# MULTIPLE RESOURCES OF ANNISTON CALHOUN COUNTY, ALABAMA

Historic name: Nonnenmacher House Owner: City of Anniston Common name: Nonnenmacher House P. O. Box 670

Anniston, Alabama 36202

Address: 1311 Gurnee Avenue

Acreage: less than one acre UTM: 16/608380/3725020

Verbal Boundary: Anniston City Land Company Map, Block 135, Lots 8 and 9.

Architectural Design: Classical with Victorian influences

Date of Construction: 1902

## Statement of Significance:

### Criterion C - Architecture:

The Nonnenmacher House is significant architecturally as the best and most intact example, in Anniston, of an important transition in architectural taste around the turn of the century: the shift from very asymmetrical, highly textured Victorian styles to those which emphasized symmetry and restraint, emphasizing classicism and the nation's colonial heritage. It has Victorian vestiges, in the vertical proportions of the openings and the chimney design, as well as the interior decorations, but the overall impression is that of classicism.

#### Description:

The Nonnenmacher House is a symmetrical two-and-a-half-story residence of pressed brick laid in stretcher bond with a hipped roof and three chimneys with corbeled tops. The foundation is native sandstone ashlar. A one-story porch with a sloping roof, stretches across the three-bay facade. It projects farther in the central section to create a portico supported by three Tuscan columns on either side of the entry and topped by a wrought-iron balustrade of a later date. Individual columns stand at each end, interspersed with wooden balustrades. The trabeated half-glass front door has a transom and side lights of etched glass; the design is echoed directly above at the second stage. Each door has a stone lintel, and the tall double-hung, one-over-one windows also have stone lintels and sills as well as original shutters. A large central dormer with a gabled roof, paired beveled-glass windows and a half-circle louvered vent in the gable accentuate the symmetry of the house. The hipped roof dormer on the rear slope of the roof contains a six-light window. The hipped porch on the rear of the house is supported with square posts with balustrade.

The interior layout features four corner rooms opening off a wide central hallway with vertical paneled wainscoting. Behind a midway arch, the closed stringer stair with two landings has squared newel posts and elaborate, turned balusters. The hall also features an elevator—the first built into a home in the city. Formal rooms on either side are entered through transomed doors. Every room has a fireplace with mirrored wooden mantels and tile hearths. In the parlor (in the southwest corner) the mantel features an oblong mirror, slender Ionic columns, and applied wooden swag and wreath designs. Across the hall, in the northwest and northeast corners, respectively, are the sitting room and the dining room, separated by a full sliding

pocket door. Both have corner fireplaces, each with mantels with fluted columns, applied wooden motifs, and ornamental fire screens. A bath and kitchen are in the southeast corner.

The upstairs repeats the first-level plan, with the wide central hall, and four bedrooms. The two north bedrooms have corner mantels. Each of the four bedroom mantels features varied applied wooden designs. The attic on the third level is finished with horizontal wooden paneling.

Ceilings throughout the house are ten-and-a-half-feet high. Original gas lighting fixtures are still found in many of the rooms.

The house is situated close to the street (see attached plot map) behind a wire fence and hedge and has a large back yard. Large trees dominate the yard, with two magnolias in front and pecan, cherry, dogwood, oak, fig, and a champion pear tree in the back.

The structure is remarkably sound and unaltered.

### Historical Summary:

Charles Nonnenmacher, who built the bakery already mentioned, (see Nonnenmacher Bakery) moved his family from their quarters at the bakery to this house which he build in 1902. The family continued to occupy the residence until the city of Anniston acquired the property on November 30, 1983. The family member who became well known after her father was Miss Louisa Nonnenmacher, who died at the age of 94 in 1981. She acted as an unofficial historian of Anniston, recording many of the city's events in a column in the local newspaper. She wrote the history of Grace Episcopal Church, and was, for most of her life, active in club, civic, and church activities in Anniston.

The Nonnenmacher House has been a symbol of many things for Annistonians: as the well-maintained home of a prominent early family, as a fine example of its type of architecture, and as one of the oldest structures in town that was continuously occupied by the same family as a residence.

The city of Anniston acquired the property to be used as offices for the Planning Department. At the present time the exterior is being renovated according to the U. S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation." No structural or design modifications are being undertaken for the interior except for modern plumbing facilities and improved lighting.



