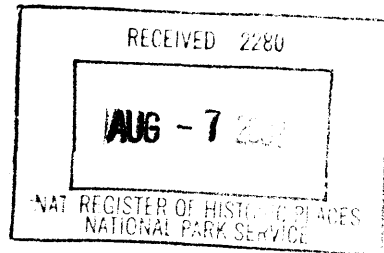


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1035



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name West Liberty Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Bounded by 4th Street, Railroad Tracks, Clay, and Spencer streets N/A not for publication

city or town West Liberty N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Muscatine code 139 zip code 52776

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (see continuation sheet for additional comments).

Rowell G. Locke August 2, 2002
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): _____

Edson H. Beall 9/12/02
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
41	8	buildings
<hr/>		
		sites
<hr/>		
6	0	structures
<hr/>		
		objects
<hr/>		
47	8	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
- SOCIAL/meeting hall
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/music facility
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater
- AGRICULTURE/storage
- AGRICULTURE/processing
- GOVERNMENT/city hall
- DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater
- COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
- AGRICULTURE/storage
- DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate
- LATE 19th & EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS
- /Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation STONE/Limestone
- walls BRICK
- roof ASPHALT
- other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- ARCHITECTURE
- COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
- COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1867-1952

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 14 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	[1][5]	[6][4][4][6][6][2]	[4][6][0][3][3][8][9]	2	[1][5]	[6][4][4][6][7][7]	[4][6][0][3][2][6][7]
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	[1][5]	[6][4][4][9][4][7]	[4][6][0][3][1][8][6]	4	[1][5]	[6][4][4][9][4][7]	[4][6][0][3][3][8][4]
					[] See continuation sheet		

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leah D. Rogers and Joyce Barrett

organization Tallgrass Historians L.C. date March 27, 2002

street & number 2460 S. Riverside Drive telephone 319-354-6722

city or town Iowa City state IA zip code 52246

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name see continuation sheet

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 Page 1 Muscatine County, Iowa

Narrative Description

The West Liberty Commercial Historic District is roughly bounded by Spencer Street on the east, 4th Street on the north, Clay Street on the west, and the railroad tracks on the south. Within this boundary are 56 major buildings and structures constructed between 1867 and 1984, with the majority constructed within the period of significance for this district, 1867-1952. In fact, the majority of the commercial buildings had been built by 1922, with only four infill buildings added in the 1940s and two more in the 1970s-1980s. The older infill buildings largely replaced buildings lost to fire. The commercial district is sited on an upland rise that slopes down to the west to Clay Street, which is the low point in elevation in the district, with the main portion of the district on the higher elevation. The streets are wide, with the brick pavement underneath asphalt. The City of West Liberty is currently undertaking a systematic restoration project of the important brick streets that remain in the community including 3rd and 4th streets and Clay and Spencer streets within the commercial district.

Generally, the commercial properties within the district retain good integrity despite the expected storefront updates through the years. Of the 55 total properties within the district boundaries, there are 41 buildings and six structures considered to be contributing to the district, with eight buildings non-contributing (Table 1). This totals 85% contributing versus 15% non-contributing. As noted above, the five brick-paved streets within the district are included among the contributing structures. The only section of street missing the original brick pavement is that along Calhoun between 3rd Street and the railroad tracks. In that area, an asphalt road replaced the brick rather than being an overlay. The brick streets were laid in the 1910s within the period of significance for this district.

The commercial buildings in the district are primarily two stories in height and masonry in construction. Brick buildings dominant, with a few tile block, stucco, and stone-veneered buildings. Notably few frame buildings remain standing, attesting to the vitality and progression of building in this commercial district and to some loss from fire. The grain elevator marks the southwest corner of the district and is an older crib construction. Both single-unit and double-unit block buildings are present; however, one of the more notable features of this district is the number of large corner buildings that anchor each block of the district. These large buildings include banks and opera houses and are among the more influential buildings architecturally and historically in the district.

COUNTING SYSTEM FOR BUILDINGS

The counting system for buildings within the district is based on the original construction of the building and its separation from adjacent buildings by structural walls and not by its internal store unit divisions. Therefore, a block building constructed as a structurally identifiable building separate and distinct from adjacent buildings but having any number of internal store unit divisions, would count as only one building.

PROPERTY TYPES

The property types follow those devised for the *Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture* Multiple Property submission to the National Register. The following is a brief listing and summary of each type, with more detailed descriptions summarized in the cover document for the MPS. Type I is the commercial district itself. Type II consists of the first generation of buildings, structures, sites and objects constructed along Main Street. Type III represents the second generation of construction along Main Street often tied to a building boom associated with prosperity and growth. Type VI consists of specialized buildings constructed for a specific purpose such as a courthouse, Carnegie public library, post office, grain elevator, or gas station. Type V represents properties that have undergone substantial modification reflecting the updating of commercial properties in the form of façade remodeling as well as buildings, structures, sites and objects that are late additions to the district but within the period of significance. Type VI consists of modern infill properties added to the district after the period of significance.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 Page 2 Muscatine County, Iowa

The West Liberty Commercial Historic District as Property Type I meets the registration requirements set forth in the Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture MPS by retaining sufficient integrity and by reflecting the settlement and commercial, social, and cultural development of the town of West Liberty, particularly of its late nineteenth century success and continued vitality into the twentieth century.

INDIVIDUAL BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

The following descriptions discuss each of the buildings in the West Liberty Commercial Historic District where known by inventory number, address, date of construction, historic name, descriptive comments, evaluation as either contributing or non-contributing to the district, and the known history of the property. The structural integrity of each building was assessed through visual inspection of the exteriors only. These assessments addressed building materials, surface and design treatment, fenestration, stylistic influence, building type, and alterations/modifications.

The West Liberty Commercial Historic District had been inventoried and evaluated as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as part of a previous study funded by the City of West Liberty. That project was conducted by Leah D. Rogers and the Dunbar/Jones Partnership of Des Moines (Rogers 2000). The City funded the previous inventory and evaluation project in order to secure funding through the transportation enhancement program for their proposed brick street restoration project. The majority of the research for the current nomination was completed as part of the previous inventory and evaluation project, with that research conducted by Clark and Leah Rogers and Bob Gernes of Dunbar/Jones. Additional information was provided by local residents and property owners in the West Liberty Commercial District and by Lon Pluckhahn, West Liberty City Manager. The current study added to this historical information with research into the population census data conducted by Lori Vermaas of Tallgrass Historians L.C. in Iowa City. Repositories visited for information on the West Liberty Commercial Historic District included the Assessor's Office in Muscatine, Iowa, the State Historical Society of Iowa Library in Iowa City, and the West Liberty Public Library. Lori Vermaas completed the photography for this nomination. Leah D. Rogers of Tallgrass Historians L.C. authored the nomination.

70-00922

Address: 3rd Street, 4th Street, Clay Street, Calhoun Street, and Spencer Streets

Date of Construction: 1915

Historic Name: 3rd Street, 4th Street, Clay Street, Calhoun Street, and Spencer Street

Property Type: III: Brick-paved streets

Evaluation: Five contributing structures

Comments: These city streets were paved in 1915 with brick pavers. The streets are all wide being 80 feet in width. All of these streets retain their original brick pavement but have an asphalt overlay. The only portion where the asphalt completely replaced the original brick pavement is that section of Calhoun Street south of 3rd Street to the railroad tracks. The City of West Liberty is undertaking a systematic restoration project to expose and restore the brick pavement on all of the streets in the district.

History: These streets were paved with brick in 1915. The main commercial corridor is 3rd Street, with 4th Street historically the main route over to the railroad depot at the west end of 4th Street.

Significance: The brick streets, particularly after their restoration, strongly contribute to the historic appearance and integrity of the West Liberty Commercial Historic District.

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 Page 3 Muscatine County, Iowa

70-00673

Address: 201 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1884

Historic Name: grocery store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story brick corner store building has pressed tin cornice. Second floor has prominent hood molds over original 2/2 double-hung windows. Storefront has recessed central entry and metal-framed plate glass windows. Metal beam above storefront. Ribbon window has been covered over but may be extant underneath. Cloth awning rolled up over storefront.

History: Built in 1884; shown on 1886, 1893, and 1899 fire insurance maps as a grocery store; by 1912 it was the Mabie Movie Theater; 1922 it was the "Happy" Smith Garage and Repair Shop, later the Lloyd Papenthien Garage and the L.R. Weise Garage; in 1938 it was purchased by Dr. Albert Ady, with his office in front and a beauty shop in back. Subsequent occupants included the *West Liberty Enterprise*, Liberty Realty/J & L Sign, WLTV, Sterner and Douller Tax Service, and the Iske Insurance Agency. The West Liberty Gun Club had a shooting range in the basement for many years. The building currently houses the El Torito Restaurant.

Significance: This corner commercial building is a notable landmark in the district. It is a good example of a well preserved Italianate-influenced commercial building built in the 1880s as construction in the district was booming. This building retains excellent integrity and is considered both contributing and key to the historic commercial district. It also marks the east edge of the district along 3rd Street.

70-00674

Address: 127 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1903

Historic Name: I.O.O.F. Lodge Building

Property Type: III: Fraternal Hall/Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Large two-story brick corner block building has elaborate pressed tin cornice. Second floor has façade marked by three inset panels with corbelled brick dentils. Windows on second floor include single 1/1 double-hung windows and a central paired window. Windows have shaped and prominent hood molds. Two-unit storefront appears largely original except for left-side store windows. Recessed central entry retains original double doors opening into the central staircase. Entire storefront has large cantilevered awning with colored glass panes. This awning was added between 1922 and 1941 and is supported by four long chains anchored with lion's head fixtures to the second floor facade.

History: Built as Oddfellows Hall in 1903, with the hall on the second floor. Between 1906 and 1912 the first floor housed millinery and tailor shops, with plumbing and tin shops to rear. In 1922 the first floor housed millinery and jewelry and book stores, with a doctor's office to the rear. Doctors' offices through the years included those of Dr. L.A. Royal, Dr. Blackman (dentist), and Dr. Morens (dentist). Ed Laughlin's TV and Repair Shop once housed in basement. In the early 1900s, the second floor was also used for classrooms when the West Liberty School burned down until a new school could be built.

Significance: This is a significant and key corner building in the commercial district, retaining a high degree of architectural integrity. This building is also important as a reflection of the contributions of fraternal organizations to the up-building of commercial districts in Iowa communities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and West Liberty in particular.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 **Page** 4 **Muscatine County, Iowa**

#70-00675

Address: 121 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1906

Historic Name: Citizen's Savings Bank

Property Type: III: Bank

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story rectangular building has buff-colored brick veneer with stone accents. Simple corbelled brick cornice has stone or concrete coping. Three double hung 1/1 second floor windows are likely original. Second floor retains good integrity. First floor storefront has vinyl horizontal siding covering over ribbon and storefront windows and has two modern doors.

History: Built in 1906, this building was first used for a jewelry store but from c.1912-1922 it housed the Citizen's Savings Bank. It also housed the West Liberty Public Library prior to the construction of the Carnegie Library on 4th Street. After 1922, the building housed a dressmaking shop, Bodin Real Estate and Insurance, Eldorama Craft and Gift Shop, and Sterner and Dowler Tax Service. J.E. McIntosh, attorney, had an office on the second floor. The building currently houses Eye Associates.

Significance: While the first floor storefront has been altered in more recent years, there appears to be some potential for reversibility. Furthermore, the second floor retains good integrity and still presents a historic appearance. The building is contributing as a result.

70-00676

Address: 117-119 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1878

Historic Name: boot & shoe store/sewing machine shop

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, two-unit brick commercial building originally had a higher cornice that was probably of pressed tin. Remnant cornice consists of corbelled brick dentils. Second floor has six round-arched windows, which are faux 6/6 double-hung replacement windows. Upper portion of original windows are covered over. Storefronts have metal and wood slipcovers over ribbon windows, which may be extant. West storefront has recessed central entry flanked by modern reduced windows. East storefront has recessed left-side entry and wood-framed plate glass-windows.

History: Built in 1878, the west side unit housed a boot and shoe store from 1886-1922+, while the east side unit housed jewelry, wallpaper, and photos (1886), sewing machines and photo gallery (1893), boot and shoe (1899), sewing machines and stationery (1906), and a pool room from c.1912 -1922+. The building currently houses Crown Appliance (east side) and the West Liberty Fun Center (west side unit).

Significance: The second floor still retains important original components (corbelling, window hoods) and original fenestration. The storefront alterations appear to have some potential for reversibility. As a result, this brick two-unit block building is considered to retain sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00677

Address: 115 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1878

Historic Name: dry goods store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 Page 5 Muscatine County, Iowa

Comments: Two-story brick commercial building, similar in design to adjacent buildings. Corbelled brick cornice, likely had pressed tin cornice originally. Second floor has four round-arched windows, with corbelled hood molds. Windows are 1/1 double-hung that are not original but probably older replacements. Storefront has metal slipcover over ribbon window and around staircase door to the east. The entry is recessed to west, with metal-framed plate-glass window in center. Rolled up canvas awning over storefront.

History: Built in 1878, this building housed a dry goods store in 1886 and a furniture store from 1893-1922+. Subsequent businesses included Mrs. Reep's Bazaar, Jackson's Notion and Hats, the Hawker Pool Hall, the Snider Funeral Parlor, Pete's Pool Hall (in the rear), the Cookie Jar Restaurant, Sam Buckman Insurance (in the rear), the Cookie Jar Bakery, The Beauty Bar, The Better Half Clothing Store, the Burnside Law Office, and the West Liberty Pain and Stress Clinic (in the rear unit). The building currently houses the Wuestenberg Insurance Agency.

Significance: This Italianate-influenced building repeats the design of the adjacent two-unit block building at 117-119 E. 3rd Street and may have been built at the same time. It was shown as a separate building on the fire insurance maps. Overall, integrity is fair, with the second floor retaining the original corbelling and hood mold details and the original window fenestration. The storefront has a good potential for reversibility. As a result, this building is contributing to the district.

70-00678

Address: 113 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: c.1893, with façade remodeled c.1912

Historic Name: furniture store

Property Type: V: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story brick store has corbelled brick cornice. Second floor windows are four arcaded round-arched windows with corbelled hood molds and have 1/1 double-hung replacement windows. The storefront ribbon window is covered with a metal slipcover with a wrought iron rail added above. Entry door is recessed at east, with metal-framed plate-glass store windows at west. Cast iron column by entry door. A cloth awning is rolled up above storefront.

History: While the Assessor's records for this building give an estimated date of construction of 1878, the fire insurance maps showed a one-story building at this location until 1912, when it was finally represented as a two-story building. The rear of the building was shown as two stories in height on the 1893-1906 fire insurance maps. Therefore, it was concluded that the extant building had its origins c.1893 but had a different storefront until c.1912 when it was remodeled into its current two-story brick storefront. The design of the new storefront closely matched that of the adjacent older buildings to the east, giving the building at 113 E. 3rd Street an overall older appearance and the illusion that it was built as a cohesive brick block. However, the windows on the second floor of this particular building are closer together than those on the older adjacent building. Between 1893-1906 this building housed a furniture, books, and jewelry store, with millinery added by 1906. From 1922+, the building housed a furniture store. It currently houses Pat's Hairstyling.

Significance: Interesting early-twentieth century updating of an older, smaller building that gave the new building a much older appearance and matched it to that of the adjacent buildings to the east. While the storefront has been modified, there is potential for reversibility. The second floor retains brick corbelling and arcaded window fenestration. As such, the building is considered contributing to the district.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 **Page** 6 **Muscatine County, Iowa**

70-00644

Address: 111 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1910

Historic Name: Knights of Pythias Hall and Opera House

Property Type: III: Fraternal Hall/Opera House

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Three-story opera house/theater has brick veneer with stone or cast concrete accents. Parapet is accented with denticulated cornice with scrolled brackets (likely a pressed tin piece). Third story windows are segmented-arched double windows with curved multi-paned transoms. Second floor windows are paired 1/1 double-hung windows, some of which are replacements. First floor façade was probably refurbished in the 1930s-40s and has a central entry with double doors reached by a low flight of stairs and flanked by small rectangular windows. The original entry doors were level with sidewalk and were covered by a shed roof awning. The current Art Moderne marquee with neon lighting was added between 1922-1941.

History: Built in 1910 as the second Knights of Pythias Hall (upper floor) and opera house (ground floor). It was converted into a movie theater between the 1920s-1940s and continues as a movie theater known as The New Strand to the present day. A National Register nomination for this property was forwarded to the State National Register Committee in 1977; however, at that time, it was felt that the building, as an individual building, had lost too much integrity, and the nomination was not forwarded to the National Park Service. Historically, the opera house functioned as a local civic and recreational center for vaudeville, drama and school productions, dances, basketball, and even roller skating.

Significance: Overall, this building has good integrity and is a considered key contributing building to the district. It is also important that it still functions as a movie theater in its continuing role of providing community entertainment.

70-00679

Address: 105 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1870s-1880s

Historic Name: drug store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story brick store has elaborate pressed tin cornice and elaborate hood molds on second floor windows. Windows on second floor are 1/1 double-hungs that appear to be old replacements. Storefront has ribbon window covered with wooden sign. Metal awning likely added in 1950s-1960s. Storefront retains a recessed central entry with metal-framed plate-glass windows probably also reflecting an early to mid-twentieth century update.

History: While the Assessor's records gave an estimated date of construction of 1905, the 1886 fire insurance map showed this building then present and labeled as a drugstore. It continued in use as a drugstore and photo shop through at least 1922. The photography studios also housed in this building included those of W.S. Tannery and Bill Reimer. The building currently houses the Dreibelbeis Pharmacy.

Significance: This two-story Italianate-influenced brick store building was built in the 1870s-1880s. It may be the oldest continuously operated drugstore in the community. The building retains good integrity and is considered contributing to the district.

70-00680

Address: 103 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1870-1880s

Historic Name: Bank/I.O.O.F. Hall

Property Type: V: Fraternal Hall/Bank

Evaluation: Contributing building

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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West Liberty Commercial Historic District

Section number 7 Page 7 Muscatine County, Iowa

Comments: Two-story rectangular brick building has wood-siding slipcover over much of the front façade (first and second floors). The original pressed tin cornice has been removed. The storefront retains original molded cement (painted black) arched columns approximating a cast iron look. The windows are covered over and reduced on storefront. Modern door at east end of storefront.

History: While the Assessor's records give an estimated date of construction of 1890, it is suspected that this building was constructed in the 1870s-1880s. It was represented in its current configuration on the 1886 fire insurance map when it was labeled as a bank and Oddfellows Hall (on the second floor). The Oddfellows Hall remained in this building until 1903 when a new hall was built at the east end of this block at 127 E. 3rd Street. The bank continued in operation through the 1910s but by 1922, this building housed a store, with the second floor used by other clubs in the community as a meeting hall. The building currently houses a law office.

Significance: This single-unit, two-story building was constructed in the 1870s-1880s. There is some potential for reversibility by removal of the current slipcover masking the front façade; however, it is concluded that the significance of the faux "cast iron" colonnade storefront that remains exposed is sufficient for this building to be considered contributing.

70-00681

Address: 101 E 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1919

Historic Name: West Liberty State Bank

Property Type: III: Bank

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Large two-story corner bank building built in Classic Revival style is suspected to have been designed by the Lytle Company. Notable details include the classical entablature/cornice treatment and the Corinthian pilasters. Body of building is brick veneer with stone accents (entablature, capitals, coping and finials) and marble veneer as watertable course. Windows on second floor are largely original; those on first floor have been infilled with glass blocks. Modern front door.

History: Built in 1919 as the West Liberty State Bank in a style typical of banks then being built by the Lytle Company, an architectural firm based in Sioux City (although it is not known for certain that this company designed this building). It functioned as a bank until more recent years when a new bank building was constructed. Since that time, this building has housed Peter Pohl International, Town and Country Real Estate, State Farm Insurance, West Liberty Chiropractic Clinic, and the present use as the Keele Law Office.

Significance: This large corner building is another key building in the district and is a good example of the Classical Revival style. It also reflects the progressive and stylish type of building updating that banks typically followed in Iowa communities to maintain their standing the community and insure consumer confidence in their solidity. While there have been window modifications since it was built, the building is significant enough and retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00682

Address: 101 W 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1860s-1870s

Historic Name: Knights of Pythias Hall/Opera House

Property Type: III: Fraternal Hall/Opera House

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: This large two-story brick corner block was built as the town's first opera house and the first Knights of Pythias Hall, with two storefront units on the front of the first floor. The low-pitched hipped roof has a wide eave overhang, with paired brackets under eaves. Upper level has rows of tall narrow, round-arched windows that are 12/6 double-hungs. Some of

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation Sheet**

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these windows have been covered with sheets of plywood but this appears reversible. The storefronts have metal siding covering the ribbon windows, with the storefronts themselves a 1950s-60s remodel.

History: Built as first Knights of Pythias Hall and the town's first opera house, this building was used as such until a new K of P Hall and opera house was built at 111 3rd street in 1910. Through the years, the west side store unit was used as a dry goods store (from c.1886-1922+), while the east side unit was a clothing store (from c.1886-1941+). The opera house and K of P Hall occupied the second floor of this building.

Significance: This large corner building reflects an important building type in any Iowa community of size—the fraternal meeting house and opera hall. Opera houses were important social and cultural centers of the community, and the large size and corner placement of this example in West Liberty reflects that importance. This particular building also reflects a progression of opera house/fraternal hall construction in this community, with nearly all of the original halls and their later replacements still standing in the district.

70-00683

Address: 105 W. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1879

Historic Name: hardware store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story single-unit brick building has prominent pressed tin cornice and elaborate hood molds over the second floor round-arched windows, which are faux 9/9 double-hung replacement windows. The ribbon window of the storefront is covered with metal siding, a modification that is probably reversible. Storefront has recessed central entry door, with older metal-framed plate-glass windows. The second floor door entry is at the west side of the storefront.

History: Built in 1879 according to the Assessor's records, this building housed a hardware store and tin shop from c.1886-1922+, with a printing shop on the second floor in 1886. Since 1922, this building has housed the Liberty Recreation Center, The Fitness Center, a Mexican restaurant, the West Liberty Historical Society, and a beauty shop currently known as the Eclips Salon.

Significance: The building shows the influence of the Italianate style of architecture and has seen some modification through the years; however it retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the proposed historic district.

70-00684

Address: 107-109 W. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1870s

Historic Name: boot and shoe store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story two-unit brick block has been stuccoed in more recent years. A pressed tin cornice was also likely removed. Second floor has five round-arched windows across that have round-arched hood molds. Second floor windows are the original 2/2 double-hungs. The two storefronts have recessed central entries with metal-framed plate-glass windows.

History: Built in the 1870s, this building has housed a boot and shoe store in the west-side unit from c.1886-1912, with a grocery in this unit c.1922. The east-side unit has housed a jeweler c.1886, and the other half of the boot and shoe store from c.1893-1922+. Subsequent businesses have included Dr. Michael Tharp (dentist), Wuestenberg Insurance, Iske-McDonald Insurance, T. & L Printing, and the current Liberty Printing and Supply. Creative Designs is currently in the east- side unit.

Significance: This early building exhibits Italianate stylistic influence and, while it has undergone modification through the years, retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district.

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70-00685

Address: 111 W 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1879

Historic Name: Potter Sisters' Millinery Shop

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story single-unit brick building has a corbelled brick cornice and may have had a pressed tin cornice that has been removed. Three segmental-arched windows across the second floor have corbelled hood molds. The second-floor windows are reduced 1/1 double-hung replacement windows. Storefront has large plate-glass window. Recessed entry door to west on storefront has cast iron column by door. Door to second floor staircase is furthest west on storefront.

History: Built in 1879 according to the Assessor's records, this building has housed a billiards hall c.1886, the Potter Sisters' millinery shop from c.1893-1906+, and a plumbing shop from 1912-1941+. Other businesses have included Bingham's Plumbing, Heating and Electric, Ivan Ingraham Electric, with the Ingraham family living upstairs in this building, and True Value Hardware.

Significance: This early building exhibits Italianate stylistic influence and retains sufficient integrity to contribute to the historic district. A companion building (#70-00686) was built to the west around the same time, and while a separate building, mimics the stylistic details of this building.

70-00686

Address: 113 W. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: c.1879

Historic Name: tin shop

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Very narrow two-story single-unit brick building has corbelled brick cornice that matches adjacent building to the west (#70-00685). Two segmental-arched windows on second floor have corbelled hood molds. Windows are 1/1 double-hungs that appear to be older replacements. The storefront has recessed double door with transom window. Former storefront window was later remodeled into a door opening.

History: Built c.1879 according to the Assessor's records, this building housed a tin shop c.1886, a barber shop from c.1893-1922+, and a restaurant by 1941. Other businesses have included a shoe repair shop, the One Minute Café, Hubert Cline outboard motor sales and displays, and Ivan Ingraham Electric.

Significance: This unusually small store building fit an odd-width lot and was built around the same time and in the same design as the adjacent building (#70-00685). This small building retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district and reflects an interesting solution to a platting problem in this block. It filled a space that might otherwise have served only as an alley or an empty lot.

70-00687

Address: 115 W 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1879

Historic Name: grocery store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, single-unit brick building has corbelled brick cornice and round-arched windows with corbelled hood molds on second floor. These windows are reduced and partially infilled with brick. Metal beam with rosette buttons above storefront. Storefront has been altered with brick veneer infill and modern doors and windows.

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History: Built in 1879 according to the Assessor's records, this building housed a grocery store from c.1886-1922+. It also housed the J.B. Luse Creamery, the Templeman Hatchery and Cream Station, Dexter Plumbing, a cabinet shop, H.D. Cline Implement (from 1937-39), and a barbershop. It currently houses Wink's Tap.

Significance: The stylistic details of this building mimic those of adjacent buildings along this block. While it has undergone modification through the years, most notably the first floor storefront, it retains a sufficient historic look on the second floor to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00688

Address: 117 W. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: c.1912-1922

Historic Name: auto repair

Property Type: III: Transportation (auto-related service)

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story brick block building has a corbelled brick cornice and polychrome brick pattern just under the cornice. Second floor windows are segmental-arched 1/1 double-hungs, with corbelled hood molds. Storefront is mostly original with the exception of a metal slipcover over the ribbon windows and part of the east-side windows, an alteration that appears reversible. While it appears to have been built as three store units, this building was originally constructed as a single store unit with the store entered through the center "unit" and an office in the west "unit." The office was later replaced with a drive-in overhead garage door for front garage access.

History: Built between 1912 and 1922 according to the fire insurance maps as an automobile garage accessories store in front and auto repair shop in the rear. Hudson, Essex, and Patterson cars were once sold from this business, which was also variously known as the A. Scott Garage, the Lloyd Papenthien Chevrolet Garage, the Miller Garage, and the Mills Garage. It also once housed H.D. Cline Implement (from 1939-1963), Fred's Food, Miller Small Engine and Repair, Daisy Patch Beauty Shop, Zip Mart offices, and Ruess Custom Cabinets.

Significance: This two-story, triple-wide but single-unit building was built as a single business—an auto garage and repair shop. While some of the stylistic details hark back to the Italianate style of architecture, this is a simpler version more reflective of the commercial brick-front designs of the early twentieth century including the use of polychrome brick patterns. This building retains fair to good integrity and reflects the emerging importance of the automobile and its related businesses and services in the early twentieth century.

70-00689

Address: 121 W. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1879

Historic Name: J.A. Deemer and Son Lumber Yard

Property Type: II: Lumber yard

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Rambling building occupies large, angled corner block and consists of several buildings and lumber sheds joined together as a single business. The oldest portion of this complex is the front-gabled frame building to which three shed-roofed wings and other additions have been made through the years. The entire building has been sided with narrow width vinyl siding. Doors and windows are modern inserts and replacements.

History: Built in 1879 according to the Assessor's records, this building housed a lumber yard for much of its history including the J.A. Deemer & Son Lumber Yard (c.1886), the McCampbell & Co. Lumber Yard (c.1893), the Thompson-Wilson Lumber Company (c.1906-1922), and the A.L. Dice and Company Lumber Yard (c.1941). Other businesses have included West Liberty Lumber, McCrabb Manufacturing, Seagull Seed Corn, Jan's Flower Yard, and Home Town Realty.

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Significance: While the buildings have been modified through the years, this complex is still recognizable as a lumber yard and was the long-time site of West Liberty lumber businesses.

70-00690

Address: 202 W. 4th Street

Date of Construction: 1914, with 1919 addition

Historic Name: West Liberty Co-operative Creamery Company

Property Type: IV: Manufactory

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story, broad gambrel-roofed building has clay tile block walls with stucco veneer. Windows include segmental-arched reduced windows and glass block infilled windows. Most doors and windows are replacements.

History: Built in 1914 as the West Liberty Co-operative Creamery Company, which continued to operate into the mid-twentieth century. A 1919 addition was built to make room for selling feed, eggs and poultry. The building currently houses Hobbs Feather Company.

Significance: While the building has undergone some modification in more recent years, it is still recognizable as a creamery building and retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district. It further represents an important agricultural-related business in the West Liberty community.

70-00701

Address: 307 N Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: c. 1886; completely remodeled 1950s-1960s

Historic Name: West Liberty Fire Station and City Hall

Property Type: V: Civic

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Two-story brick-faced building has a completely modernized and modified storefront.

History: Originally constructed as two buildings—the south building was a one story harness shop that later functioned as a club room, while the north building was two-story fire station and City Hall, with a bell tower on the roof as the fire alarm. The city built new facilities on 4th street in 1936, with the old buildings completely remodeled in the 1950s-1960s uniting them into a single storefront. The building currently houses American Legion Post #509.

Significance: The building has been completely modernized to the point that it does not retain sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00702

Address: 311 N Calhoun

Date of Construction: 1906

Historic Name: bakery

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Small one-story, single-unit brick building has a modern wood-shingled awning, vertical board siding on storefront, and modern a door and window. The cornice features an inset panel with corbelled brick dentils along the cornice.

History: Built c. 1906 as a bakery and confectionary operating at least into the 1920s. By 1941, the building housed a plumbing business. It currently houses the Panaderia Acapulco Mexican Bakery.

Significance: Although the storefront has been altered, there is potential for reversibility. The upper portion of the façade still exhibits minimal brick corbelling details but is sufficient to impart a historic look to this small building. As a result, it is considered contributing to the district.

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70-00703

Address: 313 N. Calhoun

Date of Construction: Between 1893-1899

Historic Name: farm implements store

Property Type: II: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Front-gabled wood building has metal siding and roofing. This may have had false front originally. Modern doors, but older windows.

History: Built between 1893-1899, it housed a farm implement business until at least 1941. It is currently Henderson's Upholstery and Shoe Repair.

Significance: While the metal siding and the possible loss of a false front have impacted the integrity, this frame building is still recognizable as a warehouse or implements type of business. It is one of the few frame buildings still standing in the West Liberty commercial district and is considered contributing as a result.

70-00704

Address: 317 N. Calhoun

Date of Construction: Between 1893-1899

Historic Name: grocery store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story brick storefront with bracketed pressed tin cornice. Segmental-arched windows have 1/1 double-hung windows that are probably replacements. Storefront has recessed south-side door to second floor staircase. Modern doors and metal-framed windows. Possible ribbon window is covered over. Retains a roll-down canvas awning.

History: Built between 1893-1899, this building housed a grocery store c.1899-1906, a music store c.1912, and a barber shop c.1922.

Significance: This modest brick storefront exhibits some Italianate stylistic details and generally retains sufficient integrity to contribute to the district.

70-00705

Address: 319 N. Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: c.1912

Historic Name: tailor shop

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story brick store has recessed central entry with plate-glass windows and brick kickplates. Parapet has painted wood covering, probably covers intact brick parapet.

History: Built c.1912, this building housed a tailor shop, followed by a dry cleaners from c.1922-1941+. It currently houses the Owl Glass Puppet Center.

Significance: While much of this storefront is hidden from view by the painted wood covering, the recessed central entryway and the plate-glass windows still present a sufficient historic look to be considered contributing to the district.

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70-00706

Address: 321 N. Calhoun

Date of Construction: 1908

Historic Name: grocery

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story brick storefront has plain parapet and tile coping. Modern windows and door.

History: Built in 1908 according to the Assessor's records, this building housed a grocery c.1912 and was being used as a hardware warehouse c.1922. It currently houses Dos Amigos Bar.

Significance: This building has been modernized in more recent years; however, it is still recognizable as an older commercial building and appears to have always been of modest size and detailing. As such, it is considered contributing to the district.

70-00707

Address: 323 N. Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: Between 1912-1922

Historic Name: movie theater

Property Type: III: Movie Theater

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story brick commercial building has simple corbelled cornice. Storefront has recessed central entry, with a metal beam with rosette buttons above. The rest of the storefront is covered in modern wood siding with modern windows, although the wood siding may cover up original components. Shares similar corbelled cornice design as adjacent building to the north.

History: Built between 1912-1922 according to the fire insurance maps, this building housed a movie theater c.1922 but was listed simply as a store by 1941.

Significance: This modest one story brick building has an altered storefront that may be reversible but still retains sufficient architectural detailing and original fenestration to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00708

Address: 325 N. Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: Between 1912-1922

Historic Name: restaurant

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, single-unit brick corner building has simple corbelled cornice and an interesting central rounded bay window on second floor. The storefront has recessed central entry, with a purple Luxfer glass ribbon window above that is fully uncovered. The central entry is flanked by metal-framed plate-glass windows, with the doors being modern replacements. A metal beam with rosettes is over the storefront.

History: This building was built between 1912-1922 having replaced a smaller older building on this site. It housed a restaurant between 1922-1941+. It currently houses the Liberty Dance Center.

Significance: This modest-sized corner building harks back to the Late Victorian style in the cornice corbelling and the use of a rounded bay window on the second floor façade. Overall the building retains good integrity and is notable for the retention of a Luxfer glass ribbon window across the storefront. This building is also notable as one of the few commercial buildings along Calhoun Street that retains a fairly high degree of integrity.

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70-00696

Address: 102 E. 4th Street

Date of Construction: 1977

Name: West Liberty Oil Company

Property Type: VI: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: One-story modern, corner-lot commercial building has brick veneer siding and a wood shake awning.

History: Historically, this lot was the site of a dwelling, which functioned as a boarding house from c.1899-1912+. It was replaced from c.1922-1941 by an early filling station. The current building was constructed in 1977 for the West Liberty Oil Company. It currently houses Brooke Enterprises.

Significance: As a modern building built after the period of significance for the district, this property is considered non-contributing to the district.

70-00697

Address: 322 N. Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: c. 1912

Historic Name: auto garage

Property Type: III: Transportation (auto-related)

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story brick-front commercial building has central overhead garage door entry. Storefront has more modern wood awnings and slanted wood-covered windows. Minimal brick corbelling along the cornice. The interior of this building was gutted in 2000.

History: Built c.1912 according to the fire insurance maps, this building functioned as an auto garage and an auto sales and service business through at least 1941. It has also housed Seagull Seed Corn storage.

Significance: While the building has been altered in more recent years, it is still recognizable as an early twentieth century automobile-related service business. As such, it is considered contributing to the district.

70-00698

Address: 320 N. Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: c. 1922

Historic Name: tire store

Property Type: III: Transportation (auto-related)

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story single-unit brick front store has recessed central entry with metal-framed plate-glass windows. The ribbon window is covered, which may be reversible. Metal beam with rosettes above the storefront. Historic photographs of this building suggest that the current pressed metal cornice is a modern addition to this building.

History: Built c.1922 as a tire store, this building houses a liquor store by 1941. Other businesses have included a Laundromat, fabric store, and real estate office. It currently houses the West Liberty Chamber of Commerce.

Significance: The storefront retains good integrity even though the cornice is a modern addition. As an early twentieth century automobile-related enterprise, this building reflects an important evolution in early twentieth century businesses in West Liberty.

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70-00699

Address: 314-316 N Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: 1914-1915

Historic Name: Masonic Temple

Property Type: III: Fraternal Hall

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Large three-story brick building has shaped parapet and Classical cornice details. Some Art Deco influence in use of green tiles around the second and third floor facade. Storefronts have recessed central entry and central hall/staircase. Second and third floor front windows covered with wood panels, which appear reversible. Two windows have reduced inserts. Masonic emblem on stone plaque on parapet. Basement entry on alley side.

History: The building's cornerstone was laid in July 1914 by the Grand Lodge of Iowa A.F. & A.M. The building was completed on April 28, 1915. The second floor was used by the Masons as a dining hall, with the third floor serving as their meeting hall. The first floor was rented out to a grocery and a hardware store. Other businesses have included Osborn Grocery, Osborn and Lewis Grocery, Lewis Grocery and Hardware, Mrs. Osborn's Variety Store, Wuestenberg Insurance, The Flower and Gift Shoppe, Drs. Royal and Robertson, Antiques, Calhoun Street Spirits, Dr. Knott (dentist), and a beauty shop. The building currently houses CED furniture on the ground floor and apartments on the second floor.

Significance: The architectural design of this building reflects the popular styles of the day: the Classical Revival and the Art Deco styles. It was probably an architect-designed building. This substantial early-twentieth century addition to the West Liberty commercial district was an important addition particularly in its location on a side street off the main commercial area. This building retains good integrity and is considered both architecturally and historically significant.

70-00716

Address: 130 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1949

Historic Name: Morris Grocery, Furniture and Appliance

Property Type: V: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story buff-colored brick veneered building on corner lot. This building matches adjacent building at 126 E. 3rd Street (#70-00717) and was built at the same time. Building has large rectangular and square plate glass windows and modern doors. Modern bubble-type awning across front and side facades.

History: The original building on this site burned in 1948, with the extant building constructed on the lot. This building housed the Morris Grocery, Furniture and Appliance store, which was the business that had been in the original building. Subsequent businesses have included the Haselhuhn Grocery and Pizza, Goddard Furniture, Miller Furniture, and the current Jan's Flower Yard.

Significance: This is one of last buildings added to the district within the period of significance and reflects the continued vitality of West Liberty's commercial district into the post-World War II years. As such, this building is considered contributing to the district.

70-00717

Address: 126 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1949

Historic Name: Morris Sundries

Property Type: V: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

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Comments: One-story rectangular brick storefront matches adjacent store (#70-00716) and was built at the same time. It has a buff-colored brick veneer and a recessed entry to east that has curving corner detail reminiscent of Art Deco style. Modern bubble-type awning over storefront.

History: Previous building on this site burned in 1948. The new building, constructed in 1949, housed Morris Sundries associated with the adjacent Morris grocery, furniture and appliance store but built and operated as a separate business. This building has since housed a real estate/insurance office and a physical therapy/massage clinic.

Significance: This is one of last buildings added to the district within the period of significance and reflects the continued vitality of West Liberty's commercial district into the post-World War II years. As such, this building is considered contributing to the district.

70-00718 and 70-00719

Address: 122-124 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1874

Historic Name: dry goods and millinery shop/drugstore

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, two-unit brick block building has a corbelled brick cornice from which the original pressed tin cornice has been removed. Second floor windows have segmental-arched corbelled hood molds and 1/1 double-hung replacement windows. First floor storefront on east-unit has metal beam with rosette buttons above a covered ribbon window, which may be intact underneath. The east-side unit has a central recessed door and older metal-framed plate-glass windows but the door is a modern replacement. The west-side unit has cover-up siding and reduced plate-glass windows with some potential for reversibility. The second floor windows on the west side have been reduced in height, with the lower portion now infilled with brick. A centrally-placed door leads to the second floor.

History: Built in 1874 according to the Assessor's records, this block building housed a dry goods and millinery shop from c.1886-1922+ in the east-side unit. It was subsequently a tavern but currently houses the Downtowner Restaurant. The west-side unit housed a drugstore from c.1886-1922+, with later businesses including a beauty shop, the Iowa State Liquor Store, Take 2 Video, and Paul Revere's Pizza.

Significance: The building retains good integrity as a Late Victorian Italianate-influenced commercial block building.

70-00720

Address: 120 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1870s

Historic Name: grocery store

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story single-unit brick commercial building has prominent bracketed cornice overhang, round-arched windows on second floor with prominent pressed metal hood molds and the original 2/2 double-hung windows, although modern storm windows somewhat obscure the exterior view of these windows. Storefront has denticulated pressed metal cornice and four cast iron columns across the front. Entry is recessed to west with door to second-floor staircase on west side. Storefront windows are reduced but potential for reversibility is good. Doors are replacements.

History: Built in the 1870s, this building housed a grocery store from c.1886-1922+. Subsequent businesses included a children's clothing store and the current West Liberty Chiropractic Center.

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Significance: From the style of this building and the prominent overhang of the bracketed cornice, it is suspected that this building was constructed in the 1870s. This building retains good integrity and is a good representative example of the Italianate-influenced commercial designs of the late nineteenth century in this community. It is considered contributing to the district.

70-00721

Address: 116-118 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1879

Historic Name: Billiards Hall/Grocery

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, two-unit brick block building has two storefronts separated by central stairwell. Shaped pediment has corbelled dentils and decorative cornice. Five windows across second floor have segmental-arched lintels. Windows on second floor are covered and/or reduced in size but likely are reversible. Ribbon window across storefront is also covered by wood siding and may be intact underneath. Both storefronts have recessed central entries with replacement windows and doors but retain original configuration. Door to second floor offices is in center of façade.

History: Built in 1879 according to Assessor's records. The east-side unit had in 1886 a billiards hall, in 1893 dry goods, and in 1899-1922+ a haberdashery. The first bowling alley in West Liberty was in the basement. The west-side unit had in 1886 a grocery, in 1893-1899+ a restaurant, in 1912 jewelry, and in 1922 a confectionery. Second floor used for offices. Other businesses through the years have included a café, corn drying business, clothing store, temporary city library, and the Cedar Valley Creamery. The West Liberty Coin Laundry is currently in the east-side unit, with the other unit vacant.

Significance: While there are some integrity problems with this building, it still presents a sufficient historical appearance to be considered contributing to the district as an example of an early brick block building.

70-00722

Address: 114 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: c.1941

Historic Name: store

Property Type: V: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: A late addition to the commercial district, this one-story, single-unit storefront has a brick veneer over concrete block walls. Recessed central entry with glass block accents showing some Art Moderne influence. Single-pane storefront windows flank central door. Newer glass and metal door.

History: This was previously the long time site of a meat market from c.1886-1912; however, that building burned in the early twentieth century, with the lot still vacant on the 1922 fire insurance map. This building was constructed by the early 1940s and has housed the TV and Appliance Mart, Hanson Heating and Plumbing, and Wolf Appliance. It currently houses La Mexicana Groceries.

Significance: This building was among the last to be added to this district but it was constructed within the district's period of significance and demonstrates the vitality of the West Liberty commercial economy into the World War II and immediate post-war eras. As such, it is considered contributing to the district.

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70-00723

Address: 112 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: Between 1893-1899

Historic Name: Drugstore

Property Type: V: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, single-unit brick store has modernized storefront consisting of the application of a stone veneer over brick front, insertion of replacement Chicago-type windows across second floor, with newer storefront windows and doors and modern bubble-type awning. The first floor interior is not divided into two units, although the storefront fenestration gives that impression.

History: While the Assessor's records give an 1884 date of construction, the earlier building on this lot was smaller in size than the current building, which was shown in this configuration by the 1899 fire insurance map. In 1899, it housed a drugstore until c.1912, followed by a restaurant and bakery and a dry goods store by 1922. The façade was updated in 1940s.

Significance: The 1940s remodeling of this façade was done within the period of significance and is considered an important updating of this older brick building. As such, it reflects the continued vitality of the West Liberty commercial district into the post-World War II years and is contributing to the district.

70-00724

Address: 106 E. 3rd street

Date of Construction: c.1899

Historic Name: G. Burkhart Building

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story double-unit brick block has decorative pressed tin cornice embossed with "G. Burkhart." Both store units have rounded bay windows on the second floor flanked by single windows with shaped hood molds. Second floor retains very good integrity and was recently painted in a historic paint color scheme. Both first-floor storefronts have been altered but retain recessed entryways. The east storefront has metal-framed, plate-glass storefront, while the west storefront has a wood siding cover-up and reduced windows. Metal beam with rosette buttons across storefront.

History: Built for Gus Burkhart c.1899. The east side had in 1906-1912+ a restaurant and in 1922 a dry goods store. The west side was a pool hall from c.1906-1922+. Subsequent businesses included a restaurant and bakery, a five and dime store, and Miller's Department Store until the late 1970s-early 1980s. The second floor housed professional offices and insurance agencies through the years. The building currently houses Hawkeye Pizza and Steak, with apartments on the second floor.

Significance: The second floor retains a high degree of integrity and is a notable example of Late Victorian commercial design in the district. It is also important as a prominent brick block constructed by a local entrepreneur around the turn-of-the-last-century.

70-00725 and 70-00726

Address: 102-104 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1878

Historic Name: Chesebrough Building

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story, two-unit brick block building has decorative, bracketed pressed tin cornice. Windows on second floor have segmental-arched hood molds with keystones. East-side storefront has been bricked-in and has glass block windows, but

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recessed entryways to store and second floor remain. The west-side storefront has also been modernized (in 1969) with multi-colored brick infill and three tall, narrow fixed-pane windows.

History: Built in 1878 according to Assessor's records, the building was enlarged to the rear after 1912. In 1886, this east side of this building housed a jewelry store followed in 1893 by a dressmaking shop, in 1899 a barber shop, and from 1899-1922+ another jewelry store. Other businesses have included an attorney's office, and a video arcade, with a dental office on the second floor. The building currently houses *The Index*, a local newspaper, with apartments on the second floor. The west side of the building is commonly referred to as the Chesebrough Building and housed the post office from c.1878 to 1893, a dry goods store c.1893-c.1906, a variety store c.1912, a confectionary c.1922, and a restaurant c.1941. It currently houses the Martin Insurance Agency.

Significance: The second floor of this block building retains very good integrity and is a good example of Late Victorian commercial design in the district. While the first floor storefronts have been altered, the building overall still presents a historic appearance sufficient to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00727

Address: 100 E. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: 1912

Historic Name: Iowa State Bank and Trust Company/Kimball Building

Property Type: III: Bank

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Prominent two-story brick corner building has stone and limestone veneer and a Classical Revival Greek temple-front facade. Monumental pedimented entryway and facade demarcated by four classical columns. Windows and door appear to be original. Original burglar alarm box on front.

History: This important corner building was constructed in 1912 as a bank building. It remained a bank until c.1922 but had become the post office by 1941. It currently functions as an office building.

Significance: This building is a good example of the Classic Revival style of architecture popular for bank buildings in the early twentieth century. The building has been little changed since first constructed and retains good to excellent integrity. It is both a contributing and key corner building to the district.

70-00700

Address: 219 N. Calhoun Street

Date of Construction: 1867; west addition in 1892

Historic Name: Masonic Temple/Schooley Furniture Store

Property Type: III: Fraternal Hall/Retail Commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story nearly triangular-plan brick building has low-pitched hipped roof, with wide eave overhang. Segmental-arched windows are 1/1 double-hung older replacements of the original 6/6 double-hungs. Two storefronts on east side retain recessed entries and wood-framed windows. The oldest known building extant in commercial district.

History: The original portion of this building was constructed in 1867 as a Masonic Hall (second floor), with Elisha Schooley's furniture store on the first floor. James Schooley used the basement as a cabinet and repair shop, where he made the first caskets in town. In 1892, the Masons built an addition on the west side of the building. In 1894, the post office leased the first floor and remained at this location until 1937 when the new post office was constructed. Other businesses included a printing shop, Potter and Webber's Coal and Ice, and currently Globe Financial Services.

Significance: This building is the oldest extant building in the commercial district. It is considered both contributing and key to the district as the oldest building and as the first Masonic Hall in this community. West Liberty's commercial district is somewhat unusual in the survival of so many of its fraternal halls including the original halls and their later replacements.

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70-00695

Address: 110 W. 3rd Street

Date of Construction: Between 1892-1907, with office added in 1948

Historic Name: P.R. Evans/Schafer Grain Co.

Property Type: IV: Industrial (agriculture-related)

Evaluation: Grain Elevator – contributing structure; office building—contributing building

Comments: The main grain elevator is the oldest structure in this complex and is covered with metal siding and roofing. The office building is one-story tile block building added to this complex in 1948.

History: This business operated as the P.R. Evans Grain Elevator c.1886-1893, with agricultural implements added by 1899; the Jackson Grain Company c.1906; the W.G. Addleman Elevator c.1912; and the G.F. Schafer Grain Company c.1922-1941+. It is currently operating as Fred's Feed and Supply.

Significance: This elevator complex is considered significant to the district because it reflects the importance of the railroad and agriculture to this community. The survival of this property is more notable due to the demolition of two other elevators grain elevator businesses along the railroad tracks between Calhoun and Spencer streets in the twentieth century.

70-00709

Address: 319 N. Spencer

Date of Construction: c.1886

Historic Name: dwelling

Property Type: III: Residential dwelling

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Two-story side-gabled dwelling has low pitched gabled roof. Walls are likely brick that have been stuccoed. Foundation is brick. The 1/1 double-hung windows may be replacements. Front porch was modified in 1910s-1920s.

History: This building was built as a single-family dwelling and remains that to the present day.

Significance: This house is within the boundary of the commercial district but is not situated along the main commercially-developed street, but rather a side street that was a mixture of residential and commercial properties. As such, it does not really reflect the context of living on Main Street, nor does it have an identified association with any commercial property owner through the years. As such, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

70-00710

Address: 317 N. Spencer Street

Date of Construction: 1910

Historic Name: auto garage

Property Type: III: Transportation (auto-related)

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: Two-story rectangular brick commercial building has plain parapet that steps down to the rear. Storefront had central garage door, now infilled. Replacement doors and windows, some reduced.

History: Built in 1910 as a one-story building, it housed the first car dealership in West Liberty, selling REO automobiles, Karter Kars, and Buicks. In 1914, a second story was added. From c.1922-1941+, it housed auto-related businesses including an auto repair and paint shop and an auto sales and service business. Subsequent businesses included a hatchery and the Bargain Box, a second-hand store. The building is currently used for apartments.

Significance: This building is still recognizable as early automobile-related business despite alterations and reflects the importance of the automobile in the early twentieth century commercial enterprises in West Liberty.

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70-00711

Address: 311 N. Spencer

Date of Construction: Between 1912-1922

Historic Name: sheet metal/tin shop

Property Type: III: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Contributing building

Comments: One-story, two-unit brick building is stucco over tile block walls. Has concrete foundation, and a flat roof. Brick parapet steps down to the rear. Two storefronts have a mixture of older and replacement doors and windows. Place for inset/recessed sign in parapet.

History: First appears on 1912 Sanborn fire insurance map as a sheet metal and tin shop, a business which continued through at least 1941. This building was converted into a residential property in more recent years.

Significance: While it has been remodeled in more recent years, this building is still recognizable as an early twentieth century commercial property and retains sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the district.

70-00731

Address: 114 E. 4th Street

Date of Construction: Between 1886-1893

Historic Name: dwelling

Property Type: III: Residential dwelling

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Two-story gable-front-and-wing dwelling has jerkinhead or clipped-gable ends. Two-story rounded bay on one gable end and a shallow rectangular two-story bay window on the other. Porch has half-height square posts on covered skirt rail. Windows are 1/1 double-hungs, with one cottage window. Wide replacement siding.

History: Built between 1886-1893 according to Sanborn fire insurance maps. Continuous use as a single-family residence.

Significance: This house is located on 4th Street within the boundary of the historic commercial district, with this part of 4th Street a mixture of commercial and residential properties in the later years of the district's development. This is less a case of living on Main Street, and more a case of residential properties being enveloped into the commercial district as that district expanded in its later years. As a result, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

70-00732

Address: 108 E. 4th Street

Date of Construction: Between 1886-1893

Historic Name: dwelling

Property Type: III: Residential dwelling

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Two-story gable-front-and-wing dwelling has a triangular attic window and a shallow, rectangular two-story bay window. Wrap-around porch has round columns. Windows are single and paired 1/1 double-hungs, with one cottage window. Replacement siding of narrow "board" width.

History: Built between 1886-1893 according to fire insurance maps. Continuous use as a single-family dwelling.

Significance: This house is located on 4th Street within the boundary of the historic commercial district, with this part of 4th Street a mixture of commercial and residential properties in the later years of the district's development. This is less a case of living on Main Street, and more a case of residential properties being enveloped into the commercial district as that district expanded in its later years. As a result, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

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70-00733

Address: 106 E. 4th Street

Date of Construction: c.1878

Historic Name: dwelling

Property Type: III: Residential dwelling

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Two-story rectangular house has massive truncated hip roof with flared overhanging eaves. Front porch has square half-height posts on covered skirt rail. Faux brick asphalt-roll replacement siding.

History: Built c.1878 according to Assessor's records. Continuous use as a single-family dwelling.

Significance: This house is located on 4th Street within the boundary of the historic commercial district, with this part of 4th Street a mixture of commercial and residential properties in the later years of the district's development. This is less a case of living on Main Street, and more a case of residential properties being enveloped into the commercial district as that district expanded in its later years. As a result, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

70-00734

Address: 106 W. 4th Street

Date of Construction: 1984

Name: True Value Hardware

Property Type: VI: Retail commercial

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Modern commercial building, with a low wide gabled roof was constructed in 1984 and houses the True Value Hardware store.

History: Built in 1984 as a hardware store.

Significance: Because this building was constructed after the district's period of significance, it is considered non-contributing.

70-00735

Address: 118 W. 4th Street

Date of Construction: 1898

Historic Name: dwelling

Property Type: III: Residential dwelling

Evaluation: Non-contributing building

Comments: Two-story hip-roofed corner house has lower cross-gabled eaves. Porch is both inset and wrap around, with replacement posts. Siding and most of the windows appear to be replacements.

History: Built in 1898 according to Assessor's records. Continuous use as a single-family dwelling.

Significance: This house is located on 4th Street within the boundary of the historic commercial district, with this part of 4th Street a mixture of commercial and residential properties in the later years of the district's development. This is less a case of living on Main Street, and more a case of residential properties being enveloped into the commercial district as that district expanded in its later years. As a result, it is considered non-contributing to the district.

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Muscatine County, Iowa**Statement of Significance**

The West Liberty Commercial Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C for its architectural significance and under Criterion A for its historical significance. It is being nominated under the *Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture* Multiple Property Documentation Form. The historical significance of the West Liberty Commercial District lies in its representation of the central business district from the late 1860s to the present and its reflection of the many varied commercial, industrial, public, social, cultural, and recreational enterprises that evolved in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries within this community. The architectural significance of the district lies in the retention and integrity of many of the historic buildings constructed between 1867 and 1948. Several represent unusually well-preserved examples of key, corner buildings that anchored the central business district. These buildings, in particular, give the West Liberty Commercial District some uniqueness when compared to similar business districts in communities of this size across Iowa. Most of the buildings further reflect popular architectural stylistic influences of the day as well as the impact of the railroads in the availability of building materials and in economic vitality of this community. The period of significance for the district is from 1867, when the first extant building was constructed, until 1952, the 50-year cut-off date for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. West Liberty continued to add buildings to the commercial district in response to fires and demolition into the late 1940s further reflecting the vitality of this town's commercial economy into the post-World War II years.

Historical Significance of the West Liberty Commercial Historic District

The City of West Liberty began while Iowa was still just a territory. It was first known as the Wapsipinoc Settlement because of its location near Wapsipinoc Creek. It grew because of its position along an early trail that became an important stage and post road. West Liberty through its railroad connections was also along the 1856 Mormon Handcart trail, with the handcart part of the journey starting where the railroad ended in Iowa City (Thompson 1989:3-4, 8).

The main road through West Liberty eventually became part of U.S. Highway 6, which was first registered in 1922 as the Whiteway-7-Highway and was first numbered Highway 32. Currently, U.S. 6 extends through West Liberty, with the highway named "Columbus Street" within the city limits (Thompson 1989). Columbus Street is at the east end of the district, with the main commercial street, 3rd Street, intersecting Columbus Street, which also serves as a north-south divider between the commercial area of town, on the west side, and the residential area to the east. Likewise, 4th Street serves as a boundary separating the commercial area on the south from the residential area to the north. Fourth Street was also an important connector road between the main north-south route along Columbus Street and the railroad depot, which was located at the west end of 4th Street. The commercial district also includes some residential development as this was part of the Original Town Plat for West Liberty.

The first post office at West Liberty was established on March 24, 1838, with Francis Foote as postmaster. This post office was located "at or near the southwest corner of Section 1, T78N-R4W where North Point Inn is located, and was known as Old Liberty" (Hise 1938). This location is to the northwest of the later platted location of West Liberty. The old North Point Inn is still standing along the north side of U.S. Highway 6. The second postmaster was Peter Heath, who operated the first general store in the Wapsipinoc Settlement, and became postmaster temporarily upon the death of Francis Foote in the fall of 1838. Other early postmasters included William A. Clark, A.L. Richards, Simon A. Bagley, Asa Gregg, "who had much to do with the early settlement and development of this township," and Freeman Alger (*ibid.*).

It was the arrival of the railroad in 1855 that prompted the platting of the town of West Liberty at its current location. The first postmaster of the new town was Isaac D. Vore, followed by Skilman Alger and Samuel W. Sedgewick. In 1870, the post office was housed in the Childs Building on the main commercial street in town (3rd Street). It was later located in the Polders Building and the Chesebrough Building until 1894 when it was moved into the old Masonic Hall at the southwest corner of Third and Calhoun streets where it remained until December 14, 1937. It was then moved into the Iowa State Bank Building

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(a.k.a. the Kimball Building) at the southeast corner of Third and Calhoun streets where it remained until a modern building was constructed along Columbus Street outside of the district boundary.

The town of West Liberty was first incorporated on January 1, 1868, with S.W. Sedgewick as Mayor. The first sidewalks were of plank and laid on the south side of East Third Street and the west side of North Calhoun Street in the late 1860s. In 1872, the sidewalk was extended to the railroad depot west of the main commercial area. The first fire company was organized in December 1869. A town hall was built in 1886 on the west side of N. Calhoun Street, replaced with a new town hall in 1936 on the north side of 4th Street just outside of the district boundary. Other civic improvements in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries included a sewer system built in 1911, a municipal water plant built in 1888, a municipal electric light plant established in 1897, and the first street lights installed in 1893 and updated in 1915 (Hise 1938).

Examination of the available fire insurance maps for West Liberty shows that the main commercial district began in the blocks fronting both sides of 3rd Street between Spencer and Clay streets, with secondary commercial development along both sides of Calhoun Street and, to a lesser extent, Spencer Street between 3rd and 4th streets and 3rd Street between Spencer and Columbus streets. Along the railroad tracks, which angled from the southeast to the northwest and formed the south boundary of the commercial area, there were several grain elevators and the freight depot for the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. Only one of the grain elevators remains standing, with the freight depot also non-extant. Lumber and coal sheds and stockyards also lined the railroad tracks.

On the west side of Clay Street was located the City Mills, a complex that is now non-extant, with the site later built over by the West Liberty Co-operative Creamery. Reportedly, during the early history of the City Mills, it was a stop on the Underground Railroad (Hise 1938). The mill was destroyed by fire in 1888. West Liberty was situated in a region settled early on by Quakers, whose abolitionist activities included assisting runaway slaves along the Underground Railroad through Iowa. While very little documentation remains concerning West Liberty residents' participation in both the Society of Friends and the Underground Railroad, West Liberty was considered a waystation along this route and there was a sect of the Society of Friends active in West Liberty in the 1850s-1860s, variously associated with the Prairie Grove and Springdale Society of Friends meetings (Jones 1914; The Iowa Yearly Meeting of Friends 1963).

By 1886, the types of businesses in operation in the main commercial area included the above-noted grain elevators and City Mills but also included two lumberyards, a number of grocery, livery, print shop, blacksmith, harness, tailor, drugstore, clothing, jewelry, boot and shoe, feed mills and warehouses, agricultural implements, meat shops, millinery, bakery, billiards, dry goods, furniture, and carpentry shops as well as two banks and one hotel (the Miller House). The first Masonic Hall was located at the corner of 3rd Street and Calhoun, with the first Knights of Pythias Hall and opera house built on the north side of 3rd Street by 1886. West Liberty is notable for the survival of so many of its fraternal halls and opera house/theater buildings through the years, particularly in the survival of both the first and second generation buildings for the Mason, Knights of Pythias, and Oddfellows, with all of these buildings still standing and contributing to the district. These buildings reflect the vitality and influence of these groups in West Liberty and their impact on the commercial building stock, commercial enterprises, and cultural offerings in the community.

By the 1890s, many of the same businesses remained in operation with the addition of a flour warehouse, a larger furniture store, hardware and barber shops, and restaurants (Sanborn 1893, 1899). By 1906, a larger opera house and dance hall had been added to the north side of 3rd Street, with a new I.O.O.F (or Oddfellows) Hall added at the northwest corner of 3rd and Spencer streets. Many of the same types of businesses remained with the addition of a tin shop, sewing machine and stationary shop, and wire warehouse. Women-operated businesses of note in West Liberty during this era included most notably the Potter Sisters' Millinery Shop around the turn-of-the-last century. By the early twentieth century, the commercial area fronting 3rd Street had largely taken on its present configuration with generally uniform alignment of buildings along the street frontage and very few setbacks from that line. Most of the building are two stories in height and constructed of brick, although a few earlier frame buildings remain along the side streets and periphery of the district. The Rock Island Freight House had been removed by 1906. Women-operated businesses in the early to mid-twentieth century were becoming more broad-based, with notable examples being Mrs. Osborn's Variety Store and Mrs. Reep's Bazaar.

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The commercial district had achieved a peak in development by the time of the 1922 fire insurance map (Sanborn 1922). By that time, the West Liberty Co-Operative Creamery Company had added a building to the southwest corner of 4th and Clay streets, and the remainder of the district achieved its greatest extent of building construction. Since that time, there has been some building loss due to fire and demolition, with most of the vacant lots built over by newer buildings reflecting an important aspect of West Liberty's commercial history—its continued vitality well beyond the point that many small Iowa towns had begun to decline or had failed to thrive, largely tied to the waning fortunes of the railroad industry. West Liberty continued to thrive, with only one vacant lot on the north side of 3rd Street where two small buildings, both barber shops in the early twentieth century, were removed in recent years. This vacant lot is now a small green space with park benches.

New businesses added in the early twentieth century were largely tied to automobile-related enterprises, including garages and auto sales, reflecting the rise of importance of this new mode of transportation during this period. Motion picture theaters were also a new addition to the businesses of West Liberty reflecting the evolution of entertainment from live productions to film in the early twentieth century.

West Liberty became known in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries as a trade center for a purebred-stock region in northwestern Muscatine County. The large stockyards that lined the railroad tracks on the south edge of the commercial area reflect this agricultural industry. In addition, the many dairy farms of the region encouraged the development of several creamery companies and later the Iowa Condensed Milk Company in town (WPA 1986:486). The first creamery was established in West Liberty in 1870 in the basement of one of the buildings within the main commercial district. In 1870 the Cedar Valley Creamery Company was established along S. Columbus Street and "was one of the largest and best equipped creameries in this part of the country" (ibid.). In 1914 the West Liberty Co-Operative Creamery Company was built at the corner of 4th and Clay streets increasing their business in 1919 to include the selling of feed, eggs, poultry, and the drying of buttermilk (ibid.). Poultry figured prominently in the agricultural-related commercial development of West Liberty, with a turkey processing plant still a major industry to the present day.

Other industries and commercial enterprises important to the development of West Liberty included the brick and tile plant located near the Wapsie Creek supplying brick and tile for "most of the business houses and residences" in the community (Hise 1938); a carriage and wagon factory at the corner of Spencer and 3rd Street; a harrow factory located on Elm Street; the Favorite Canning Factory established in 1880 on Calhoun Street east of the fairgrounds and canning beans, corn, peas, and tomatoes; a poultry and egg plant located on Clay Street also near the fairgrounds (south of the railroad tracks); a broom factory on West 5th Street; two cigar factories on 3rd Street; a soap factory one-half mile southwest of town; a flax mill located on Columbus and 1st streets; a wagon factory on Calhoun Street; a saw mill located where the golf club was later located; a fencing factory located on Elm Street; the Hutchinson Ice Cream Company located on W. 4th Street; a button factory located at Elm and 6th streets; a grist mill at Columbus and 5th streets; and a cement block factory built in 1913 on Prairie Street (ibid.). Most of these industries were situated outside of the commercial district on the periphery of the town.

Transportation has always played a major role in the settlement and development of West Liberty. The community took hold because of its location along a major early trail that most importantly was a stage and post route between Davenport and Iowa City. However, the community boomed and remained a viable community because it was able to secure a major rail line early in its history.

The main railroad lines through West Liberty began as the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad in the 1850s, with the line built through West Liberty by 1855. Because of financial difficulties, this railroad was purchased by the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad (a.k.a. the Rock Island) in July 1866. The line was to extend between Davenport and Council Bluffs and was finally completed to Council Bluffs in 1869; construction having been slowed by the Civil War. The original plans for the M & M Railroad called for a north-south connection to Cedar Rapids as well; however, that plan was not realized until the organization of the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Minnesota (BCR & M) in 1868 by Judge George Greene of Cedar Rapids. This railroad was built south to cross the main line of the Rock Island at West Liberty and the Muscatine Branch at Columbus Junction. To the north it extended through Cedar Falls to Plymouth Junction in Iowa. Suffering financial

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difficulties during the Panic of 1873, the BCR & M was reorganized as the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern (BCR & N). In 1903, this line became part of the Rock Island system (Thompson 1989:23-28).

A hotel operated by William Hise was built in the early 1870s near the juncture of the two rail lines on the south side of the main tracks. The Hise House hotel later operated as the National Hotel and the Hotel Moylan. This important building is non-extant (Hise 1938). The juncture of the north-south and east-west rail lines is approximately two blocks west of the main commercial district of West Liberty but was not included within the district boundary because there have been too many buildings lost and too much alteration in the blocks in-between the railroad juncture and the commercial district for the boundary to be extended in that direction. The 1897 passenger depot for the Rock Island Railroad is currently undergoing a major restoration project and has been listed individually in the National Register.

The securing of such a major railroad line as that of the Rock Island System plus a connecting branch enabled West Liberty to grow and prosper in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was during this period that the commercial district reached its peak in construction, with many of the buildings constructed of materials brought in on over the railroad and many of the businesses kept in a variety of supplies by the railroad. While locally-manufactured brick would have been used in the construction of foundations, chimneys, and load-bearing walls, the vitrified and pressed face-brick used for most of the commercial buildings facades as well as the decorative tin cornices and cast iron storefronts, would have been shipped into town by rail from larger factories to the east.

The railroads also made possible the burgeoning livestock, poultry, and other agricultural-related industries important to West Liberty's growth because of the shipping opportunities at this important juncture. One interesting related development associated with the importance of the agricultural-related industries in West Liberty was the early arrival of Mexican immigrant labor attracted to the community's canneries, which began operating in the 1940s-1960s (*Daily Iowan* 1986). Mexican migrant laborers were also a smaller presence in the 1910s-1920s, with some finding more permanent employment in West Liberty as railroad section workers. Today, the Latino presence in West Liberty is strong, with the presence of multi-generational families, property ownership, and the installation of ethnic-related businesses such as the Mexican restaurants, bakeries, and groceries within the district reflecting that influence (*Iowa City Press-Citizen* 1988).

Railroad transportation began to wane in the first three decades of the twentieth century, largely because of the rise of the automobile and trucking industry which began to supplant railroads as the major mode of shipping across the United States. As the importance of the railroad waned, the importance of having U.S. Highway 6 through West Liberty and the rise in the number of automobile-related businesses in the main commercial district began to be felt in this community. However, the railroads still extend run through West Liberty, with grain and poultry still major industries in town and situated along the railroad tracks to take advantage of all shipping opportunities.

Architectural Significance of the West Liberty Commercial Historic District

The commercial buildings within the district are predominated by two-story brick buildings having Italianate-influenced designs, followed by one-story brick buildings devoid of much stylistic expression, two-story brick buildings also showing little stylistic expression, two- and three-story Classical Revival-styled buildings, and a few one-story tile block and two-story frame buildings. The grain elevator is of crib construction. While the extant buildings cover the full range from 1867 to 1948 in construction, there were two distinct building booms—one in the 1870s-1880s when 18 buildings were added to the district and one between 1900 and 1922 when 17 buildings were constructed. Nine buildings were also added in the 1890s, likely in the aftermath of a fire in 1893.

The commercial buildings reflect the prosperity and vitality of this community throughout the period of significance, with most of the buildings lost either through fire or demolition, quickly replaced by new construction. There were notable fires in the 1880s and 1890s that certainly had an impact on the building stock of the district, with the paucity of early frame buildings reflecting this loss but also reflecting the prosperity of the community, with the older outdated buildings replaced through time by more substantial, stylish buildings.

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The importance of the railroad in West Liberty is reflected in both the siting of the main commercial area parallel and adjacent to the main-line tracks and in the materials used in the construction of Main Street buildings. While there were local brick and block factories, much of the façade material present within the district would have arrived in this community by rail.

The few dwellings within the district consist of one vernacular two-story single-family dwellings that were influenced to varying degrees by popular architectural styles of the day including Queen Anne, Stick, and Italianate. The majority of these houses were built during the 1880s-1890s when the Late Victorian Queen Anne style was most popular. However, none of these dwellings are high-style examples; rather, they are vernacular types particularly the gable-front-and-wing. Generally, these are modest homes likely occupied by merchants and workers in the commercial district, although their historical connection to the main commercial area is not strong. These houses were situated along the side streets and along 4th Street where it appears they were more a phenomenon of being enveloped by the expansion of the commercial district through time than the context of living on Main Street. There were certainly residential properties on the second floors of most of the commercial buildings within the districts, with a number still occupied as apartments to the present day.

Finally, the brick-paved streets within the district, and as they extend through the district, are considered contributing structures to the district. The brick pavement along 3rd, 4th, Clay, Calhoun, and Spencer streets most certainly contribute to the district's overall historic appearance and sense of time and place. The City of West Liberty has undertaken a systematic, multi-year project to restore and repair the existing brick streets, including those within the district.

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West Liberty Commercial Historic District

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Table 1. List of Properties in West Liberty Commercial Historic District.

Inventory No.	Property Address	Property Type	Year Built	Status in District
70-00922	3 rd , 4 th , Clay, Calhoun, & Spencer Streets	Brick Streets	1915	Five Contributing Structures
70-00673	201 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1884	Contributing building
70-00674	127 E. 3 rd Street	2 nd IOOF Hall	1903	Contributing building
70-00675	121 E. 3 rd Street	Bank	1906	Contributing building
70-00676	117-119 E. 3 rd St.	Retail commercial	1878	Contributing building
70-00677	115 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1878	Contributing building
70-00678	113 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	c.1893	Contributing building
70-00644	111 E. 3 rd Street	2 nd K.P. Hall/Opera House	1910	Contributing building
70-00679	105 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1870s-80s	Contributing building
70-00680	103 E. 3 rd Street	1 st IOOF Hall	1870s-80s	Contributing building
70-00681	101 E. 3 rd Street	Bank	1919	Contributing building
70-00682	101 W. 3 rd Street	1 st K.P. Hall/Opera House	1860s-70s	Contributing building
70-00683	105 W. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1879	Contributing building
70-00684	107-109 W. 3 rd St.	Retail commercial	1870s	Contributing building
70-00685	111 W. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1879	Contributing building
70-00686	113 W. 3 rd Street	Tin Shop	c.1879	Contributing building
70-00687	115 W. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1879	Contributing building
70-00688	117 W. 3 rd Street	Auto Repair	c.1912-22	Contributing building
70-00689	121 W. 3 rd Street	Lumber Yard	1879	Contributing building
70-00690	202 W. 4 th Street	Creamery	1914	Contributing building
70-00695	110 W. 3 rd Street	Grain Elevator	1892-1907	Contributing structure
70-00695	110 W. 3 rd Street	Elevator Office	1948	Contributing building
70-00696	102 E. 4 th Street	Retail commercial	1977	Non-Contributing building
70-00697	322 N. Calhoun	Auto Garage	c.1912	Contributing building
70-00698	320 N. Calhoun	Tire Store	c.1922	Contributing building
70-00699	314-316 N. Calhoun	2 nd Masonic Temple	1914-15	Contributing building
70-00700	219 N. Calhoun	1 st Masonic Hall	1867	Contributing building
70-00701	307 N. Calhoun	Fire Station/City Hall	c.1886	Non-Contributing building
70-00702	311 N. Calhoun	Retail commercial	1906	Contributing building
70-00703	313 N. Calhoun	Retail commercial	c.1893-99	Contributing building
70-00704	317 N. Calhoun	Retail commercial	c.1893-99	Contributing building
70-00705	319 N. Calhoun	Tailor Shop	c.1912	Contributing building
70-00706	321 N. Calhoun	Retail commercial	1908	Contributing building
70-00707	323 N. Calhoun	Movie Theater	c.1912-22	Contributing building
70-00708	325 N. Calhoun	Retail commercial	c.1912-22	Contributing building
70-00709	319 N. Spencer	Dwelling	c.1886	Non-Contributing building
70-00710	317 N. Spencer	Auto Garage	1910	Contributing building
70-00711	311 N. Spencer	Metal Shop	c.1912-22	Contributing building
70-00716	130 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1949	Contributing building
70-00717	126 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1949	Contributing building
70-00718/719	122-124 E. 3 rd St.	Retail commercial	1874	Contributing building
70-00720	120 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	1870s	Contributing building

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Muscatine County, Iowa**

Table 1. Continued.

Inventory No.	Property Address	Property Type	Year Built	Status in District
70-00721	116-118 E. 3 rd St.	Retail commercial	1879	Contributing building
70-00722	114 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	c.1941	Contributing building
70-00723	112 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	c.1893-99	Contributing building
70-00724	106 E. 3 rd Street	Retail commercial	c.1899	Contributing building
70-00725/726	102-104 E. 3 rd St.	Retail commercial	1878	Contributing building
70-00727	100 E. 3 rd Street	Bank	1912	Contributing building
70-00731	114 E. 4 th Street	Dwelling	c.1886-93	Non-Contributing building
70-00732	108 E. 4 th Street	Dwelling	c.1886-93	Non-Contributing building
70-00733	106 E. 4 th Street	Dwelling	c.1878	Non-Contributing building
70-00734	106 W. 4 th Street	Retail commercial	1984	Non-Contributing building
70-00735	118 W. 4 th Street	Dwelling	1898	Non-Contributing building

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Daily Iowan, September 7, 1986
Iowa City Press-Citizen June 18, 1988
Sanborn fire insurance maps 1886, 1893, 1899, 1906, 1912, 1922, 1941
Historical information supplied by local residents and property owners
Additional photographs and historical research conducted by Lori Vermaas, Tallgrass Historians L.C., October 2001.

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**West Liberty Commercial Historic District
Muscatine County, Iowa**

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the West Liberty Commercial Historic District is shown as the dashed line on the map entitled "Map of West Liberty Commercial Historic District" (Page 33).

Boundary Justification

This boundary encompasses all the area historically associated with the commercial development of West Liberty along 3rd and 4th streets and the side streets of Clay, Calhoun, and Spencer streets that maintain historic integrity.

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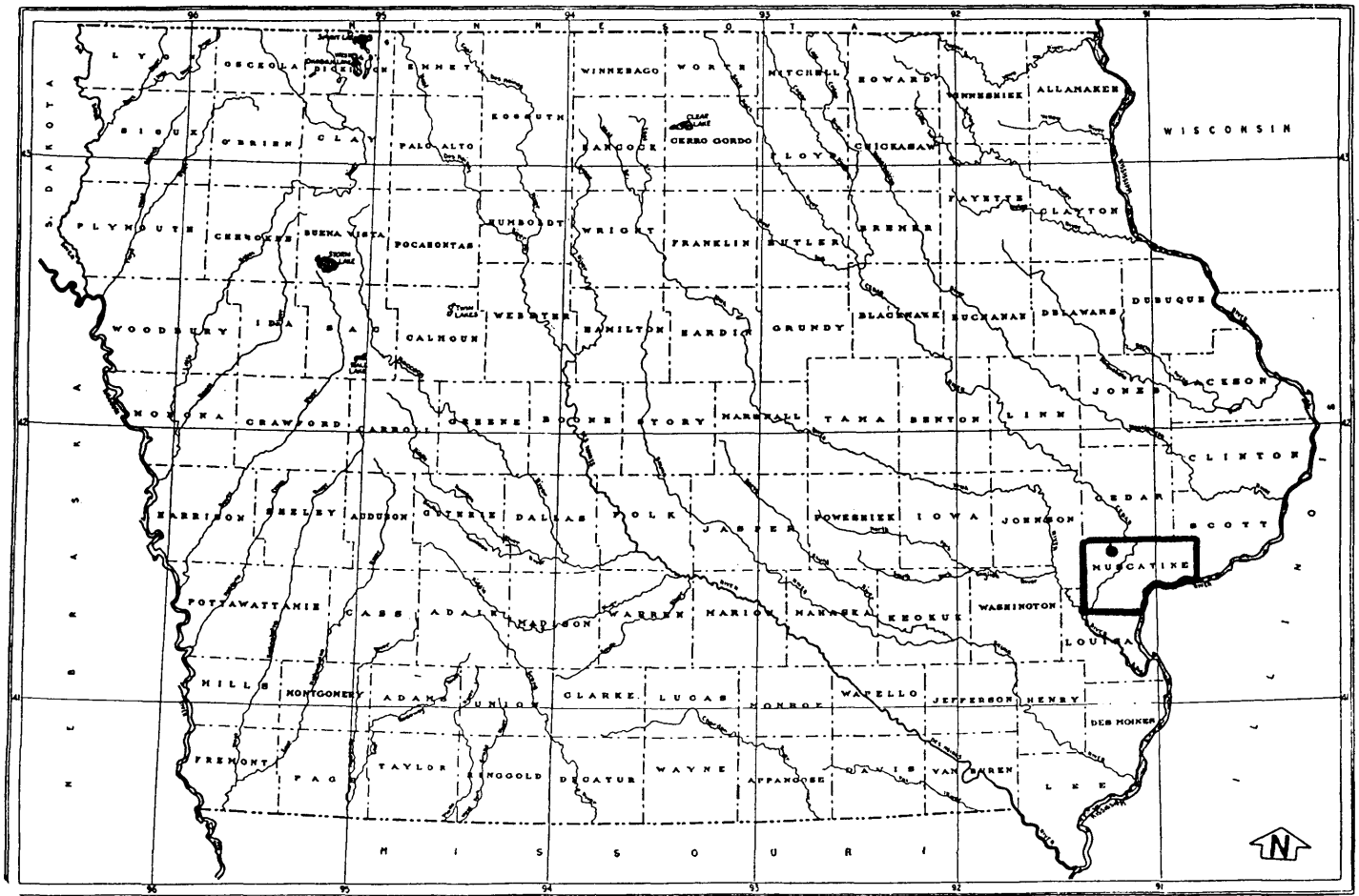
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General Location of West Liberty, Iowa



MAP OF IOWA



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Additional

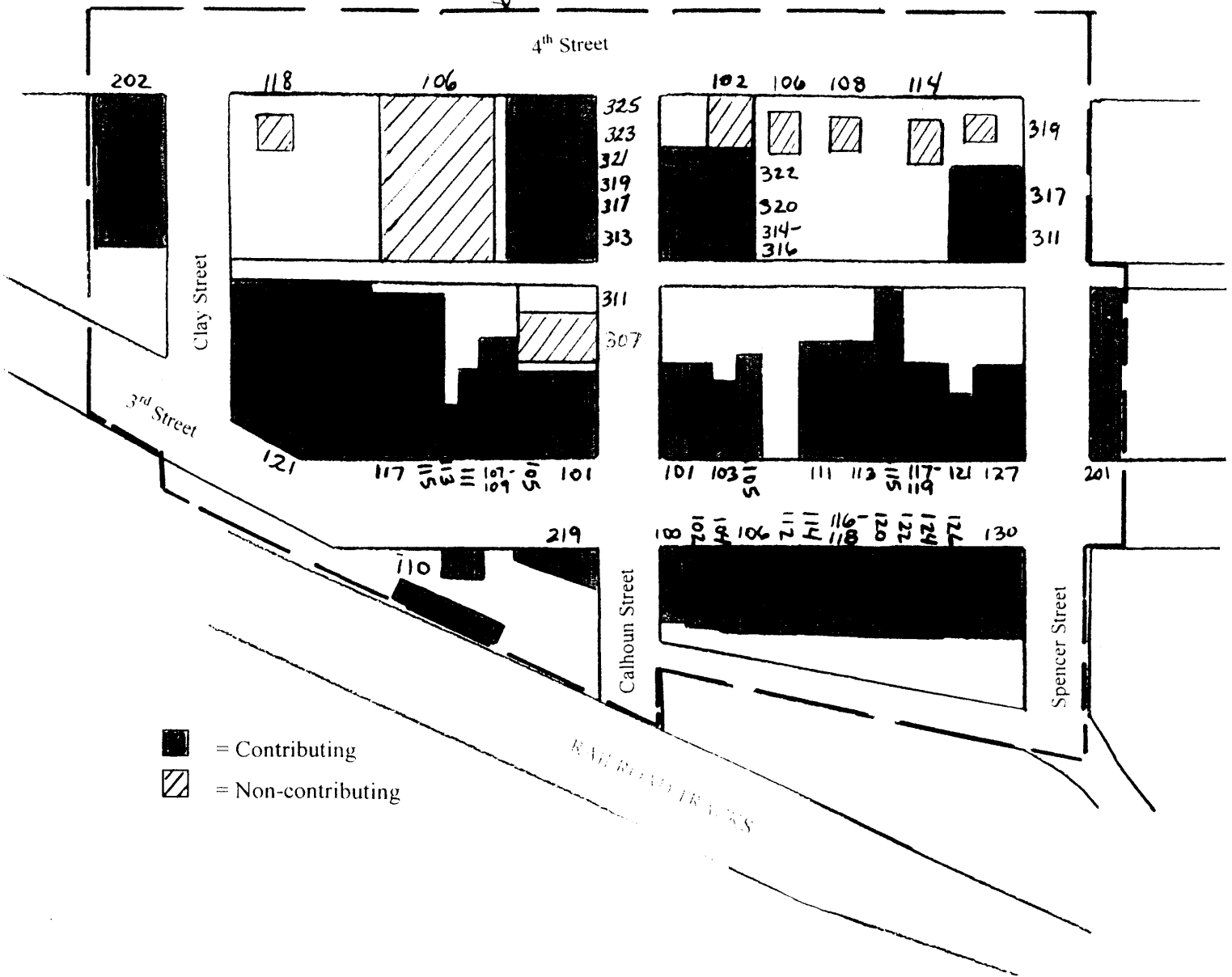
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Map of the West Liberty Commercial Historic District



District Boundary



-  = Contributing
-  = Non-contributing

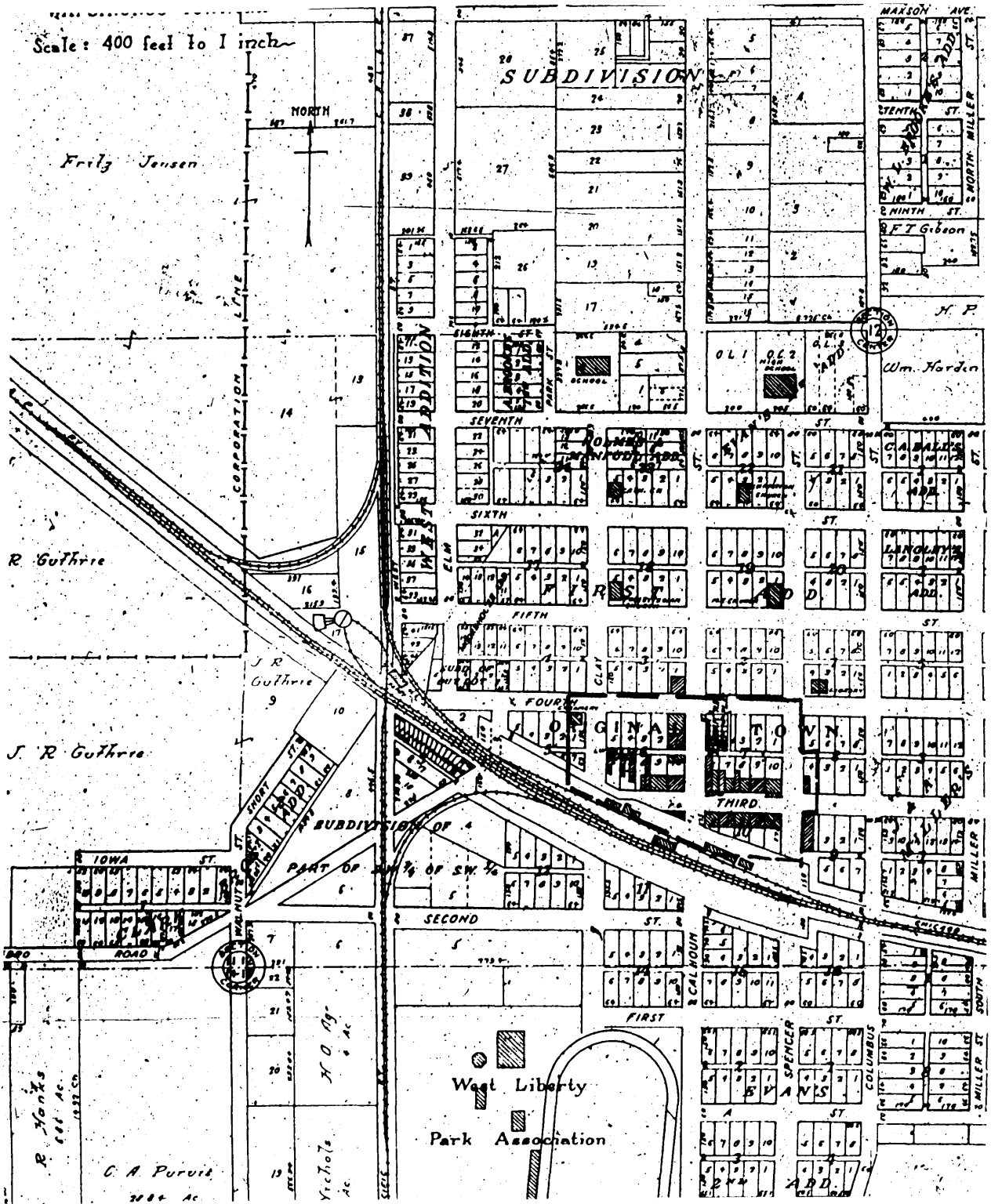
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West Liberty Commercial Historic District
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Historic Plat Map of West Liberty in 1916
(Anderson 1916)



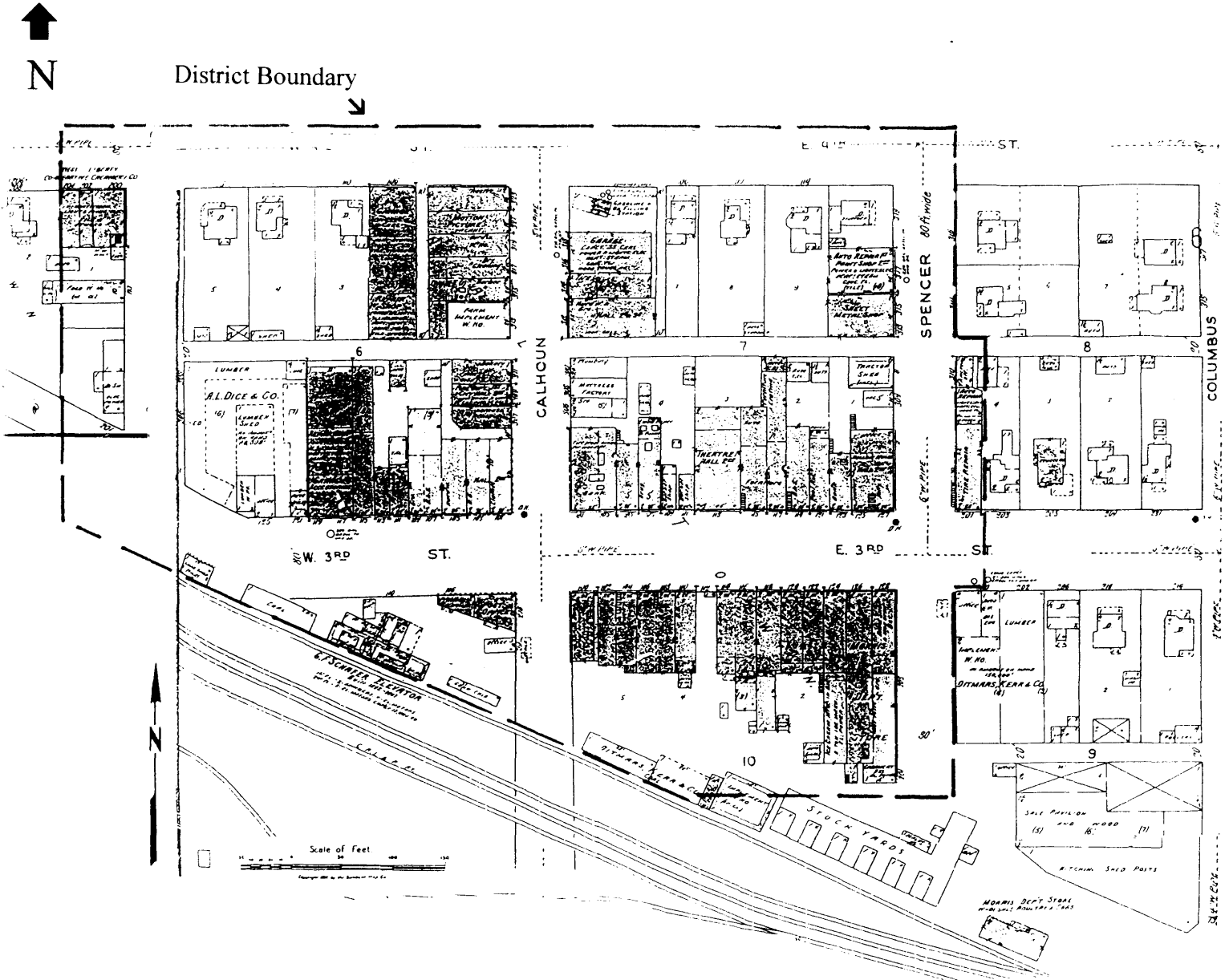
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1922 Fire Insurance Map of District
(Sanborn 1922)



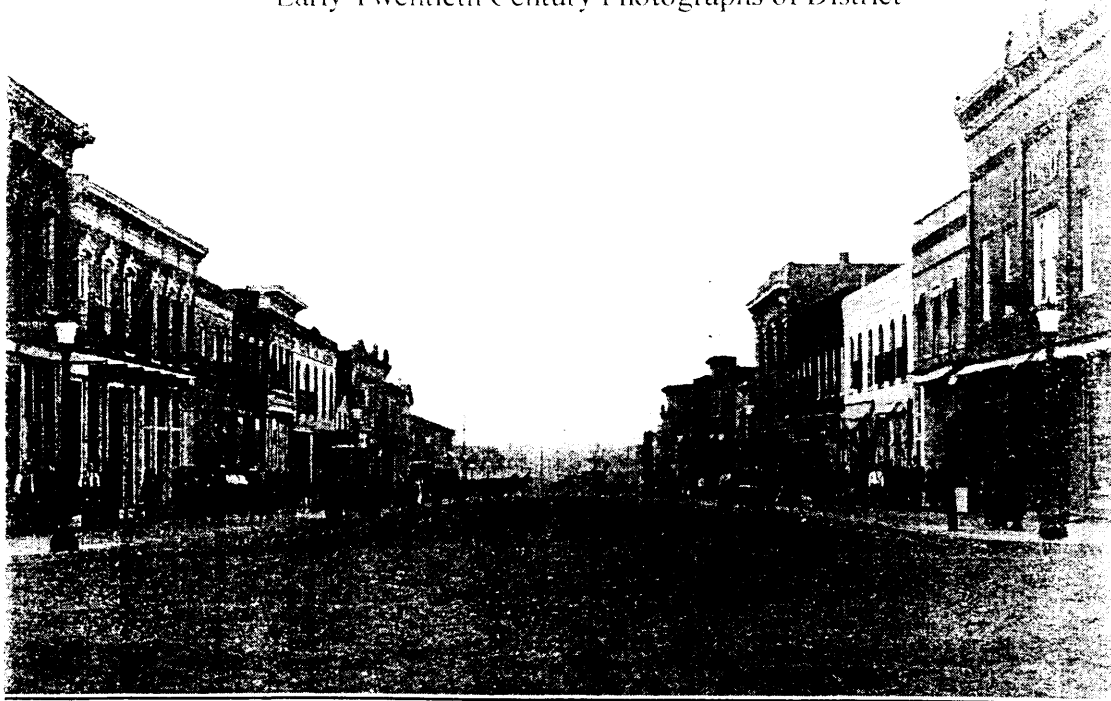
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Early Twentieth Century Photographs of District



BUSINESS DISTRICT. THIRD STREET. LOOKING WEST FROM SPENCER STREET



BUSINESS DISTRICT LOOKING EAST ON 3RD

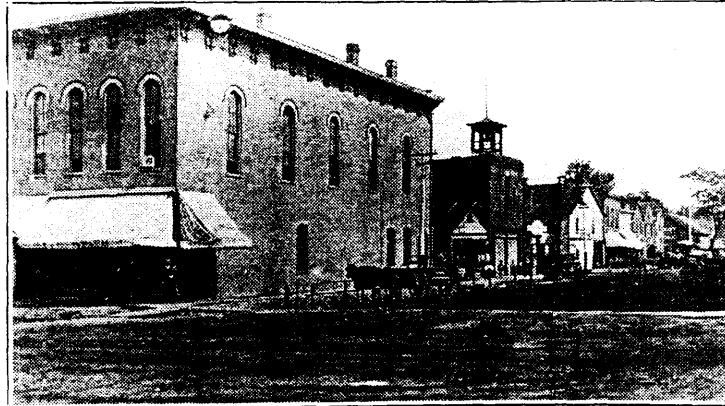
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Early Twentieth Century Photographs of District



Calhoun street north from 3rd.—1908



CALHOUN STREET LOOKING NORTH FROM 3RD

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**West Liberty Commercial Historic District
Muscatine County, Iowa**

List of Photographs

Name of Photographer: Lori Vermaas
Date of Photographs: Fall 2001
Location of Original Negative: State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines

- #1 Northeast corner of 3rd Street and Spencer, View to the NE
- #2 Northwest corner of 3rd Street and Spencer, View to the NNW
- #3 North side of 3rd Street between Spencer and Calhoun Streets, View to the NW
- #4 Detail of K of P Hall/Opera House/New Strand Theater (111 E. 3rd Street), View to the NNW
- #5 Detail of West Liberty State Bank (101 E. 3rd Street), View to the NE
- #6 Detail of 1st K of P Hall/Opera House (101 W. 3rd Street), View to the NW
- #7 North side of 3rd Street between Calhoun and Clay Streets, View to the WNW
- #8 West side of Calhoun Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, View to the NW
- #9 East side of Calhoun Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, View to the NNE
- #10 Detail of Masonic Temple (314-316 N. Calhoun), View to the ENE
- #11 Southwest corner of 3rd Street and Spencer, View to the SSW
- #12 Southeast corner of 3rd Street and Calhoun, View to the WSW
- #13 Southeast corner of 3rd Street and Calhoun, View to the SW
- #14 Detail of Iowa State Bank and Trust (100 E. 3rd Street), View to the South
- #15 Detail of 1st Masonic Temple (219 N. Calhoun), View to the SW
- #16 Southwest corner of 3rd Street and Calhoun, View to the SW

This project has been funded with the assistance of a matching grant-in-aid from the State Historical Society, Community Programs Bureau through the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior or the State Historical Society of Iowa, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior or the State Historical Society of Iowa.

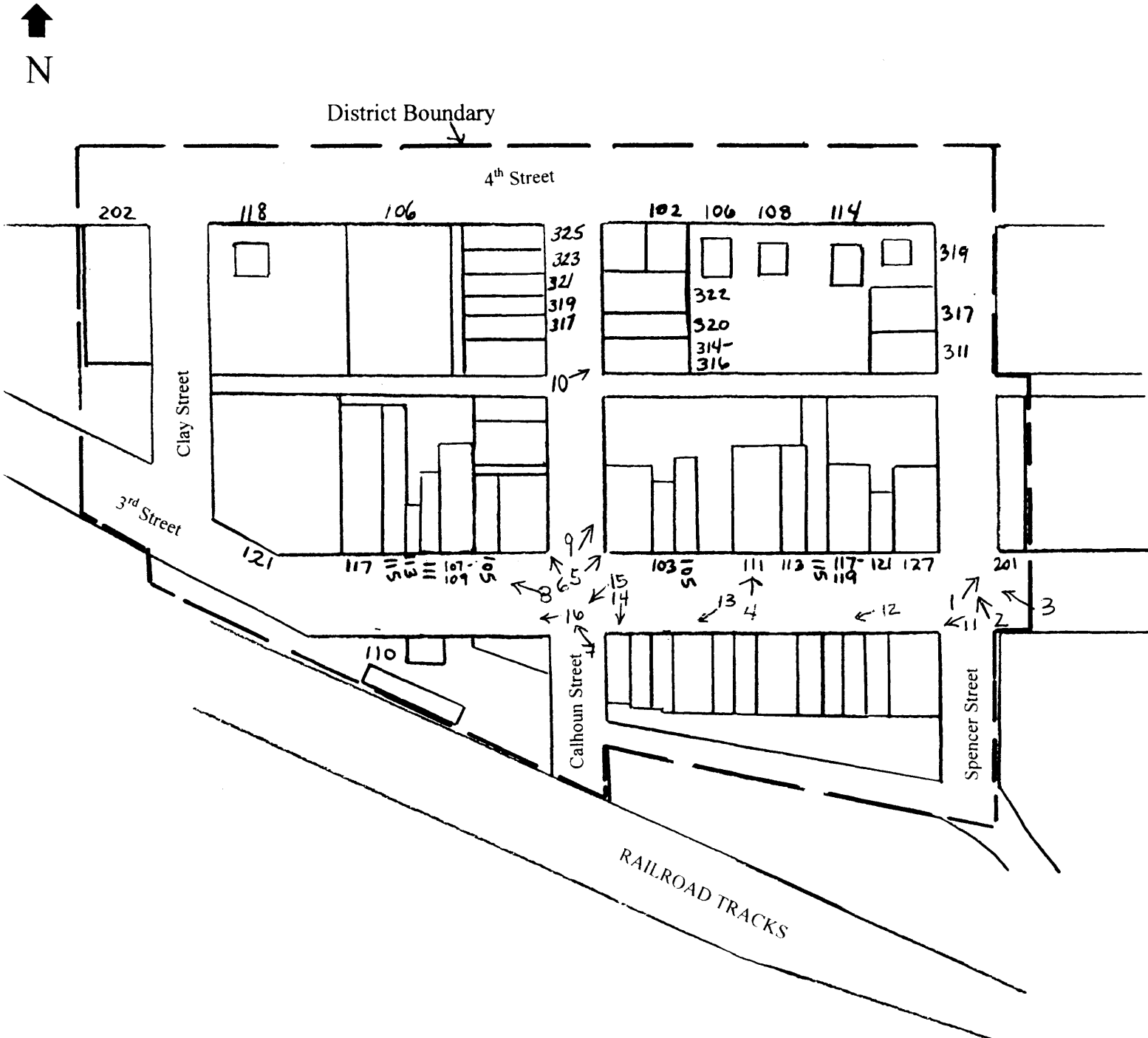
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Map Showing Direction of Photographs



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West Liberty Commercial Historic District
Muscatine County, Iowa

List of Property Owners

Telsa M Graham 206 E. 6th West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Mallory Smith 1100 N Walnut West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Halavak-Towncrst Asoc 1060 Williams St. Iowa City, Iowa 52245	Pohl & Rieger Partnership Box 197 West Liberty, Iowa 52776
James Keele 714 N. Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Robert Fulwider 807 N. Park West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Craig Farlinger 1059 Evans Ave West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Carlos H Verdines 114 E 4th West Liberty, Iowa 52776
Todd Leach 111 E. 3rd St West Liberty, Iowa 52776	James E. Dreibelbeis 1743 Hwy 6 West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Michael J Tharp 101 W. 3rd St West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Carlos Lopez 118 W 4th West Liberty, Iowa 52776
Douglas Phillips 104 S. Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Kenneth & Linda Wieneke 1308 Houser Muscatine, Iowa 52761	Clarence & Donna Stagg 1234 Country Heights Ln West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Jose Elizondo 517 E 3rd St. West Liberty, Iowa 52776
Donald J McCrabb 1230 Country Heights Ln West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Donald & Dorothy Hobbs 1232 Country Heights Ln West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Bruce M Miller 110 W 3rd St West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Javies Rojas 19 Lakeview Cir. Iowa City, Iowa 52240
Brooke Enterprises P.O. Box 147 Moscow, Iowa 52760	West Liberty Oil Co. P.O. Box 48 West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Mt. Calvary Lodge #95 314-316 N Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Earl J Martin 1502 Brayton Muscatine, Iowa 52761
American Legion #509 307 N Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Gerald & Janey Westra 1229 Country Heights Ln West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Charles & Louise Newcomb 715 N Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	MARY P Brooke P.O. Box 48 West Liberty, Iowa 52776
Harlan Wiese 317 N Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	John & Monica Jenks 319 N Calhoun West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Evelio Villarreal 108 E. 4th St West Liberty, Iowa 52776	
Sergio A. Zamora 321 E. 5th St West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Cristina De La Rosa 319 Spencer West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Jan's Flower Yard, Inc 130 E. 3rd St West Liberty, Iowa 52776	
James McCrabb 1230 Country Heights Ln West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Thomas G Reinsager 307 N Corn West Liberty, Iowa 52776	Randy D. Klein Hwy 22 W. Box 467 Riverside, Iowa 52327	