangers for coats, hats, scarfs and rubber boots (mud room). It was the entrance to the dining room. (McKinney: 3)

Porches

A wrap-around porch is situated on the east and south elevations of the farmhouse. The footprint of the porch measures 35 x 22 foot. It extends the full width of the east elevation. One entry to this porch is centered symmetrically on the east façade of the house, while the other entrance to the porch is situated asymmetrically on the west end of its south elevation. Red brick bulkheads flank the steps to the wrap-around porch on its east and south sides. This porch was rehabilitated circa 1989. This rehabilitation shored up the roof with temporary support columns and removed and reserved its Doric-styled wood columns. The project then removed and replaced the porch's termite infested wood deck, replacing it with a new deck constructed on the porch's original brick piers. These piers are about three feet high, constructed of red, rusticated brick, and surmounted with stone caps. The reserved wood columns were then returned to their proper place to support the roof, and the temporary supports removed. The piers at the corners of the porch feature three columns; the other piers feature paired columns. A hip roof, clad with red asphalt shingles, covers the porch.

A kitchen porch is situated on the northwest corner of the building. Built circa 2000, it features frame construction and is covered with a hip roof. It conforms in footprint and building materials to the original kitchen porch, which had deteriorated and was removed. An historic photograph of this porch has not been discovered.

Windows and Doors

Windows are typically 1/1 double-hung sash and original to the house. Wood storm windows cover the sash. One large window is situated on the east elevation's first floor. The Olmsted House features three hip-roofed dormer windows. One dormer window is situated on the east, one on the south, and one on the north elevations. Each of these dormer windows features paired windows, each with 16 small panes. Doors are solid wood paneled.

When originally constructed the Olmsted Family Farmhouse featured operative shutters on most of its double-hung sash windows. Historic photographs show some of these shutters open and some of them shut. (Figures 4, 5, 6, 7) Obviously, the Olmsteds operated these shutters to cool or heat the house. All of these shutters have been removed, replaced on the second floor of the east and south façades by fixed wooden shutters.

Historic photographs of the house show the exterior windows and doors painted a dark color. The clapboard siding cladding the dormer windows is painted in a dark color as well. These dark colors lend a more textured look to the house than at present.

INTERIOR

The interior of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse features a full basement, public rooms on the first floor, private quarters on the second floor, and a full attic. The original floorplan changed somewhat during the occupancy of Harold and Ruth Gutfreund, who owned and lived in the house from 1937 to 1947. The following paragraphs describe these changes as well as the interior in general.

The basement includes areas for laundry, boiler, coal, work, and storage. A door leading to the basement is situated in the short hall between the dining room and the kitchen on the first floor. Poured concrete benching, constructed sometime after the basement was built, strengthen its south, east, and north walls. An outside set of stairs, located near the northwest corner of the farmhouse and covered with a metal hatch door, leads from grade to the basement. A set of inside stairs on the west wall, located a little to the south of the outside set, leads to a blank wall. A coal bin, situated in the southwest corner of the basement and defined by brick bulkheads, separates it from the rest of the basement. A coal chute opening stood at one time near the ceiling of the coal bin on the west wall of the basement. The construction of the restroom on the first floor circa 2002 closed off this opening to the exterior. A cistern is located on the south side of the basement. Originally, it was

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fed by a downspout from the roof. (Figure 5) The location of this downspout has been relocated, and the cistern is now inactive.

The first floor includes a large living room and main staircase to the second floor, dining room, office, kitchen, pantry, restroom, and backstairs to the basement and to the second floor. (Figure 8) This large living room was created in the 1930s during the Gutfreund occupancy by the removal of two partition walls, which originally divided this space into a reception hall, parlor, and living room. Pocket doors likely provided the access to these three spaces. Another door, located near the southwest corner of the reception hall, led into the living room. The original purpose of the room used today as an office and archival center is unknown. The first-floor walls are wood lathe and plaster covered with modern finishes. The ceiling is also wood lathe and plaster. A 1-story expansion to the farmhouse, constructed circa 1990, is situated on the southwest corner wing of the main block. Today, this expanded wing includes an exterior door, small entrance hall, and restroom.

As configured today, the living room is the largest space in the interior. It features a 3-foot wide front door on the east wall and a narrower side door on the south wall. The floors are pine. (Wetherell – Ericsson – Architects: 12) The side door originally provided access to the original living room. The floor is covered with wall-to-wall carpeting. The dining room includes an opening to a short hall to the pantry and kitchen and to the 1-story wing described above. The first-floor features oak woodwork original to the house, painted as of circa 1989 (*ibid.*) but now refinished, including doors, windows, casings, baseboard, and picture molding. Crown molding in the living room is painted white. The oak main staircase to the second floor features a dogleg configuration with mid-flight landing. At one time, the opening between the living room and dining room was arched (although unlikely an original feature). Circa 1990, the top of this opening was squared-off and new oak woodwork installed to trim it. The kitchen features original cabinets painted at one time and now stripped of paint to natural surfaces. The east wall of the kitchen curves slightly outward from the south to the north. A door in the northwest corner of the kitchen leads to the kitchen porch. The pantry features wood cabinets on its south and north walls. These cabinets are painted.

An architect report, prepared circa 1989 by Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects, identified and prioritized improvements needed for the Olmsted Family Farmhouse. This report included a concept plan, prepared by the DeBord-Dunbar Partnership, for the development of the farmhouse site. The architect report noted a structural deficiency in the house. When the Gutfreunds removed a load-bearing wall on the first floor, they created an unstable support system for the weight of the upper house. (*ibid.*: 16-17) To address this problem, the Urbandale Historical Society installed a heavy beam under the first-floor ceiling between the front door and the study.

The stairs to the basement and the backstairs to the second floor are dangerous. The stairs themselves are original to the building, narrow, and steep. Some of the risers are uneven in height. The depth of the treads is shallow. The stairs to the second floor are situated in a tight stairwell. The amateur construction of the stairs is surprising, given the quality of the main staircase and the overall building. It is possible that Leander J. Olmsted, perhaps with the help of his sons, constructed these basement stairs. In any event, their quality is poor. The circa 1989 architect report recommended that the basement stairs be “layered out anew with greater uniformity.” (*ibid.*: 17)

The second floor today features four bedrooms, a dressing room, and two bathrooms. (Figure 9) The Gutfreunds during their occupancy removed partition walls that separated the original southwest bedroom from the one abutting it to the east, converting these two rooms into a large bedroom. These walls also formed a stairwell containing stairs to the attic. Another Gutfreund conversion created a dressing room on the second floor, sandwiched between the southwest bedroom and a bathroom. This bathroom might originally have served as a bedroom. All of these alterations were made with seamlessly finished floor, wall, and ceiling surfaces.

The attic is unfinished and used for storage. Today, the attic is accessed through a scuttle in the southwest bedroom’s ceiling. A set of stairs originally provided this access. These stairs were removed when the partition walls between the middle bedroom and southwest bedroom were removed in the 1930s.

When the Urbandale Historical Society acquired the house in 1987, wallpaper dating to the 1930s remained on the living room walls. According to a newspaper story in 1989: “Even the living room wallpaper and carpeting have held

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up for more than 50 years.” (*Des Moines Register*, June 7, 1989) The dining room wallpaper was of a similar vintage. (Author’s inspection) All this wallpaper and carpeting have been removed and replaced with new wallpaper and wall-to-wall carpeting. The wallpaper in the northwest corner bedroom on the second floor is vintage to the farmhouse.

WAYNE ROBBINS BARN (NONCONTRIBUTING)

In 2002, the Urbandale Historical Society erected a wood-framed barn, located behind the farmhouse. It included a 1.5-story main block covered with a front gable roof and a lean-to on its south side covered with a shed roof. In 2007, the society built another lean-to on the north side of the main block. Board and battens clad the exterior walls of this building. Wood shingles cover the main block and south lean-to. A standing seam metal roof covers the north lean-to. Modern heavy posts and beams and braces of wood provide internal support for the building, mimicking historic barn building methods. The floor of the building is poured concrete. Built a little later, a staircase in the main block provides access to a haymow where a haymow door is situated in its east gable end. This barn is used today as a museum for agriculture and rural life.

An earlier barn, which burned in 1920, stood at one time on this site. At its annual summer ice cream social in 2015, the Urbandale Historical Society dedicated it as “Wayne Robbins Barn” in recognition of his long service as the organization’s president.

CONDITION

The condition of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse and grounds remains very good to excellent. An architect report has evaluated the building’s construction and condition and recommended remedial actions to ensure its preservation. This report noted a series of remedial actions needed structurally to mitigate the removal of partition walls on the second floor and the floor deflection, which it created. (Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects: 16-17)

ALTERATIONS

To summarize the alterations to this farmhouse as discussed above, these took place during two periods of time. On the first floor during the tenure of the Gutfreunds in the 1930s and 1940s, partitions between the reception hall and living room and between the parlor and living room were removed, and the top of the opening between the living room and dining room was reconfigured as an arch on the first floor. On the second floor, the Gutfreunds removed a partition between two of bedrooms and added partitions to create a small dressing room. During the tenure of the Urbandale Historical Society, beginning in the late 1980s and 1990s, the deck of the front porch was replaced, a kitchen porch built on the northwest corner to replace an earlier one, and a wing on the southwest corner to replace a smaller one. Interior wise, the opening between the living room and dining room was returned to a rectangular configuration, and the oak woodwork on the first floor was stripped and covered in natural finish.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

The exterior of the Olmsted House retains integrity in seven aspects. Historic images of the building picture its exterior during several eras of its life. A comparison of these with the present-day building reveals that the building’s original exterior design remains intact. The interior of the building also retains integrity in seven aspects, although not to the same extent.

Because the Olmsted Family Farmhouse remains on its original site, its level of integrity as related to *location* is excellent.

The integrity of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse exterior *design* is very good. The building has enjoyed careful maintenance over the years, and, when repairs were required, they followed the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing*

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Historic Buildings. Although the kitchen porch is new, it conforms to the configuration and building materials of the original porch. The wing on the southwest corner of the building likewise is new, but it too conforms in building materials and general configuration to the smaller wing it replaced. Both the kitchen porch and this wing are located at the rear of the farmhouse, reducing their visual impact.

The integrity of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse interior *design* is good. Although two partition walls have been removed from the first floor and three partition walls removed from the second floor, the overall floorplan of the building remains discernable.

The integrity of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse *setting* is good. Although none of the farmland originally attached to the farmhouse remains intact, the farmhouse site itself has the spacious feeling of a farmstead home.

The integrity of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse as it relates to exterior *materials* is excellent. The building's clapboard siding remains intact and well maintained in spite of the availability of contemporary cover-up materials, which might reduce upkeep cost but detract from the texture of the original wood. The interior integrity of materials is good. Most of the original floors, woodwork, and plaster walls and ceilings remain in place. Although some of the oak trimwork on the first floor is new, such as the casing surrounding in the opening between the living room and dining room, this trimwork matches original trim and finish.

The integrity of the house's exterior *workmanship* is excellent, evident in the skilled carpentry of its clapboard siding, wood sash windows, and other architectural detailing. The integrity of the interior's workmanship remains good, but some workmanship—the secondary stairwells and staircases in particular—is poorly planned and constructed.

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse retains a good *feeling* of its historic function. Viewers today immediately perceive the building as a large and comfortable family home, its chief function.

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse retains excellent integrity as it relates to *association*. Visitors from the building's period of significance would readily recognize the building today.

FUTURE PLANS

Currently, there are no plans for development at the Olmsted Family Farmhouse except for its continued maintenance and use as a house museum, community social center, and archival depository. The Urbandale Historical Society respectfully maintains the historic integrity of the property and will find the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and *Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings* helpful guides to the continued preservation of the exterior and interior of the farmhouse and of its site.

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AERIAL MAP

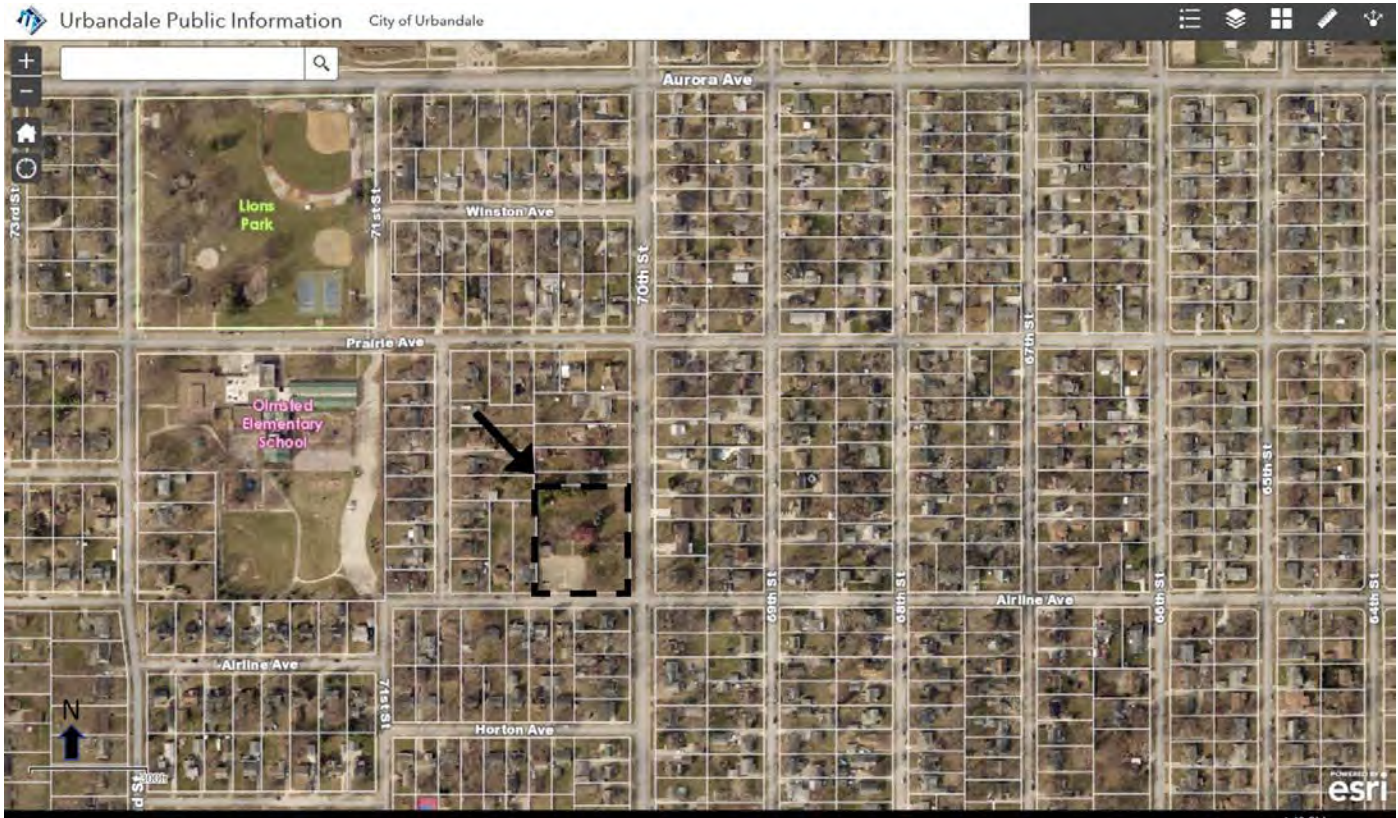


Figure 1



The location of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse and property are indicated by the black arrow and outlined by the black dashed lines.

Source: Urbandale Engineering & Public Works. <https://maps.urbandale.org/UrbandalePublicInformation/> . June 3, 2019

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Map of Surroundings with Scale

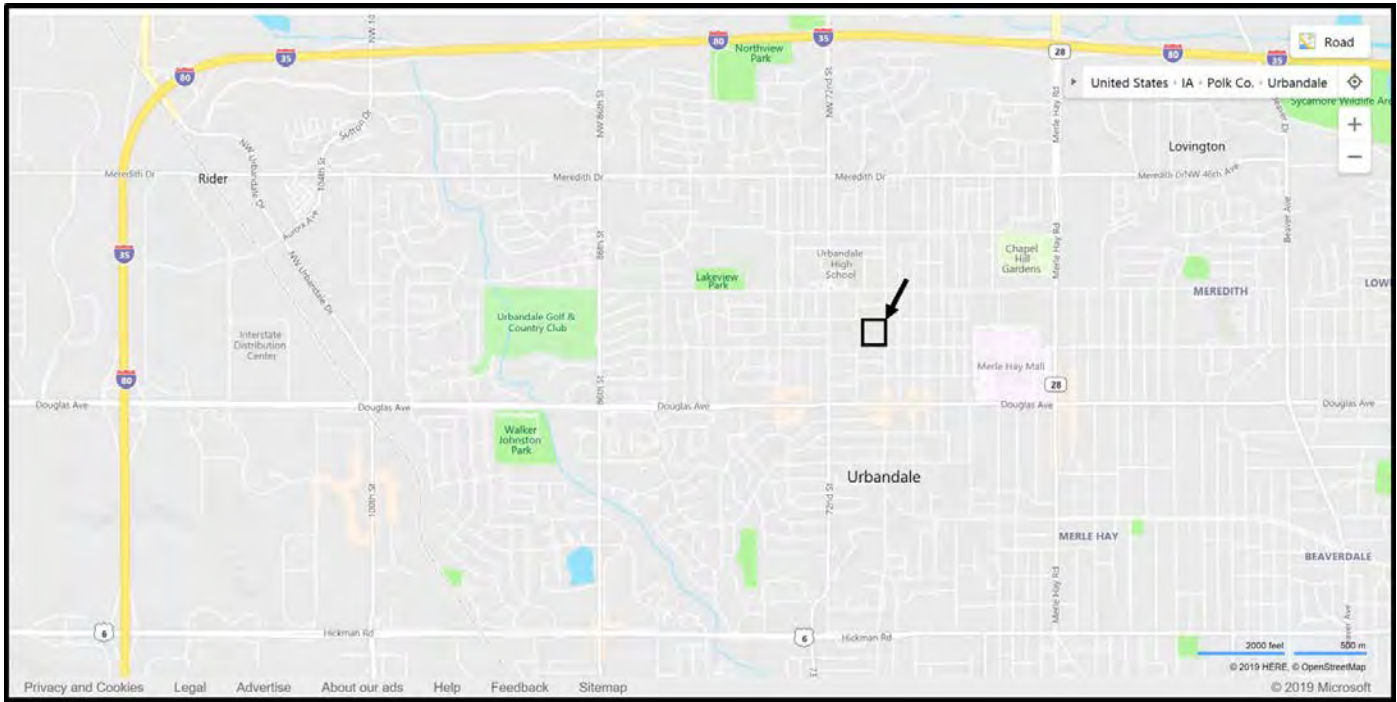


Figure 2

The heavy arrow on this map locates the Olmsted Family Farmhouse within the context of its surroundings

Source: Bing Maps, Viewed June 3, 2019.

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WEBSTER TOWNSHIP

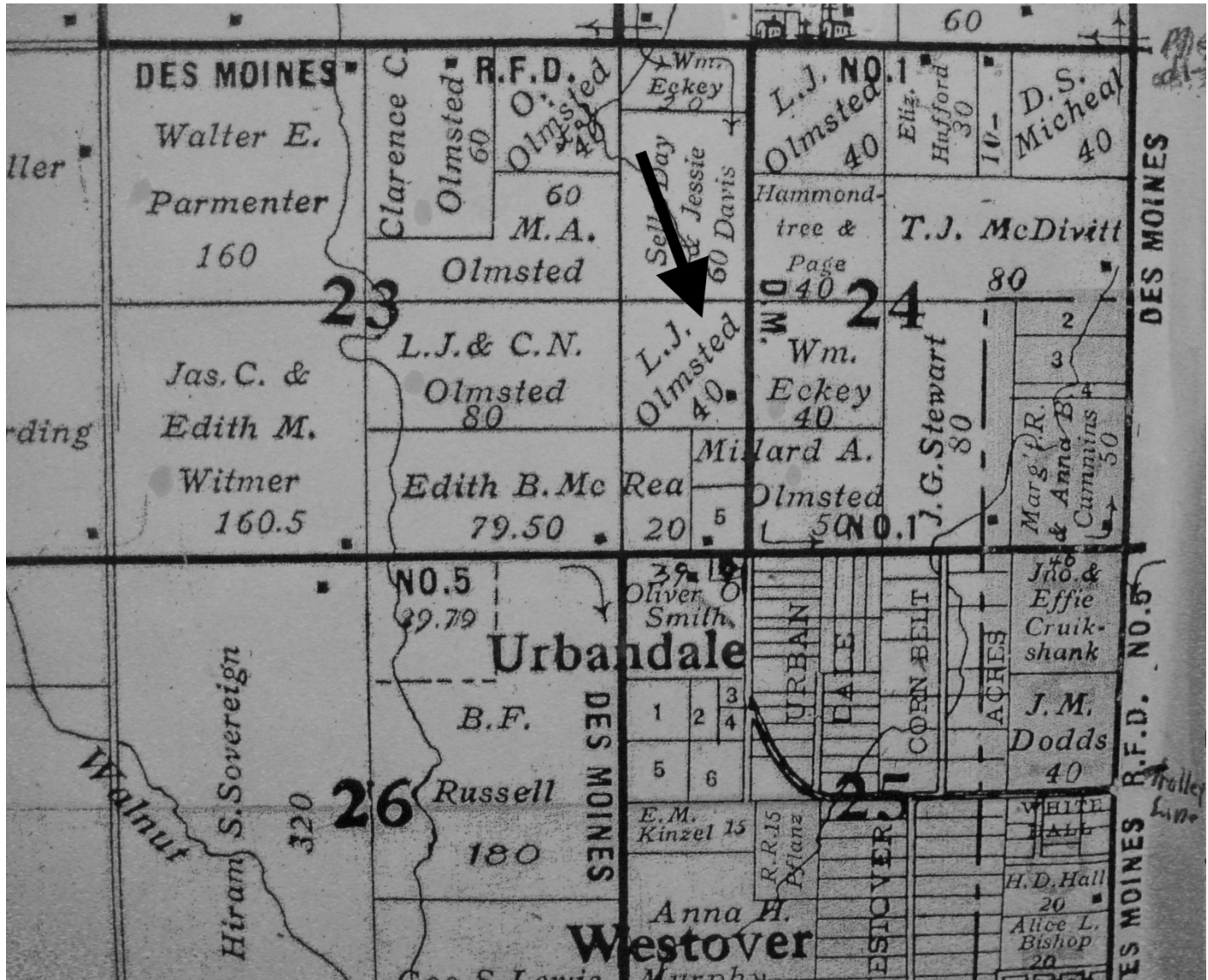


Figure 3

As this map shows, members of the Olmsted family owned a quarter section of land in Section 23 as well as 130 acres in Section 24. The heavy arrow locates the site of Olmsted Family Farmhouse. The map also locates the Des Moines Delivery Route No. 5. It enters Section 24 on its north section line (today's Meredith Drive) and leaves Section 24 on its south section line (today's Douglas Avenue). In Section 25, the map locates the western terminus of the Inter-Urban Railway (opened 1905) and plats of Urban Dale (laid out 1907) and Corn Belt Acres (laid out 1909) (lower right-hand corner). Both these plats were laid out in the wake of the interurban's advent in Urbandale in 1905 but before the incorporation of the Town of Urbandale in 1917.

Source: *Atlas Polk County, Iowa.*

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LOCATION OF PROPERTY



Figure 4

The arrow on this map locates the Olmsted Family Farmhouse at 4010 70 Street in Urbandale, Iowa.

Source: Polk County Assessor's Office, 2017.

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TOWN OF URBANDALE AS INCORPORATED IN 1917



Figure 5

Two plats in Section 25 predated the incorporation. They are shown as one hatched rectangle. The town's boundary lines generally conform to standard U.S. government survey section and quarter section lines. In Section 22, for example, the town includes 120 acres excluding the northwest quarter with its schoolhouse.

Source: Map of Polk County, 1918-1925, Polk County Auditor's Office.

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70TH STREET IN 1949

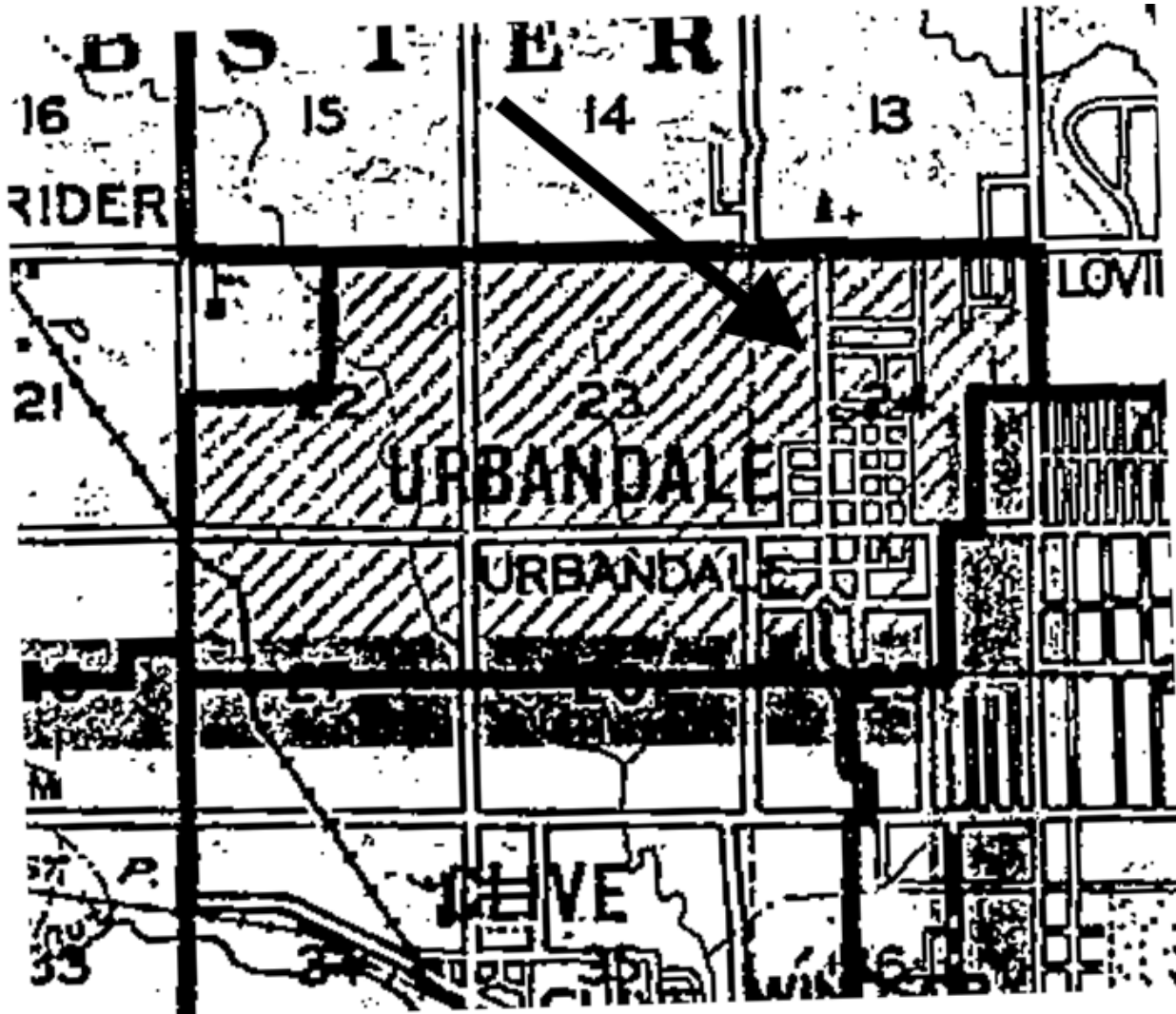


Figure 6

This map shows the linear configuration of Urbandale along the 70th Street (heavy arrow) in 1949. Plats and streets cluster along this axis in the far eastern part of the town. The central and western parts of the town (Sections 22 and 23) remain unplatted.

Source: American Lithographing & Printing Co., 1949.

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HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH C. 1909



Figure 7

This, the earliest known view of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse, pictures it several years after construction. It pictures the Millard A. and Olive Stuart Olmsted family and Olive's sister. From left to right: Millard, Blanche, Olive (standing), Martha (in baby carriage), Laura, and Olive's sister, Laura Horton. Martha was born in 1908, helping to date the picture.

Source: Archives Urbandale Historical Society.

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HISTORIC IMAGE C. 1933



Figure 8

Looking to the north, this photograph pictures the Olmsted Family Farmhouse as it appeared circa 1933. Some of the shutters are open, some are partially opened, and some are closed. The window sash are painted a dark color. Four or five glacial drift boulders, likely unearthed when plowing nearby fields, decorated the south lawn. Curiosities of nature such as these interested the Victorians intensely. These show the Olmsteds' interest.

Source: Archives Urbandale Historical Society.

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HISTORIC IMAGE 1936



Figure 9

Looking to the northeast, this view pictures the 1-story wing on the southwest corner of the farmhouse, called by the Olmsted's the "sink room." The photograph pictures the downspout from the roof, which fed the south cistern at its base. Ruth Olmsted McKinney has described how water from this cistern was piped to sink room and hand pumped for washing-up upon entering the house. This view also shows another outside pump. Where did the concrete pedestrian walk by the pump lead? The boulders pictured in Figure 5 have been removed.

Source: Archives Urbandale Historical Society.

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HISTORIC IMAGE C. 1939



Figure 10

Looking to the northwest, this view pictures the south lawn cleared of vegetation with young trees taking their place. These landscape changes are thought to be another of the renovations undertaken during the Gutfreund occupancy of the property beginning in 1937. Some of the shutters have been removed from the house.

Source: Archives Urbandale Historical Society.

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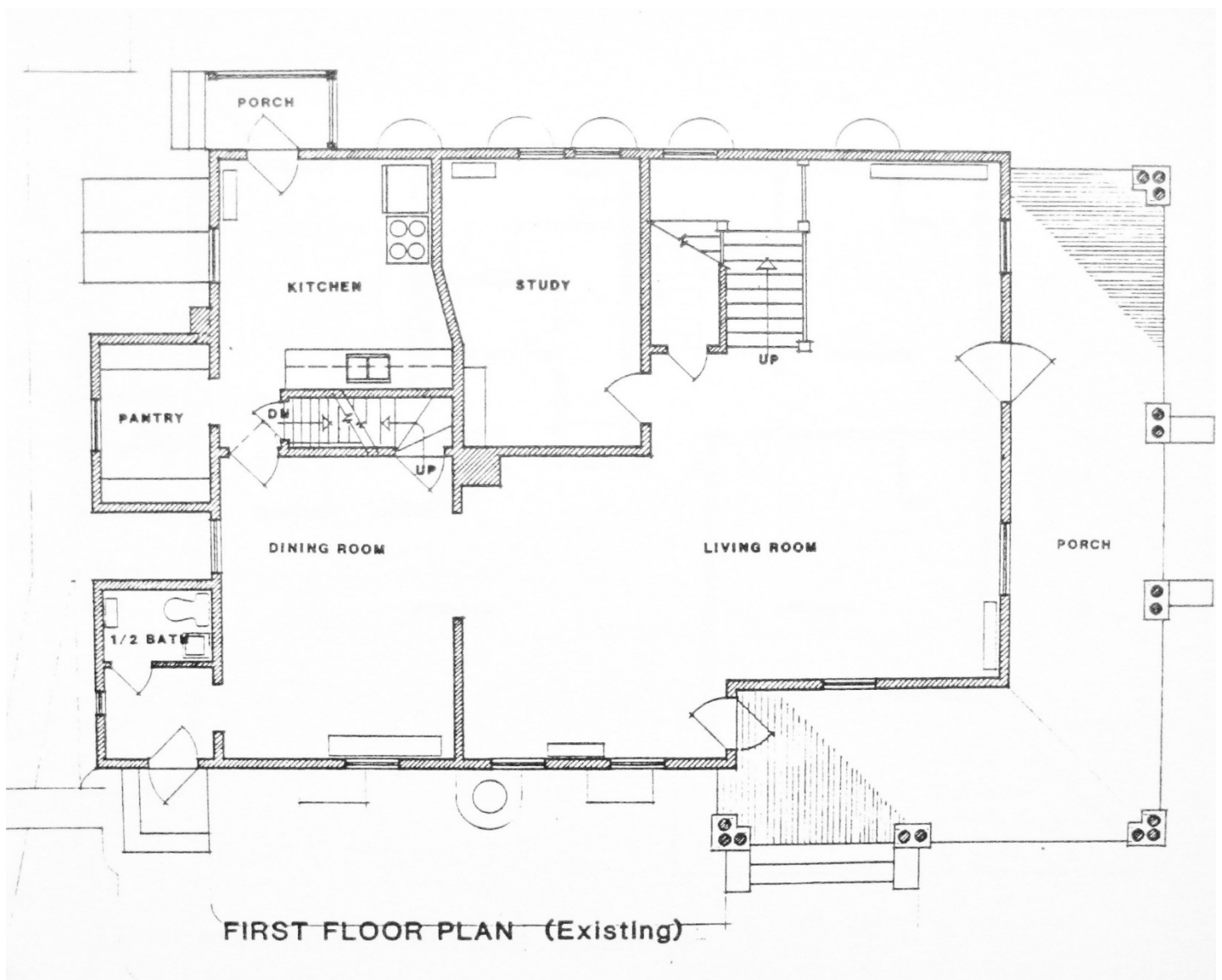


Figure 11

Source: Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects, undated, c. 1990.

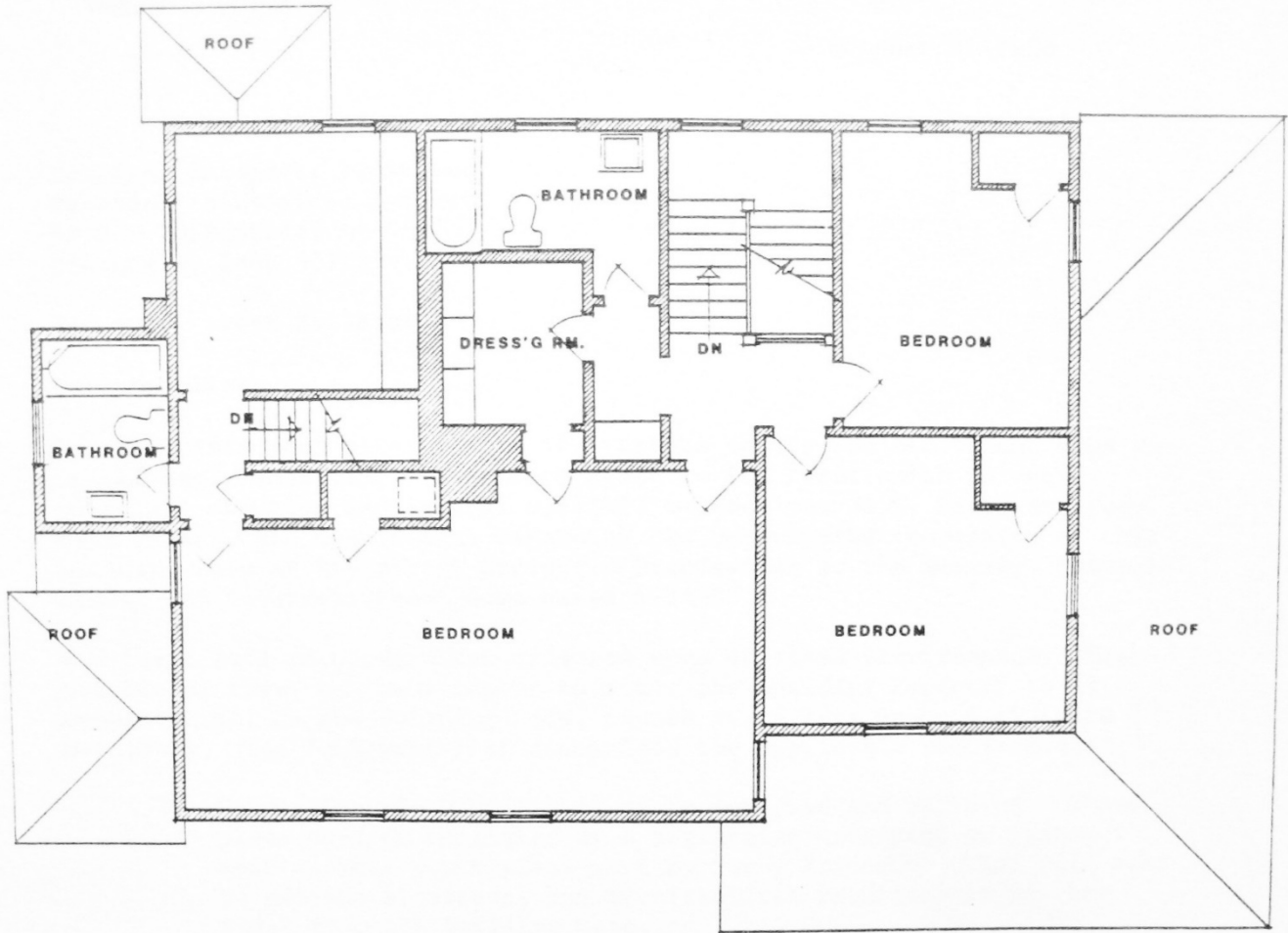


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SECOND FLOOR PLAN (Existing)

Figure 12

Source: Wetherell-Ericcson-Architects, undated, c. 1990.



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CONCEPT PLAN FOR LANDSCAPED GROUNDS

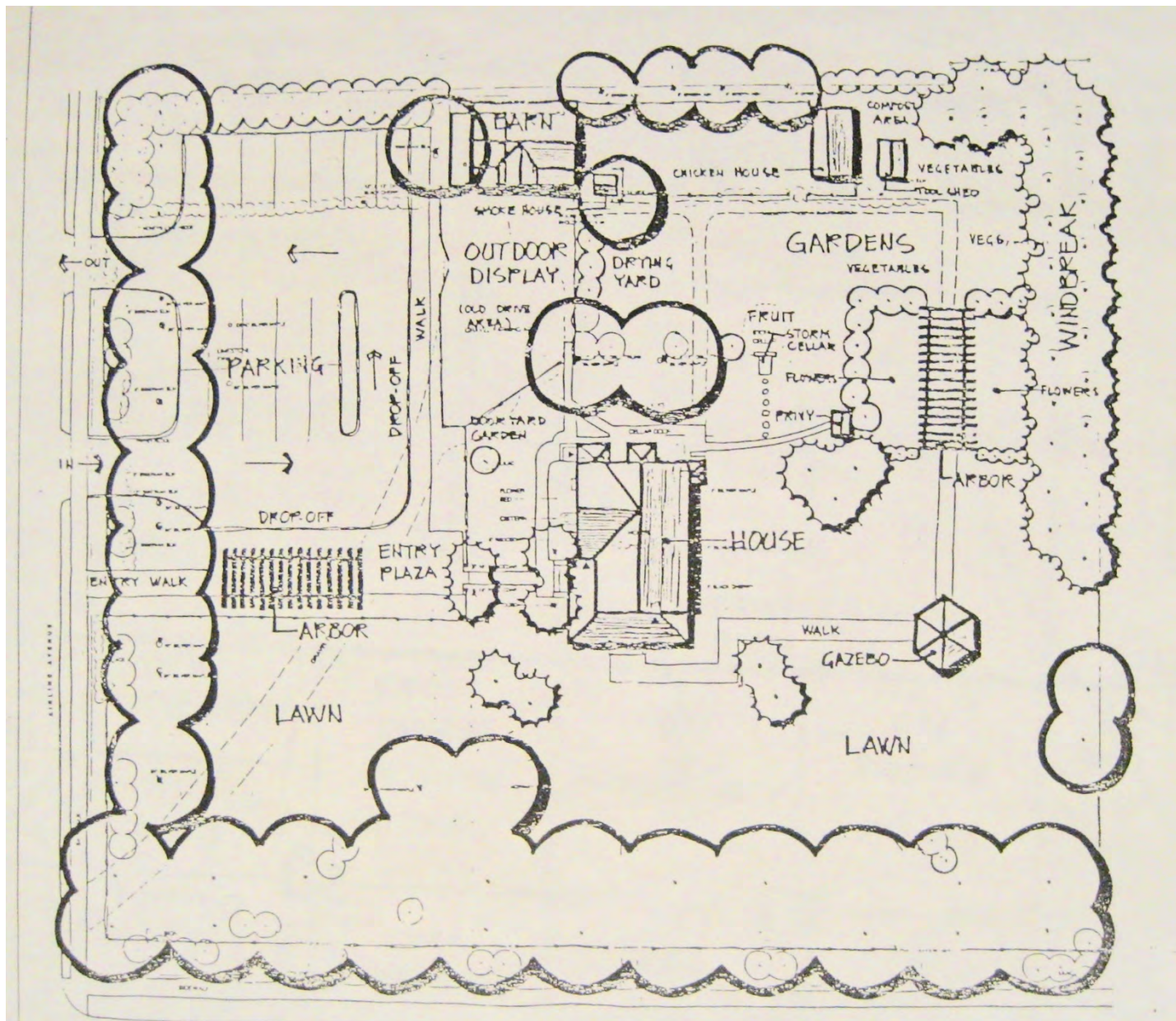


Figure 13

The thrust of this concept was to create an imagined early 20th century farmhouse dooryard rather than to recreate a documented historic landscape. The stand of trees on the south edge of the property, for example, never existed historically but were planted in the 1990s in partial implementation of this concept. Other implemented elements include the parking lot, barn, and pergola.

Source: DeBord-Dunbar Partnership.

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OLMSTED PLACE PLAT NO. 3

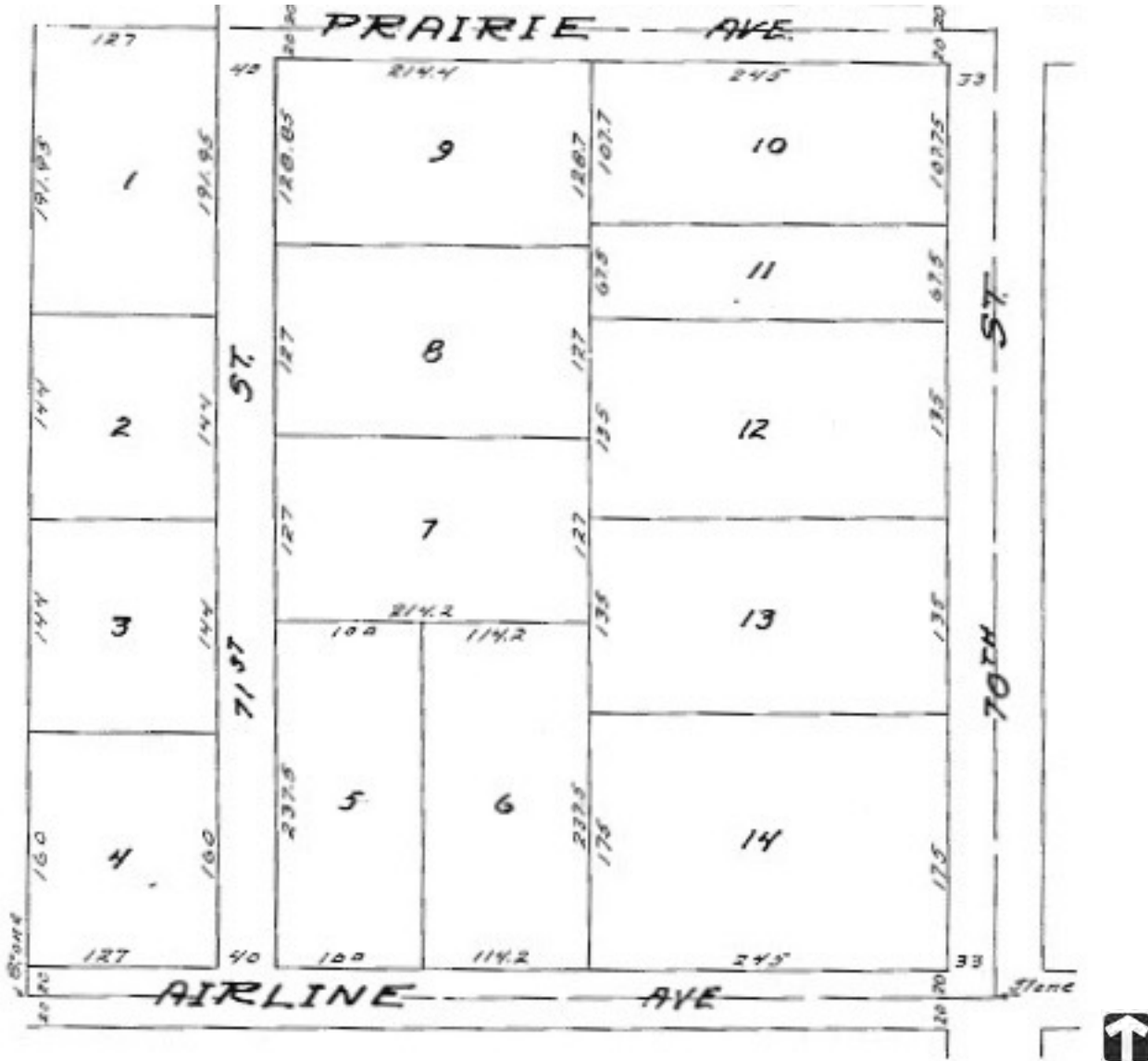


Figure 14

Olmsted Place Plat No. 3 was filed for record in Polk County on March 31, 1937. The plat subdivided 10-acres of land from a 40-acre tract for residential development. The Olmsted Family Farmhouse is situated on Lots 13 and 14 of this plat. Millard A. Olmsted held the title to this land at the time.

Source: Polk County Auditor's Office.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.
- 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:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance

within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Exploration/Settlement

Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1904

1937

Significant Dates

1904

1937

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

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Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

SUMMARY

Built in 1904, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse is significant, locally and under National Register Criterion A, because it calls attention to the emergence of Urbandale, Iowa, as a town. Incorporated in 1917, this town overlaid its boundaries on a rural community of scattered farms. The Olmsted Family Farmhouse signals this evolution of land use. The farmhouse is much larger in size than its neighbors and Victorian rather than 20th century in architectural feeling. These character-features proclaim this property's earlier land use and rural origins prior to urban incorporation.

Following the town's incorporation, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse also affected urban development in Urbandale. The platting of the farmland associated with this farmhouse into residential lots in 1937, as well as the physical prominence of the farmhouse itself, reinforced the importance of 70th Street, the rural road adjacent to it, which, by the 1940s, had become the backbone of Urbandale, Iowa, as an urban space.

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse period of significance, under Criterion A, is 1904 and 1937, the time when it affected settlement and urban growth in the community.

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse possesses two resources for this National Register nomination, the house itself, which is contributing and classified as building, and the barn, which is noncontributing and classified as a building.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

NOMINATION METHODOLOGY

The origin of this nomination dates to the late 1980s, when the Urbandale Historical Society acquired this property. Madeline L. Kaloides, president of the society, prepared a draft nomination for the Olmsted Family Farmhouse using Criterion B, locally, to justify the property's significance. Although this draft contained only two pages of text and was never presented to the Iowa State Nominations Review Committee, its statement of significance for Millard A. Olmsted as a locally significant individual made a persuasive case for the claim. Kaloides' text, quoted below, tells this part of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse story and acknowledges her insightful perspectives. While Criterion B is likely justifiable for Millard A. Olmsted, it would require more research to make the complete case. Although Olmsted lived from 1904 until the mid-1930s in this house, from then until his death in 1956, he lived elsewhere. Identification of these later properties associated with him and their potential significance for his life and accomplishments are necessary. Instead, the nomination now in hand approaches this property's significance under Criterion A.

URBANDALE EMERGES

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse calls attention to the rural origins of Urbandale, Iowa, as a town. Built in 1904 and predating this incorporation, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse was one of only a few improvements in the countryside where Urbandale now stands. (Figure 3) When the Town of Urbandale was incorporated some 13 years later, it included the Olmsted Family Farmstead and its associated farm. Then, during the 1920s and 1930s, Urbandale grew slowly as a residential suburb at the edge of Des Moines. Following World War II as the metropolitan area enjoyed a post-war housing boom, the population of Urbandale exploded with new home construction, which continues to the present day. Throughout all of this time, the site of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse, its large scale as a building, and its Victorian architectural design—so distinctive from its surroundings of smaller Craftsman, Tudor Revival, and mid-century modern residences—lend the sense of the area's rural origins to Urbandale's present-day streetscape.

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Within this story of rural development and municipal incorporation, the Olmsted Family played an important role, first as pioneer farmers and then, as related later in this nomination, when Millard A. Olmsted joined with others to agitate for incorporation as a town and establish the Urbandale Independent school district.

Leander J. Olmsted (1839-1917) and Charlotte Horton Olmsted (1842-1933), his wife, pioneered in 1867 settlement in Webster Township, Polk County, Iowa, where the City of Urbandale is now located. By the early 20th century, the Olmsteds and their two sons had prospered and become prominent landowners in the area. According to a 1911 biographical sketch of Millard A. Olmsted, their son:

Together with his father and brother he [Millard] owns four hundred and thirty-three acres of land in Webster township, all under a high state of cultivation. (Brigham: 1087)

As Webster Township grew, a picture of settlement and piecemeal upbuilding unfolded as the area now known as Urbandale gradually emerged as a town.

The early homes in Urbandale were of a great variety. Some were very large to accommodate relatives and friends that came to visit. . . There were smaller houses too. A small chicken house was moved from a farm near 50th and Kingman in Des Moines. The Leander Olmsted family lived in this for some time. [Unproven, ed.] John Davis family lived in a remodeled street car and it was later moved farther out to the Kuefner farm. There it was used for raising rabbits. There are a few of the early homes still standing and they are lived in by folks who helped built (*sic*) them. These include the Stuarts at 63rd and Douglas, the Keufners on Applegate Road and the Nelsons at 75th and Meredith. These are only a few of the folks who have played a very important part in the development of our town. . .

These are some of the early experiences of some of the older residences (*sic*) of Urbandale as they recalled them in early 1962. (Anonymous)

Based largely on oral tradition, this folksy account evidences pride in the community's individualism, ingenuity, and respect for thrift. A dash of American boastfulness is also evident. The Edith B. McRae Farmhouse might also have been cited as another example of a large dwelling in the area. Located at 7205 Douglas Avenue and built in 1871, this house resembled many so-called I-Houses erected in rural Iowa at the time.

In 1905, the Inter-Urban Railway Company extended a streetcar line from Des Moines to this area and named it the Urbandale Line. Inter-urban transportation inaugurated a new era of growth for this rural area and that name stuck. Walker's Station, located on the northeast corner of today's intersection at 70th and Rosedale Drive, served as a small depot and terminus of the Urbandale Line. This streetcar line encouraged further settlement of the area, particularly among residents in metropolitan Des Moines who wished to live in a rural environment or perhaps escape unhealthy conditions of urban living at the time. This trend toward ex-urban settlement had gained popularity in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th century across many sections of the nation as public transportation and the automobile opened up new areas for residential development. The establishment of two plats adjacent to Walker's Station—Urban Dale, platted in 1907 and Corn Belt Acres, platted in 1909—call attention to this national trend. (Figure 3) Although these plats preceded the incorporation of Urbandale as a town in 1917, they occupied only a very small portion of its boundaries. When first incorporated, the Town of Urbandale was not really a town but an unplatted rural neighborhood. The Olmsted Family Farmhouse reflects that historic context.

URBANDALE GROWS

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse calls attention to spatial development of Urbandale, Iowa, as a town in the 1930s. Prior to World War II, 70th Street had emerged as Urbandale's principal corridor. (Figure 6) The Olmsted Family Farmhouse contributed to this development because it and its associated farmland were platted in 1937 as Olmsted Place Plat No. 3. This opened up land along the west side of 70th Street for residential development. (Figure 2) At this time, land use west of 70th Street remained agricultural, precluding residential development along Douglas Avenue.

Already by the turn of the 20th century, the U.S. Post Office had established the Des Moines Rural Free Delivery Route #1 (today's 70th Street) in Webster Township. (Figure 3) From the City of Des Moines, this route ran along Meredith Drive past 70th Street to points west and north to return south along 70th Street and back to Des Moines along Douglas

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Avenue. Of course, these streets were country roads at the time. A series of 19th and early 20th century rural landmarks stood along this stretch of 70th Street. The T. E. McDivitt farm, McDivitt School, and McDivitt Methodist Church and Cemetery stood at the northern head of 70th Street. The Olmsted Family Farmhouse stood along 70th Street midway to the south. Walker's Station, the terminus of the Urbandale interurban line stood at the south end of 70th Street. The construction of a community schoolhouse on the southwest corner of 70th Street and Douglas Avenue in 1912 further reinforced the importance of the 70th Street corridor. These points created a north-south axis, which became the backbone of Urbandale emerging from a rural community into a town.

Foreshadowing the future, Douglas Avenue began its ascent as a principal traffic corridor in Urbandale in 1926, when it was paved from Merle Hay Road in Des Moines to about 83rd Street in today's Urbandale. Two hundred neighbors celebrated this improvement in a dance party on the new pavement. (*Des Moines Register*, June 27, 1926) Still, land use west of 70th Street in Urbandale remained agricultural, precluding residential development along Douglas Avenue and the great westward march of Urbandale's growth until the 1950s.

Meanwhile in 1937, the Olmsted family had laid out Olmsted Place Plat No. 3. (Figures 4 and 14) Fronting 70th Street on the east, this plat opened up 40 acres of farmland associated with the Olmsted Family Farmstead for residential development. The plat created 14 building lots with varying dimensions and laid out 71st Street on its western edge. The presence of the Olmsted Family Farmstead, prominently sited in Lot 13 and Lot 14, anchored the plat. As a result, the creation of Olmsted Place Plat No. 3 acted as a magnet, drawing new residential construction north along 70th Street, reinforcing its importance as a residential corridor.

Four years earlier, the Olmsted family had laid out Olmsted Place, a plat situated on the northwest corner of 70th Street and Douglas Avenue. The opening of this strategic location for development solidified it as the community's town center.

Although development in each of these Olmsted plats mostly occurred following World War II, they had established land use patterns for future growth and signaled that 70th Street had become the backbone of the community. (Figure 6) The Olmsted Family Farmhouse, "one of the most beautiful homes in Urbandale," lent prestige to the street. (*Des Moines Evening Tribune*, April 18, 1924) As we will see, this urban pattern changed following World War II; but for the time, a linear north-south configuration shaped Urbandale as a town.

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URBANDALE EXPANDS WEST

World War II brought to a standstill further residential development in Urbandale and the Des Moines metropolitan area in general. After the war ended in 1945, Urbandale experienced an unprecedented housing boom as G.I.s returned home, married, and started families. Fueled by American automobile culture and the lure of suburbia, many new plats in Urbandale were surveyed and laid out. New homes filled the plats, and, as the following table shows, Urbandale's populated skyrocketed.

URBANDALE'S POPULATION GROWTH 1920-2000

Table 3.1: Population and Household Growth Rates

Year	Population	Average Annual Population Gain	Households	Average Annual Household Gain	Average Annual Population Gain/Household
1920	298.00				
1930	596.00	29.8	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
1940	1,038.00	44.2	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
1950	1,777.00	78.9	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
1960	5,821.00	404.4	1,495	Not Available	Not Available
1970	14,434.00	861.3	4,045	255.0	3.38
1975	16,410.00	395.2	5,395	270.0	1.46
1980	17,869.00	291.8	6,412	203.4	1.43
1985	19,443.00	314.8	7,208	159.2	1.98
1990	23,500.00	811.4	9,013	361.0	2.25
1996	27,565.00	677.5	10,465	242.0	2.80
2000	29,072.00	376.75	11,484	254.8	1.48

Sources: edited from U.S. Census, Camiros, Ltd., City of Urbandale

Source: "Urbandale Comprehensive Plan," 2003, p. 11.

Most of this growth occurred westward from Hickman Road, Douglas Avenue, and Meredith Avenue. Urbandale's earlier development and the role 70th Street had played in it were forgotten. Indeed, Urbandale's current comprehensive plan stated in 2003:

The city has grown from east to west, initially as a residential enclave in the countryside at the end of a streetcar line, then as an auto-dominated suburb of single-family housing. ("Urbandale Comprehensive Plan": 5)

The nomination of the Olmstead Farmhouse to the National Register of Historic Places revises this historical interpretation by recalling the key role 70th Street played in the community's early development as a town.

DAUGHTERS OF CERES

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse is of historical interest because it calls attention to the Daughters of Ceres, a social organization of rural farmwomen promoting progressive ideas. As members during the early 20th century, Olive Stuart

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Olmsted and Charlotte H. Olmsted, her mother-in-law, actively participated in and hosted meetings of this organization at the Olmsted Family Farmhouse.

In 1898, Mrs. Martin Flynn with help from Mrs. Henry Wallace established the Walnut Chapter of this organization. "Any woman interested in rural work could become an active member. Original dues were 35 cents." (Gee 2008) Chapters were named after the townships in which they were located. The establishment of the Webster Chapter in which the Olmsteds were members followed that of the Walnut Chapter. Along with other chapters in central Iowa and across the state, the Daughters of Ceres fostered progressive ideals of social, political, and educational reform through programs, discussion, and action. Named after the Roman goddess of agriculture, the Daughters of Ceres remained active throughout the 20th century.

Topics discussed at the Webster Chapter included:

proper education of girls, food preparation and favorite recipes, basket weaving as an occupation, rural mail delivery, women as wage earners, Red Cross overseas, keeping young men on the farm, women suffrage, and transportation concerns with proposed townships schools for rural students. (*Ibid.*)

The minutes of these meetings, carefully recorded over many decades, also serve to "illuminate the social and emotional bonds that tied this group of women together throughout the years." (University of Iowa)

Olive and Charlotte Olmsted hosted meetings and social events at the Olmsted Family Farmhouse for the Daughters of Ceres. According to the July 3, 1920, minutes of the Webster Chapter:

The daughters of Ceres were invited to meet at the home of Mrs. Olmsted as Grandma Olmsted was to leave soon for a visit to New York. July 4th being so near at hand, everyone came with full baskets and a feast was spread on the beautiful lawn in old fashioned picnic style to which 64 people, old and young, seemed to do justice. (Quoted in Gee 2008)

In addition to its concern for progressive issues, the social events held by the Daughters of Ceres promoted friendship and neighborliness at a time when farm families lived far apart. The Fourth of July is still celebrated on the grounds of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse today.

MILLARD A. OLMSTED AND THE INCORPORATION OF URBANDALE

Millard A. Olmsted (1868-1956) was one of Urbandale's most notable early leaders. Olmsted along with his neighbors agitated for the establishment of an independent school district in what was then an unincorporated rural community. The success of this effort resulted in the incorporation of Urbandale as a town.

A member of Drake University's Class of 1889, its first graduating class, Olmsted had a life-long interest in education. Along with Clarence C. Olmsted, his brother, and other local residents, these men agitated in 1917 to protect their rural community's school from absorption into the Johnston consolidated school system. This agitation spurred the incorporation of the Town of Urbandale as an effective means of opposition. Signaling his importance in these events, Millard was elected the new school district's first president, a position he served for 17 years and a testament to the community's trust in his leadership. Throughout all this time and these activities, Millard lived in the Olmsted Family Farmhouse.

Rural school consolidation had been very slow in Iowa until 1913, when state legislation "opened the floodgates to a torrent of consolidations." (May: 228) As Madeline Kaloides has written:

Offering state aid to consolidated schools based on the number of rooms in the school, this legislation prompted an upsurge of interest and increased the number of consolidated schools in Iowa from only 18 in 1913 to 439 by 1921. At the same time, resistance to being brought into consolidated school districts stiffened in areas opposed to the idea. Such an instance occurred, when, in 1917, the recent Johnston Consolidated School

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District, its boundaries heretofore reaching no further south than Meredith Drive, now threatened to extend itself one mile further south to the Walnut Township line.

Residents in the affected area, now with their own two-room schoolhouse, organized to stave off the annexation. In order to keep their children from being hauled by horse-drawn busses to Johnston, residents seized upon an Iowa law that permitted towns and villages to establish their own independent school districts. On March 7, 1917, organizers filed with the county district court a petition for incorporation as the Town of Urbandale. Nearly all qualified electors living in this small but growing locality signed this petition. The name proposed for the new town was that of a streetcar line operated by the Inter-Urban Railway Company of Des Moines. The line had reached Urbandale in 1905. An election, held on April 5, 1917, approved the incorporation of Urbandale as a town with 49 residents voting in favor and no votes cast in opposition. (Official Publication)

Urbandale's incorporation approved by early May 1917 created the offices of mayor, city council of five (Clarence C. Olmsted a charter member), and assessor, as well as an independent school district. With evident pleasure, Millard A. Olmsted, president of the Urbandale's new independent school district, wrote to the Board of Directors of the Consolidated School District of Johnston:

The independent school district of Urbandale now claims jurisdiction over all school matters within the corporate limits of said town of Urbandale and the right to all school funds collected or derived from the territory within the limits of. . . Urbandale. . . You will therefore govern yourselves accordingly. (Olmsted)

Source: Madeline Kaloides

Kaloides' insightful words succinctly portray Millard A. Olmsted's contributions to Urbandale betterment. Millard A. Olmsted was Urbandale's first town assessor, as noted above, although the length of his tenure remains unknown. Olmsted was elected the new school district's first president and served for 17 years in this, the largest public institution in Urbandale. Throughout this time and these activities, Millard lived in the Olmsted Family Farmhouse.

In 1947, Millard sold a 10-acre tract of land at reduced market value to the Urbandale Lions Club for the establishment of a park, now known as Lions Park. Millard also sold land at reduced market value for the construction of the elementary school in Urbandale that acknowledges his contributions to local education. The Urbandale Independent School District named its new facility at 7110 Prairie Avenue "Millard Olmsted Elementary School" in his honor.

Although Clarence C. Olmsted actively contributed to this effort—he was one of the five commissioners appointed to hold the incorporation election and subsequently was elected and served on Urbandale's first town council—he did not live in the Olmsted Family Farmhouse. As such, this building lacks a direct association with him. (See Recommendations for Further Research.)

Further research and survey activity is recommended concerning Millard A. Olmsted and properties associated with him. Following the death of Charlotte Olmsted, his mother, in 1933 and the sale of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse in 1937, Millard lived at other locations in both Des Moines and out-of-state. Extant properties associated with this period of his life need to be identified and evaluated in conjunction with his occupancy at the Olmsted House to justify that property's significance under National Register Criterion B.

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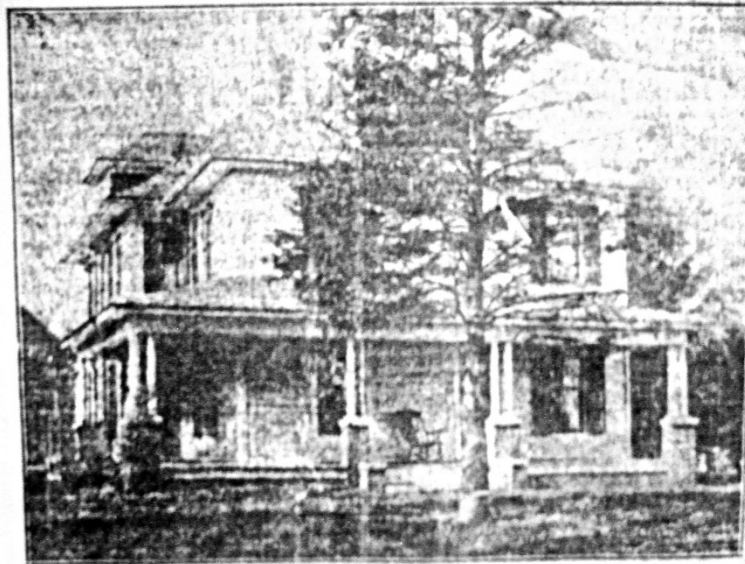
Name of Property

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ARCHITECTURE

Though no significance is being claimed under Criterion C for architecture due to the changes made by subsequent owners, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse is of local architectural interest as a well-planned American Foursquare design influenced by Colonial Revival styling and so is worth a discussion here. The house shows the adaptability of the American Foursquare format and how it could be enlarged to create a more impressive exterior appearance and greater interior volume. The clean lines of the building and its tightly contained massing hallmark the Colonial Revival influence. Because of its architectural distinction, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse has long enjoyed local recognition. As a newspaper feature noted some two decades after its construction:

“URBANDALE GROWING SUBURB HAS CLAIMS OF DISTINCTION”



“An Urbandale Home. The residence of M. A. Olmsted, one of the most beautiful homes in Urbandale.” (*Des Moines Evening Tribune*, April 18, 1924)

American Foursquare

The American Foursquare—also known as the “American Basic,” “Box House,” and “Corn-belt Cube” (Schweitzer: 71)—became a nationally popular residential design at the turn of the 20th century both in urban and rural areas. In cities, the foursquare design could be designed to fit into tight spaces. Alike for urban and rural residents, the foursquare offered practicality and simplicity. The block-like massing of the foursquare also lent a powerful feeling of stability and security to the dwelling. On upland prairies, the American Foursquare looked like fortresses against whatever the weather could muster. Whatever the setting, the foursquare provided spatial efficiency and cost effectiveness. The foursquare could accommodate farm families with three or four bedrooms and greater simplicity and easier construction than the bungalow with its complex roof and styling. (Far fewer bungalows were constructed in Iowa for farmhouses than foursquares.)

The hallmarks of American Foursquare design include a box-shaped ground plan, height of two stories, hip roof with one or more dormer windows, and 1-story porch situated on the front facade more often than not extending across its entire width. The interior floorplan usually consists of a simple arrangement of rooms. Typically, two rooms extend across the front of the house and two rooms extend across the rear. This simple plan usually provides for an entrance hall and staircase to the second floor and living room at the front of the house and a dining room and a kitchen at the rear. Sometimes a 1-story wing at the back provides for a kitchen with a bedroom (perhaps with bathroom) occupying the erstwhile kitchen.

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse shows the adaptability of the typical American Foursquare format by increasing its size. The house expands the simple rectangular shape of the foursquare ground plan by adding two more rooms at the rear.

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The 2-story projecting wing attached to the south elevation of the main block also increases the volume of the rooms affected by its presence. (Figures 8 & 9) Each of these adaptations increases the building's architectural stature.

On the exterior, the presence of the 2-story projecting wing and its roof increase the mass of the building. This wing also provides a function for the wrap-around front porch, which adjoins the south elevation of the house. A door to the living room is situated on this wing's east elevation. The wrap-around porch extends to this wing and provides a covered entrance to this door. Taken together, the expanded footprint of the house and the sweep of its wrap-around porch work harmoniously together to create a balanced architectural massing of notable effect. While it is true that the expansion of the foursquare format is not necessarily unusual, the presence of such a large wrap-around front porch is. In an urban setting, this porch would require a large lot, limiting widespread construction. The conservative nature of rural areas might have eschewed something this showy as lacking modesty.

On the interior, the removal of certain partition walls have rendered the original 2x2x2 layout of rooms less evident today in the Olmsted Family Farmhouse than when it was originally constructed. Still, this layout is readily apparent when interpreted to the visitor. As originally configured, an entrance hall and parlor occupy the front tier, a living room and bedroom occupy the middle tier, and a dining room and kitchen occupying the rear tier. The wing at the very back of the house provides for a pantry. The layout of the second floor repeats this 3-room tiered layout: two bedrooms across the front, two bedrooms across the middle, and two bedrooms across the rear. A bathroom occupies the second story of the 2-story wing at the very back.

Colonial Revival Styling

The architectural design of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse shows the influence of Colonial Revival styling. The flared roof of this house—a major architectural element of the building's design—bears a significant hallmark of Colonial Revival styling. The Olmsted House employs numerous flared roofs, including those over its main block, south wing, and two dormer windows. The curvilinear lines of these roofs soften their visual weight, avoiding any feeling of heaviness. Seen in conjunction with the horizontal lines of the wrap-around front porch, the flaring lines of the main roof flow out in a welcoming embrace to the viewer.

One of the notable qualities of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse's design is its architectural restraint. Architectural detailing is kept to a minimum throughout the exterior and interior of the building. True, cove-edged corner posts stand on each corner of the building, but this Colonial Revival detailing is subtle, and the overall lack of architectural detailing lends a clean and simple feeling to the building. This, in turn, allows its massing and good lines to express forcefully a powerful presence without detracting to the eye.

Although no architect or architectural firm has been identified in connection with the design of this house, its well-proportioned lines suggest the influence of professional planning. Perhaps the design of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse originated in an as yet unidentified catalog of house plans, published and widely available throughout the nation at the turn of the 20th century and available at local lumberyards and by mail.

Planning the Home

The Olmsted Family Farmhouse was intentionally erected as the home for an extended family, and careful planning was given to ensure that it functioned to that end. When completed in 1904, the house featured seven bedrooms, far more than the parents Leander and Charlotte needed but appropriate for their growing extended family. This included Millard, their son, and Olive Stuart, their recent daughter-in-law. Millard and Olive had lived with his parents since their marriage in 1902; and, when planning for the new house, provisions also were made for that couple's children. As it happened, Millard and Olive had six children. The first was born in 1905. At its fullest occupancy, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse likely housed two grandparents, two parents, six children, one hired-girl and one hired-man. The hired-girl lived in the northeast bedroom. The hired-man lived in the northwest bedroom.

The farmhouse grounds also exhibit careful planning. To ensure abundant water supply at a time when that public utility was unavailable, the Olmsteds included two cisterns on the site. The south cistern provided water for washing

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

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in the Sink Room (nonextant). Rainwater from the roof fed the south cistern. The privy was located near the north cistern.

The cistern on the north side of the house was for the kitchen and bathroom. The kitchen stove heated a tank of water so we had hot water. We did not drink the soft water from the cistern. . . We went outside to pump well water. We used well water for drinking, dishes and cooking. (McKinney: 3-4)

A hand pump south of the farmhouse provided the drinking water. It was still there in 1936. (Figure 9)

Contractor-Builder

The name of the builder of the Olmsted Family Farmhouse remains unknown. He was likely a local carpenter with a crew or a building contractor, working for a week or so at the site, returning home for a while, and then returning to the job with his crew. Certain methods used for the construction of the house reveal the hand of a builder willing to employ unacceptable construction techniques or lacking the knowledge to avoid them. As noted above, the building's brick foundation betrays a "very inadequate construction practice." (Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects) The backstairs to the second floor and the stairs to the basement are clumsily built and dangerous. While the builder might have been under pressure to complete this job, cutting corners at the outset with the foundation belies good judgment.

When the Olmsted House was constructed, stair-building was a specialized occupation. The carpenter who constructed the main staircase in the Olmsted House had these skills, while the carpenter who constructed the other staircases in the house did not. It is hard to imagine a skilled contractor-builder sanctioning the construction of these clumsy backstairs. This amateur construction lends credence to the tradition that Leander J. Olmsted and, perhaps, his sons, built part of the house themselves. The same might hold true for the building's deficient brick foundation.

SELECTION OF HISTORIC NAME

The historic name for this property is "Olmsted Family Farmhouse." This property is also known as the Olmsted-Urban House by the Urbandale Historical Society and other entities. Karl and Matty Urban, bearers of the Urban name, purchased this property in 1947. This was long after its construction and period of significance. The Olmsted-Urban name for this property memorializes Mr. and Mrs. Urban for their philanthropic dedication to its preservation. Their estate sold the property below market value to the Urbandale Historical Society in 1987, confident that that institution would serve as good stewards. As such, "Olmsted-Urban House" stands as a recognized common name for the property. Although "farmhouse" has not been used officially to denote this building to date, the word is correct for the property because it identifies an important aspect of its history and significance and should be included as part of its historic name.

REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS

The Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Governments [CIRALG] prepared a Historic Sites Survey Form for the "Millard Olmsted House" circa 1979. It evaluated the property as locally significant under the sub-theme of farming and town development. In a point system evaluation methodology (abandoned soon after by the State Historical Society of Iowa), this survey ranked the property high in historical importance and site suitability (85 out of 100 points). In spite of this, the survey methodology required a determination of "NOT eligible for entry on the National Register of Historic Places." (CIRALG) It should be noted that the surveyor recognized the value of oral history as a source of information in his summary of the property, although he was hindered by an unwieldy evaluation methodology, which was subsequently scrapped.

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

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POTENTIAL FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

The site's potential for archaeological significance is, as yet, unevaluated. The site's potential for historic archaeological discovery remains a viable endeavor, given the fact that a barn, driveway approaches, and outbuildings, now nonextant, originally stood on the site. These include a privy, whose location is known.

The potential for pre-historic archaeological discovery is less likely, given the site's limited size and location on an upland prairie. However, the resource area was on an open upland prairie between two tributaries to North Walnut Creek and may have been considered an attractive prehistoric habitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As an archival repository of local history, the Urbandale Historical Society will make an important contribution to posterity by promoting oral history. The 1940s and 1950s were important periods for the development of the community, and living residents from these years have stories to tell. How did new residents swelling the town's population in the post-World War II years relate to those already living there? Why did these new residents choose Urbandale? How did local government respond to the challenges of urban growth? What cultural traditions remained or disappeared during these years?

Public transportation played an important role in the development of Urbandale prior to World War II. "Frequently young couples just starting out had to choose between buying a house or a car, so they bought the house and used the streetcar for transportation." (Kaloides 1989:1) The Urbandale streetcar line ceased operations after World War II, and public transportation (electric-powered buses known as "curbliners") terminated at St. Gabriel's Monastery at Merle Hay Road and Douglas Avenue. Why did public transportation no longer serve Urbandale? How did the automobile culture affect daily life in Urbandale? How did it affect local commerce? Oral history can add to our knowledge of topics such as these.

Seventieth Street has the potential for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as an historic district. This largely residential corridor emerged in the early 20th century as the Urbandale community's main thoroughfare. Today, the Urbandale United Church of Christ, Olmsted Family Farmhouse, and McDivitt Cemetery anchor this historic corridor.

Further research and survey activity is recommended concerning Clarence C. Olmsted and properties associated with him. The C. C. Olmsted Subdivision stands between Douglas and Madison Avenues from 70th to 72nd Streets. One historical source notes: "Corner house built by Olmsted." (Anonymous: 3) Was this Clarence C. Olmsted's home? Such properties might be National Register-eligible, given Olmsted's significance to Urbandale.

Further research is recommended concerning the Country Life Movement and the Federation of Women's Clubs and their possible linkage with the Daughters of Ceres. John J. Fry's *The Farm Press Reform and Rural Change, 1895-1920* is a recommended resource for such discovery.

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

PRIMARY SOURCES

American Lithographing & Printing Co.
1939 "Official Map of Polk County, Iowa." Des Moines, Iowa.

American Lithographing & Printing Co.
1949 "Official Map of Polk County, Iowa." Des Moines, Iowa.

Anonymous
n.d. "Urbandale from 1909 to 1925—Pioneers of Urbandale." Typewritten MS, archives Urbandale Historical Society.

Atlas of Polk County, Iowa
n.d. Archives of Urbandale Historical Society. Loose leaf sheet, circa 1910.

Bartholomew, Harland
c. 1928 "Des Moines, Iowa, Boundary Changes." Map, Harland Bartholomew, City Plan-Engineer. St. Louis, Missouri.

Brigham, Johnson
1911 *Des Moines, The Pioneer of Municipal Progress and Reform of the Middle West*. Chicago, The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company. Includes biographical sketches of Millard A. Olmsted and Olive Stuart Olmsted.

Official Publication
1917 District Court of the State of Iowa, March Term, 1917, No. 27110 LAW.

Iowa Department of Public Instruction
1918 "Report of the Department of Public Instruction For the Biennial Period Ending June 30, 1918." State of Iowa, Des Moines.

Iowa Title Company
n.d. Abstract of Property, 4010 70th Street. Company Abstract #16770. This abstract was unavailable for the author of this nomination, but certain of its sections, quoted in Madeline L. Kaloides (see below), are cited in it.

Olmsted, Millard A.
1917 "Letter from Olmsted to the County Auditor of Polk County, Iowa, and the Board of Directors for the Consolidated School District of Johnston, Polk County, Iowa." Letter dated July 2, 1917, cited in Kaloides.

McKinney, Ruth Olmsted
n.d. "Memories of Ruth Olmsted McKinney: Many Happy Memories." Typewritten MS on file at the Urbandale Historical Society. McKinney, a daughter of Millard A. and Olive Stuart Olmsted, lived in the Olmsted House from 1910-1934, the first 24 years of her life.

Midland Map & Engineering
1925 "Official Map of Polk County, Iowa." Des Moines, Iowa.

Polk County Assessor's Office
2018 "Property Record Card."

Polk County Auditor's Office
1937 "Olmsted Place Plat No. 3." Surveyed by D. H. Shires, Registered Engineer No. 521.

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Supplement to the Code of Iowa

1913 "Section 2794: Formation of independent [school] district." Des Moines, State of Iowa.

Urbandale, City of

2003 "Urbandale Comprehensive Plan." City of Urbandale, Iowa.

U.S. Geological Survey

1905 Des Moines Quadrant Map. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. Surveyed in 1905, Edition of 1907, Reprinted 1919.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Ames, David L.

2002 "Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places." U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D. C.

Anonymous

1962 "How We've Grown." Typewritten MS, archives of the Urbandale Historical Society.

Carlson, Norman, editor

1975 *Iowa Trolleys: Bulletin 114 of the Central Electric Railfans' Association.* Privately printed.

DeBord-Dunbar Partnership

n.d. Concept Plan for Landscaped Grounds. Drawing prepared for Urbandale Historical Society circa 1989.

Gee, Virginia

n.d. "Millard Olmsted." Typewritten MS, biographical sketch. Archives Urbandale Historical Society.

Gee, Virginia

2008 "Daughters of Ceres at the Olmsted House." Urbandale Historical Society newsletter, February 2008.

Hamilton, Les

1967 *Around Home, Urbandale.* Privately printed local history.

Kaloides, Madeline L.

n.d. "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form." Draft National Register nomination along with newspaper clippings and other documentation related to the Olmsted House in 3-ring binder assembled circa 1989 and deposited at the Urbandale Historical Society.

Kaloides, Madeline L.

1989 "History of Urbandale." Typewritten MS. Archives of Urbandale Historical Society.

Lufkin, Jack

n.d. "Millard Olmsted House, CIRALG [Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Governments] Historic Sites Survey Form." Prepared c. 1979 and on file State Historical Society of Iowa.

May, George

1956 "Iowa's Consolidated Schools." *Palimpsest*, 37 (January 1956)

Nelson, Mae C.

n.d. *Listening and Learning, Urbandale.* Privately printed. As the title suggests, compiled from personal interviews with local residents by the author. Circa 1964,

Schweitzer, Robert

2002 *Bungalow Colors: Exteriors.* Salt Lake City, Gibbs Smith Publisher.

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

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Wetherell – Ericsson – Architects

n.d. "Report on the Olmsted-Urban House for the Urbandale Historical Society." Includes undated "Site Concept" prepared by the DeBord-Dunbar Partnership. Both documents prepared circa 1989.

NEWSPAPERS

Des Moines Evening Tribune

1924 "Claims to Distinction." April 18, 1924. Includes photograph of Olmsted Family Farmhouse exterior.

Des Moines Register

1989 "Urbandale aims to return home to '30s glory." Story by Linda Kaplan, June 7, 1989.

ORAL HISTORY

Gee, Virginia

2018 January 17, 2018, with William C. Page. Gee is a long-time member of the Urbandale Historical Society and knowledgeable about the Olmsted House and local history.

Huitt, Norman E.

2017 October 23, 2017, and February 27, 2018, with William C. Page. Huitt is president of the Urbandale Historical Society and shared his knowledge of the Olmsted House's construction and evolution.

ONLINE RESOURCES

University of Iowa

2018 "Guide to the Daughters of Ceres (Walnut and Webster, Iowa) records." <http://collguides.lib.uiowa.edu/?IWA0113>. Viewed March 20, 2018.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

Polk County, Iowa

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- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local Government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.515

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>41-38-00.30</u> Latitude	<u>93-42-47.05</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Lot 13 excluding the west 5.8 feet and south 62.5 feet, and Lot 14 excluding the west 5.8 feet, in Olmsted Place Plat No. 3, an official plat in the City of Urbandale, Polk County, Iowa.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Contains all land associated with the Olmsted House at the time Olmsted Place Plat No. 3 was surveyed and platted.

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family
Name of Property

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian date June 3, 2019
organization Urbandale Historical Society telephone 515-243-5740 (Page)
street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue email page@dwx.com
city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50313-5017

Additional Documentation

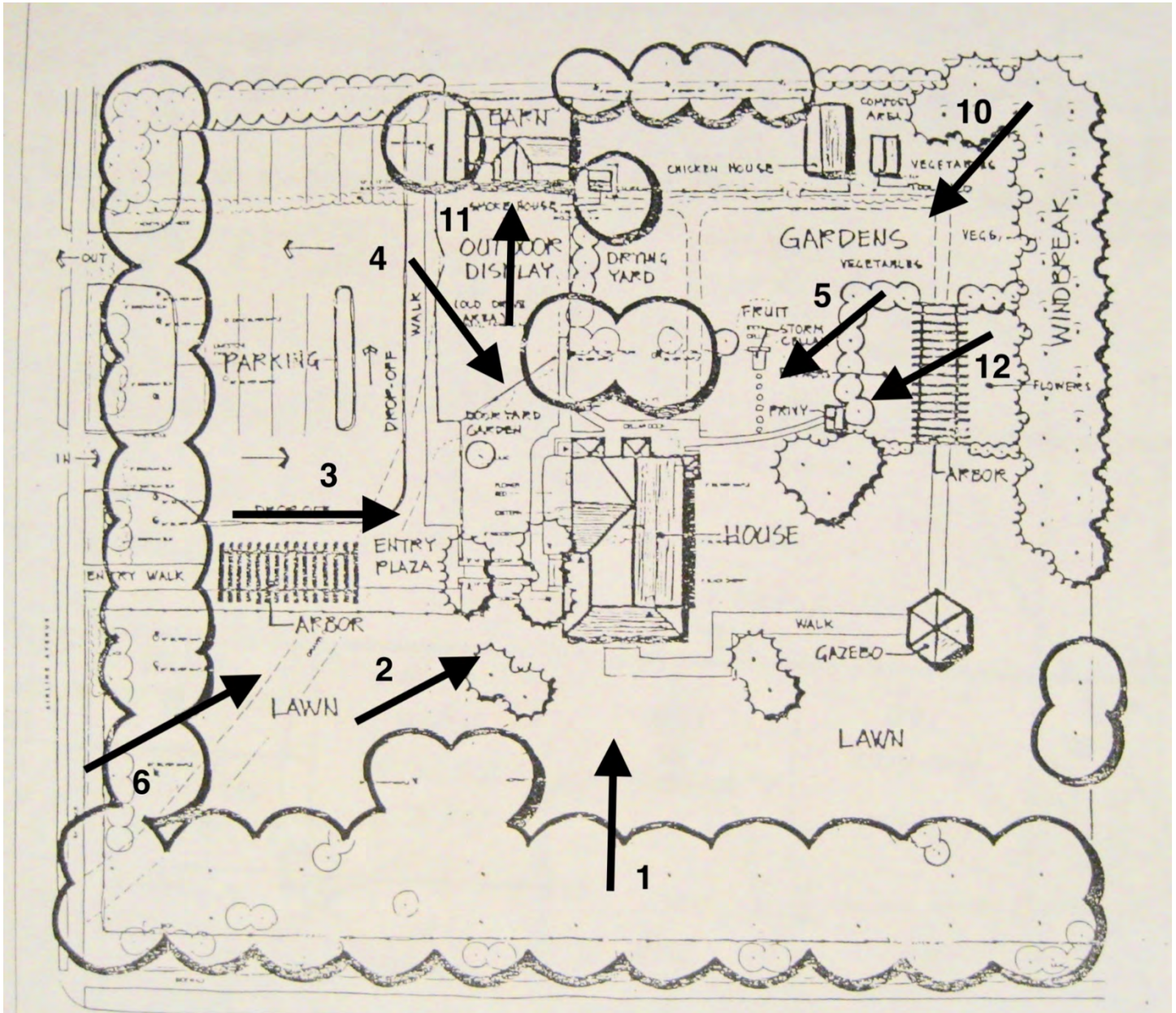
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa
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PHOTO LOCATION MAP EXTERIOR



Source: DeBord-Dunbar Partnership, c. 1989.

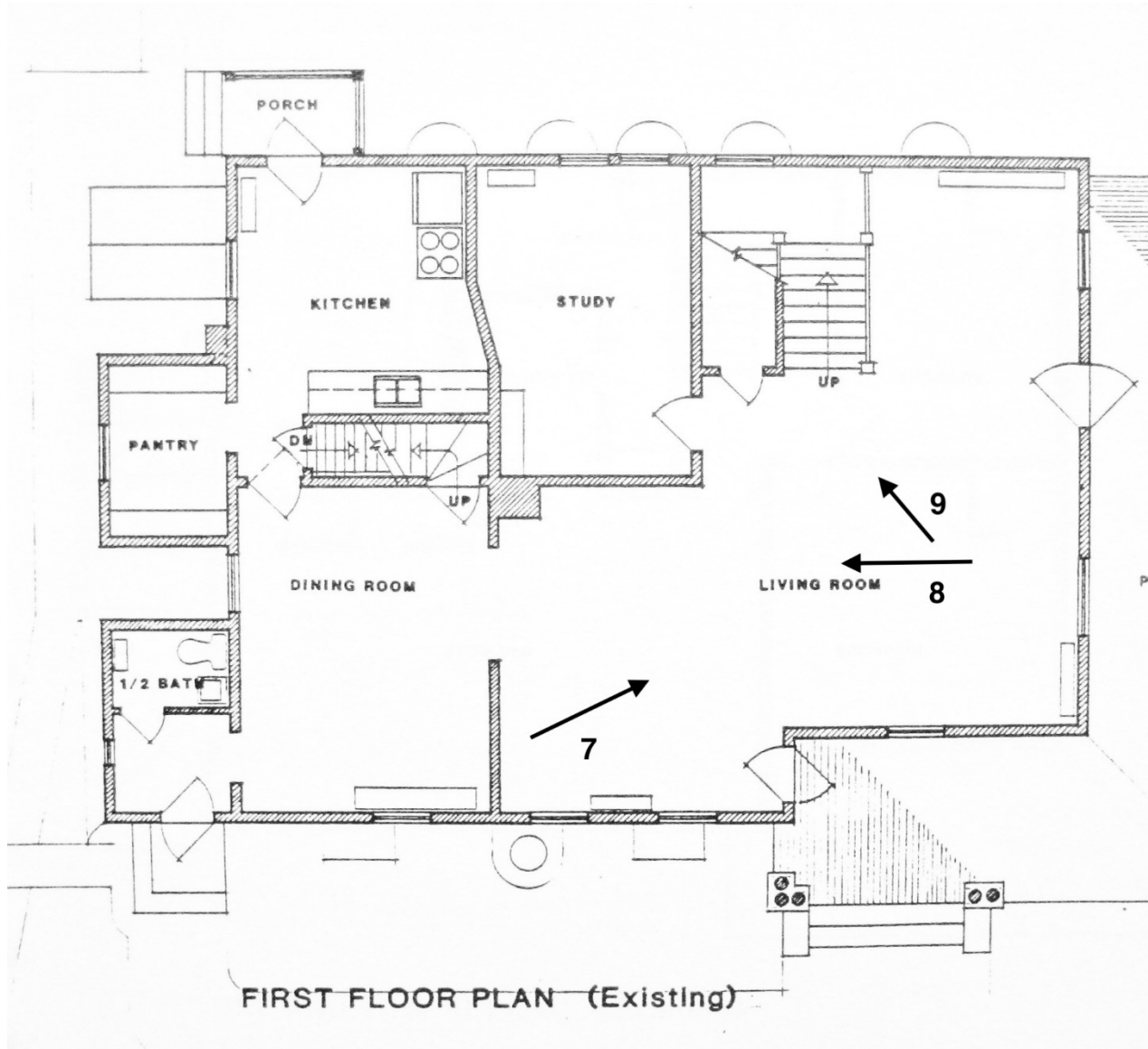
Farmhouse, Olmsted Family

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PHOTO LOCATION MAP INTERIOR



Source: Wetherell-Ericsson-Architects, undated, c. 1990.

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family
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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Olmsted Family Farmhouse
City or Vicinity: Urbandale
County: Polk **State:** IA
Photographer: William C. Page, Public Historian
Date Photographed: October 23, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Front (east) facade looking W
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
2. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Front (east) facade and south facade looking NW
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
3. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
South facade looking N
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
4. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
South and north facades looking NE
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
5. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
North facade looking SSE
William C. Page, Photographer
Octo October 23, 2017

Farmhouse, Olmsted Family
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6. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
South lawn & parking lot looking NW
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
7. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Living room (former living room & parlor) looking NE
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
8. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Living room (formerly parlor & living room) & dining room looking W
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
9. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Staircase in living room (formerly reception hall)
North lawn w/pergola looking SE
October 23, 2017
10. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
North lawn w/pergola & flower garden looking SE
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
11. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Wayne Robbins Barn looking W
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
12. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
1040 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322
Pedestrian walk to nonextant privy
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
13. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
4010 70th Street Urbandale, IA 50322
Second floor bedroom looking SW
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017
14. Olmsted Family Farmhouse
4010 70th Street Urbandale, IA 50322
Basement wall and benching looking SE
William C. Page, Photographer
October 23, 2017

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



4010

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination
Property Name: Farmhouse, Olmsted Family
Multiple Name:
State & County: IOWA, Polk

Date Received: 6/24/2019 Date of Pending List: 7/19/2019 Date of 16th Day: 8/5/2019 Date of 45th Day: 8/8/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100004230

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 8/6/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Olmsted Family Farmhouse is locally significant and meets National Register Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Community Planning & Development. Built in 1904, the handsome American Foursquare farmhouse is a well preserved reflection of the early twentieth century settlement patterns of the farmlands outside Des Moines that would eventually become the suburban community of Urbandale. The Olmsted family, prosperous land owners, farmers and civic leaders, not only witnessed the dramatic transformation of the community from rural farmland to suburb, but actively participated in the earliest phases of community development and planning.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criterion A

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 08/06/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL PRODUCE IOWA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

JENNIFER HAWKER, DIRECTOR



June 18, 2019

Joy Beasley, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms Beasley:

The following National Register nomination(s) from Iowa are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable. For the **Coggon Commercial Historic District** there were no objections received from any of the 14 property owners.

Coggon Commercial Historic District

The Coggon Commercial Historic District is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. The district is a good example of a rural Iowa community that grew and thrived as a commercial center in a largely rural portion of Linn County. In addition, the town developed in conjunction with the construction and running of the railroad in Iowa. Initially a hamlet that formed at the location of a mill and store, the town was platted with the promise that Coggon would be a stop on the Cedar Rapids and Chicago Railroad, and it quickly developed once the railroad was constructed. The district historically included commercial enterprises as well as a mix of civic organizations and an opera house. Architecturally, the district contains buildings characteristic of Main Street architecture of the period, exhibiting examples of wood frame structures and turn-of-the-century commercial brick architecture. The period of significance begins in 1887 with the construction of its earliest extant Main Street building, which coincided with the construction of the railroad and the town's platting and incorporation. The ending date of significance is 1931, the year passenger rail service was discontinued to Coggon. This ending date coincides with business decline associated with the increasing importance of the automobile and Iowa's road system over rail transportation.

The Coggon Commercial Historic District meets the registration requirements of the "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture" Multiple Property Document for the National Register of Historic Places. The district is significant under Criterion A as determined under Property Type I (commercial districts). The Coggon Commercial Historic District exhibits a wide Main Street lined with a mix of frame and masonry architecture, mainly attached. The district includes some buildings that fall within Type II (associated with the platting and settlement of a community and often including frame construction) and Type III (second generation construction often exhibiting masonry construction associated with the turn of the century) categories.

Olmstead Family Farmhouse

Built in 1904, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse is significant, locally and under National Register Criterion A, because it calls attention to the emergence of Urbandale, Iowa, as a town. Incorporated in 1917, this town overlaid its boundaries on a rural community of scattered farms. The Olmsted Family Farmhouse signals this evolution of land use. The farmhouse is much larger in size than its neighbors and Victorian rather than 20th century in architectural feeling. These character-features proclaim this property's earlier land use and rural origins prior to urban incorporation. Following the town's incorporation, the Olmsted Family Farmhouse also affected urban development in Urbandale. The platting of the farmland associated with this farmhouse into residential lots in 1937, as well as the physical prominence of the farmhouse itself, reinforced the importance of 70th Street, the rural road adjacent to it, which, by the 1940s, had become the backbone of Urbandale, Iowa, as an urban space. The Olmsted Family Farmhouse period of significance, under Criterion A, is 1904 and 1937, the time when it affected settlement and urban growth in the community. It possesses two resources for this nomination, the house itself, which is contributing and classified as building, and the barn, which is noncontributing and classified as a building.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Laura Sadowsky
State Historian and National Register Coordinator
State Historical Society of Iowa

Enclosures.