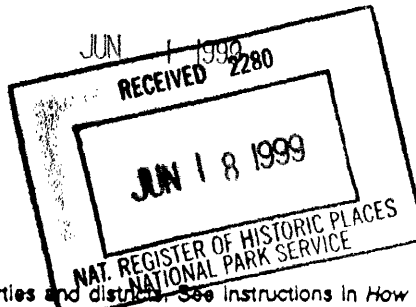


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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 Swedesburg Historic Commercial District
other names/site number Swedish Heritage Museum

2. Location

street & number 107 Highway 218 N/A not for publication
city or town Swedesburg N/A vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Henry code 087 zip code 52652

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.)
Patricia Chenkin OSITPO 1-10-99
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
State of 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper Edson A. Beall Date of Action 7-15-99

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	
3	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
3	1	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

Historical & Architectural Resources of Henry County, IA 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Department Store
COMERCE/TRADE /Specialty Store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Weatherboard
Brick

roof Asphalt

other Limestone
Metal

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)

- ETHNIC HERITAGE
- ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1875-c. 1945

Significant Dates

- 1875
- 1881
- 1928

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

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 622200 451160
Zone Easting Northing

3
Zone Easting Northing

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 Molly Myers Naumann, Consultant

organization Henry County Historic Preservation Comm. date March 1999

street & number 167 West Alta Vista telephone (515) 682-2743

city or town Ottumwa state IA zip code 52501-1437

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed 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 Swedish Heritage Society

street & number 107 Highway 218 telephone (319)254-2317

city or town Swedesburg state IA zip code 52652

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 1

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:

The Swedesburg Historic Commercial District is located on the northwest corner of U.S. Highway 218 (the old Military Road) and Park Street. This is one block south of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The district is comprised of four buildings with a graveled parking area. The largest, and most prominent, building is the Farmers Union Exchange (1928) which is located immediately next to the highway facing east. This is a single story rectangular building (31' x 60') of wood construction on a concrete foundation. The entrance is located on the east gable end. This façade was altered from the original design in 1964 by the application of a tan brick veneer on the lower portion, and aluminum siding on the "boomtown" front. It retains the original recessed entry with double doors that are flanked by large display windows. The side and rear elevations are covered by the original weatherboard. The side elevations feature very small rectangular windows just below the roof line, and the south elevation has a door near the west end with a single window to the right of it. The rear of the building features a single window at the southwest corner plus one of the small rectangular ones in the center of the wall. The rear door of the building opens from northwest corner and leads through a hallway that connects it with a small building to the rear.

On the interior the Farmers Union Exchange is basically unaltered. It features a large sales room with high ceiling at the front of the building, and three small rooms at the rear. The room at the southwest corner was the "cream" room and originally contained the cream tester, etc. The door leading into it from the south allowed cream to be taken directly into this area. The room at the northwest corner housed the hardware department. It is from this room that the hall leads to the small adjacent building.

This small building is the Sam White General Store from 1881. It is also rectangular in shape, measuring 19' x 29', with a gable roof, and entrance on the gable end. This building faces south. Resting on a limestone foundation, it is of wood construction with vertical board exterior and a standing seam metal roof. The façade features a central entrance with double doors with a four light transom above. Large display windows with nine lights each flank the entrance. There are no windows on the side elevations, but a door is centered in the rear (north) elevation. On the interior the White Store is a single room with beaded board walls and ceiling. It connects to the Farmers Union Exchange at the northeast corner and is two steps lower than the Exchange building.

Immediately west of the White Store is another small frame building. This is the 1875 Bergh Store, also known as the Huckster Barn. It is also rectangular, measuring 19' x 29', and has a board and batten exterior. This is a one and one-half story building with a symmetrical façade on the south gable end. Nine-light display windows flank double sliding doors, and two 6/6 double hung windows are located in the gable. It is believed that sliding doors replaced the original recessed entrance at an early date. The present sliding doors replace a previous façade alteration. There are no windows on the side elevations, but there are two on the north (rear) elevation, one offset to the left on the first floor, and one centered in the gable above. The roof is presently covered with two different materials: metal on the west slope, and wood shingles on the east. On the

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 2

interior, there is a single room on the first floor that was used for commercial purposes, and two small rooms on the second that were used as a residence. Restoration of this building in the past several years has been funded through the ISTE program. It rests on a new stone foundation. Although much of the interior beaded board walls and ceiling is original, there are areas with replicated board. On the first floor the flooring is new, but on the second the original floor is in place and has been oiled. The plaster and wallpaper in the front room upstairs is being repaired and matched.

Of these three buildings, only one is on its original site, the 1928 Farmers Union Exchange. Both the White Store (1881) and the Bergh Store (1875) have been moved twice. Each time the move was just a few feet (although one of the moves put the Bergh building on the lot immediately to the west), and the last time was in 1928 when the Farmers Union Exchange was built. Since these moves occurred during the period of significance Criterion Consideration B regarding moved buildings does not apply.

The fourth building in the district is located at the west end of the district facing east. This structure was built as a garage in 1928. It has been converted into a *stuga*, a typical Swedish cottage, complete with small front porch, to give museum visitors an idea of what the early Swedish settlers left behind. It is a simple gable roof rectangle with a board and batten exterior. A double privy is attached to the north side of the building. It is the only non-contributing building in the district.

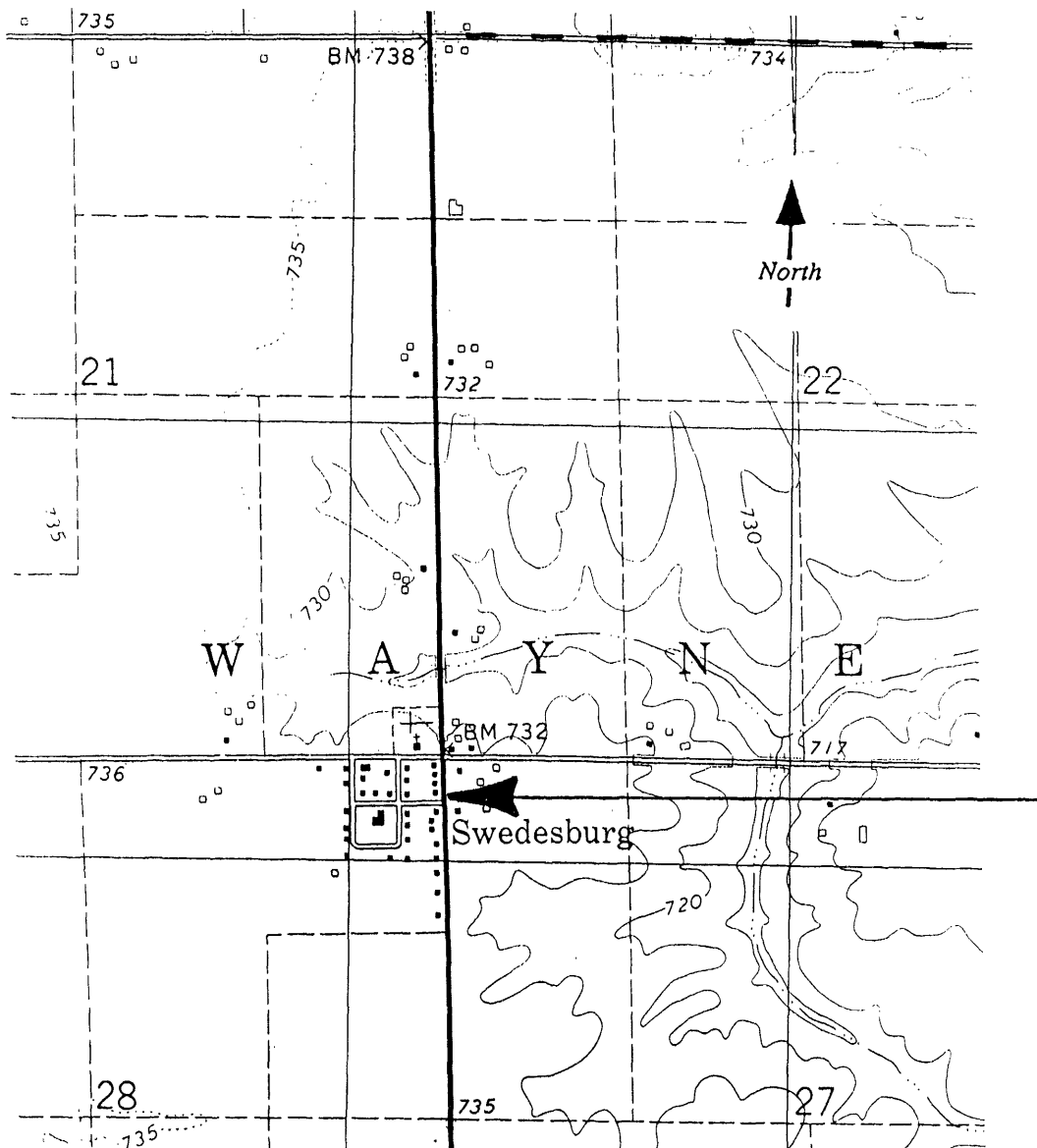
The Farmers Union Exchange and the White Store were in commercial use (and the Bergh Store as storage) until the store closed in 1976. In 1990 the four building complex was purchased by the Swedish Heritage Society for use as a museum. The museum opened to the public in 1991, and the garage was converted into the *stuga* the following year.

These buildings are representative of small town commercial architecture between 1875 and 1928. They retain a high level of integrity and the completeness of this group is unusual.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 3



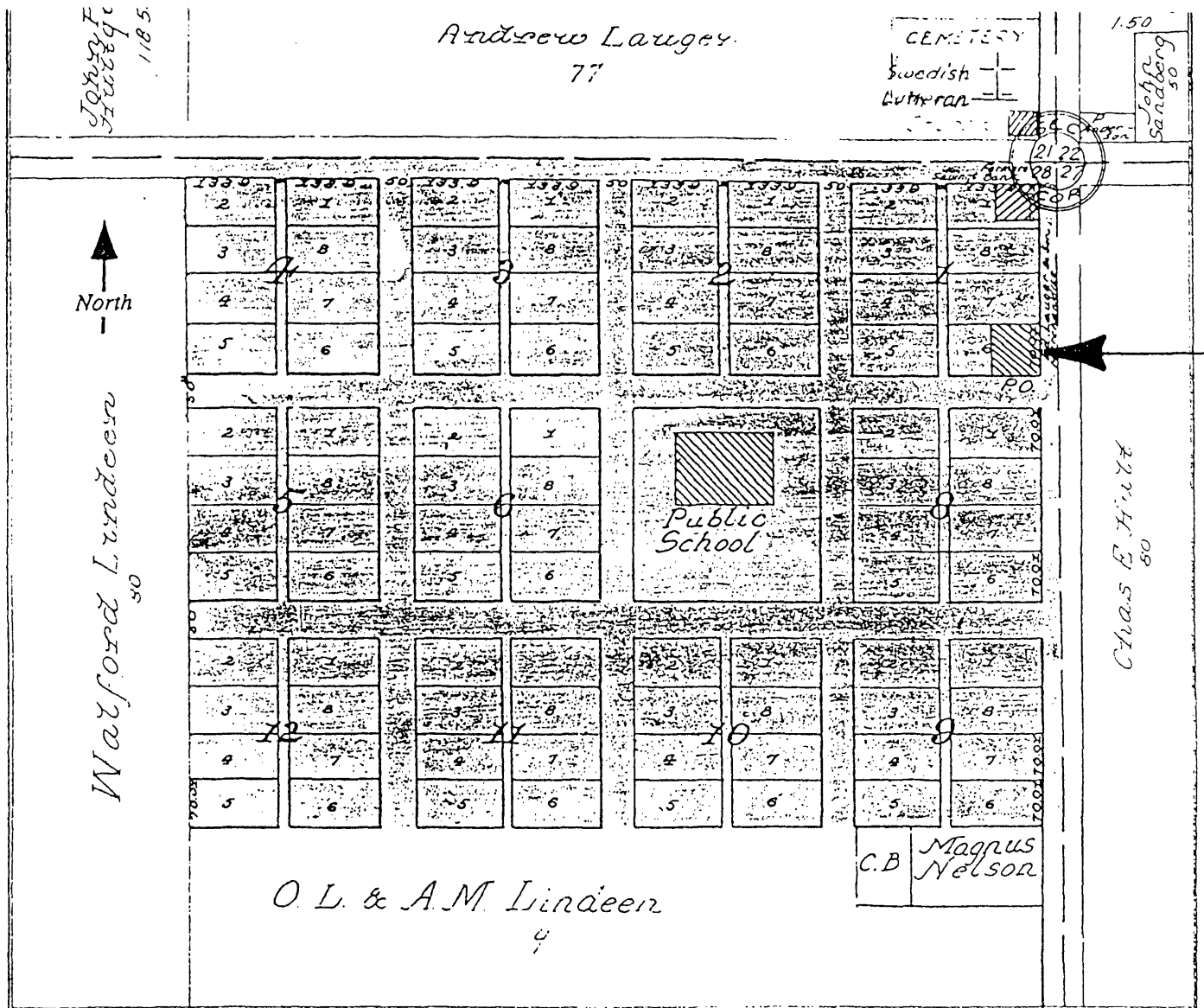
U.S.G.S. map showing location of the historic district.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7

Page 4

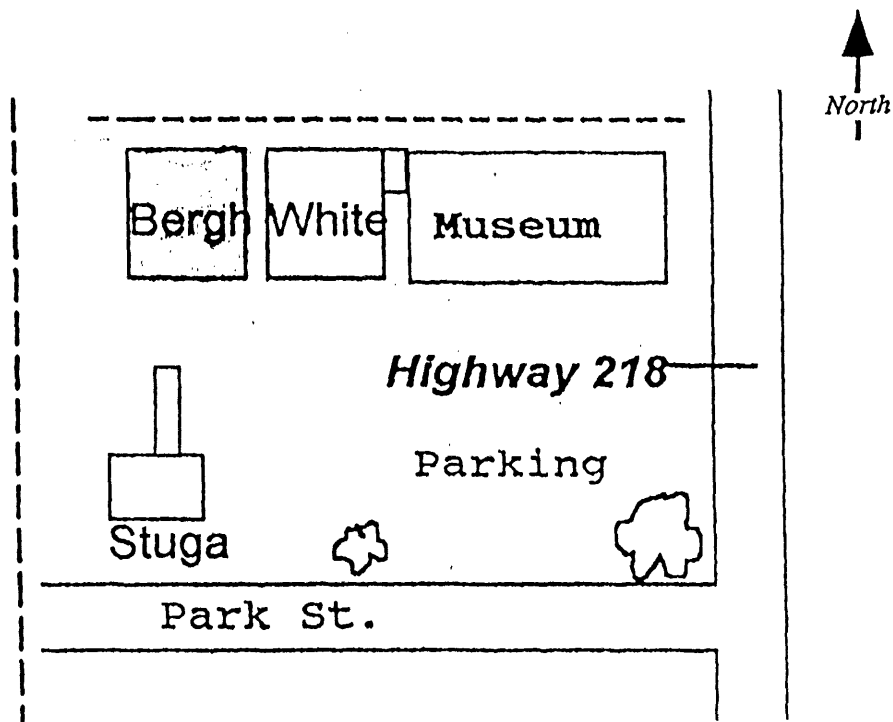


Plat map showing location of the historic district
within the village of Swedesburg.
(From 1917 Standard Atlas of Henry County)

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 5

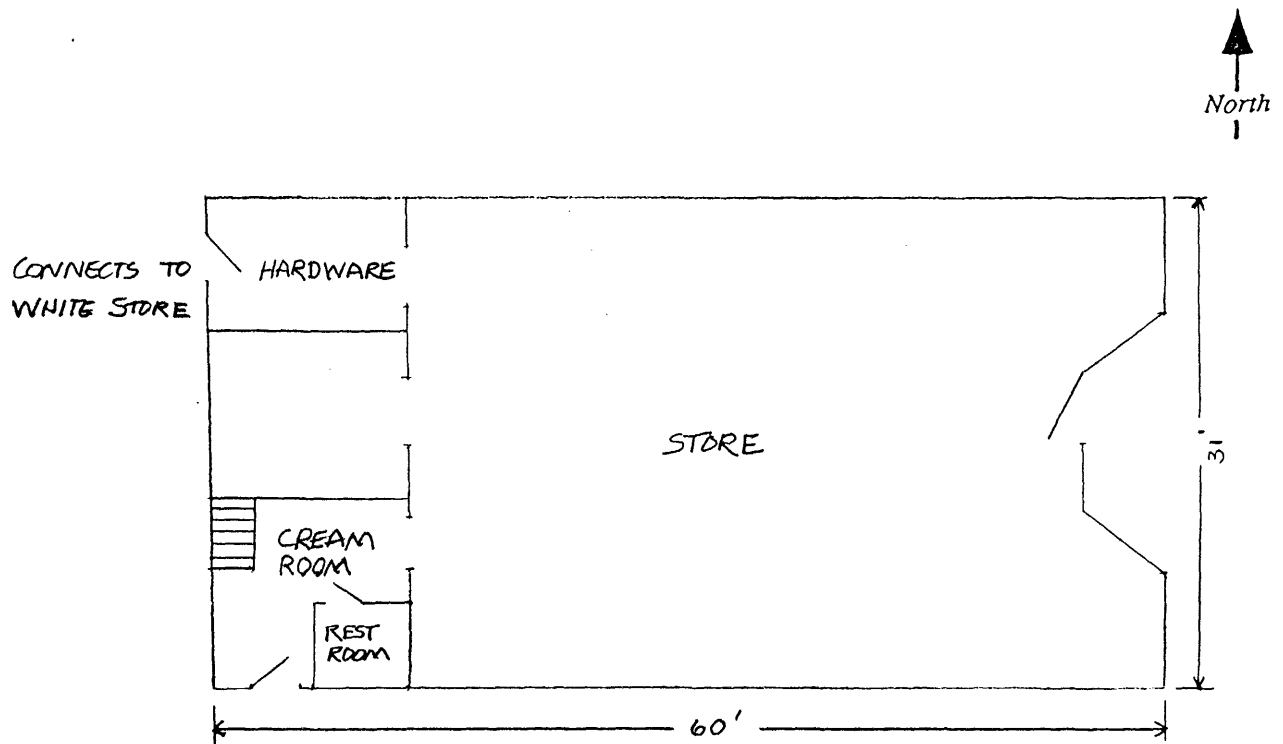


Sketch map of the historic district.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 6

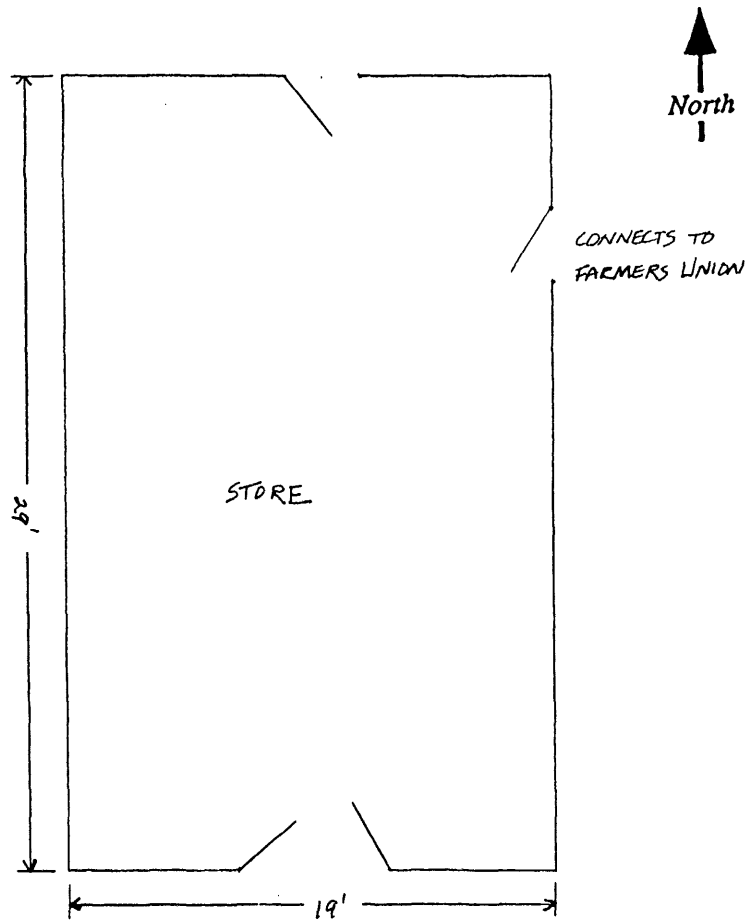


Floor plan for the Farmers Union Exchange.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 7

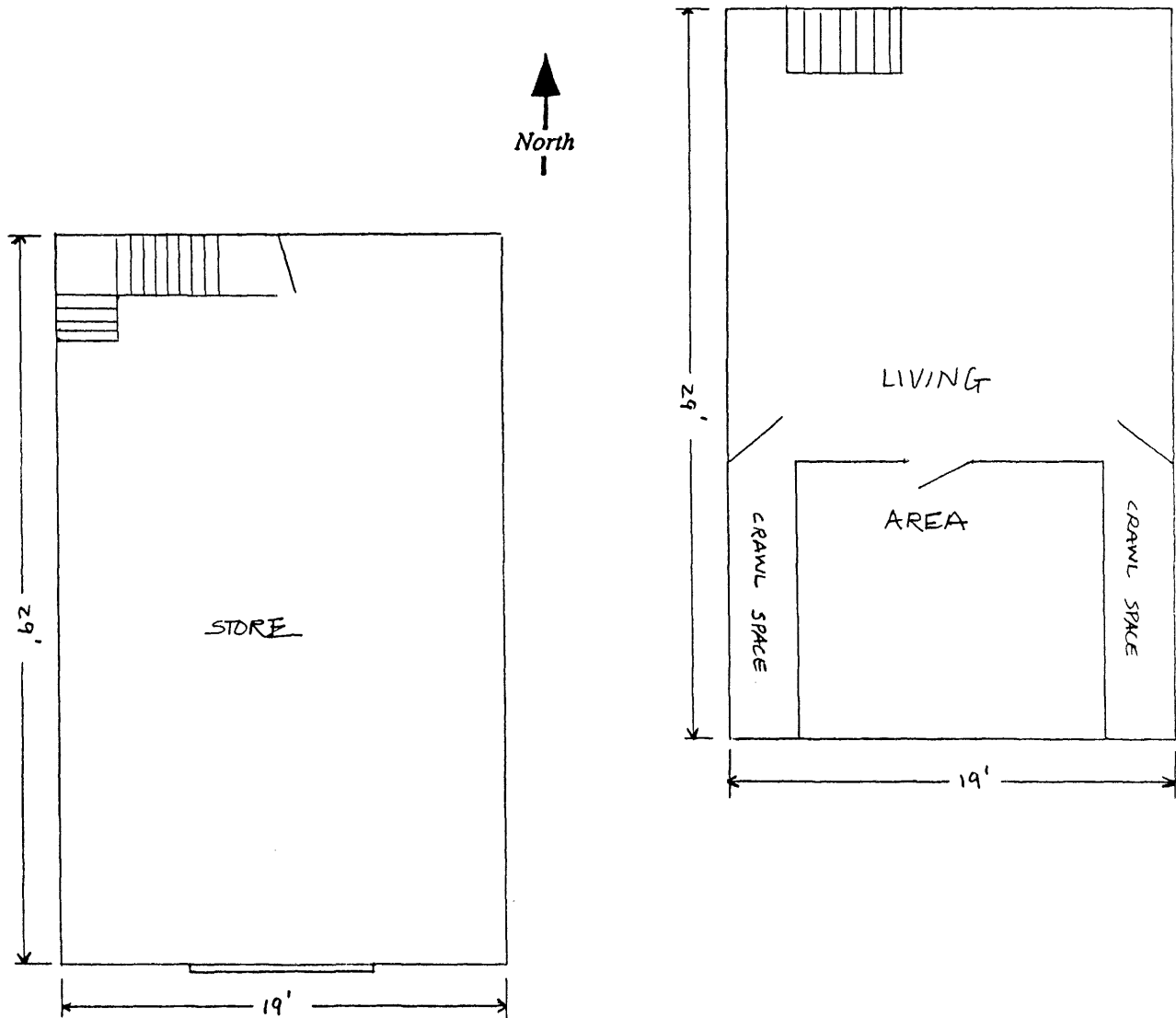


Floor plan for the White Store.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 8



Floor plans for the Bergh Store.
(1st floor on left, 2nd floor on right)

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 8 Page 9

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Swedesburg Historic Commercial District is locally significant under Criterion A as it illustrates the commercial development necessary to sustain the Swedish settlement, and under Criterion C as it represents typical small town commercial design. The period of significance for the district is from 1875 (construction date of the earliest extant building) to c.1945 (the closing date for the Swedish Heritage context). The district meets the integrity requirements established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for commercial building as well as for a historic district. It includes four buildings, three of which are considered to be contributing structures, the *stuga* is considered to be non-contributing due to loss of integrity.

Commercial development in Swedesburg has always been focused on the highway, with additional development to the west along Park. It appears that the first lot that Pastor Hakan Olson sold in the village was to Peter Larson for business purposes. The deed to the property had an important restriction,

This conveyance is to remain in full force and in good faith so long as the said Larson or his successor or assigns or any persons or person through his or their permission do not sell intoxicating liquors of any sort whatever, but if said condition is violated then this conveyance is to be void and null.

Given under our hands this 29th of Sept., A.D. 1868.

Hakan Olson
Prunella Olson

That pretty much set the tone for the development of this conservative Swedish community.

It has not been determined exactly when the first store was built in Swedesburg. Otto Abrahamson had a store across from the church (southwest corner of the intersection) at an early date, and in 1870 a blacksmith shop was established diagonally across the street. The second lot sold in the village was to the Prairie Hall Association, but it is not known exactly when the association built the two story building which housed a restaurant and barber shop on the first floor and the I.O.O.F. Lodge on the second. This was located across from the public square on the northwest corner of Park and Academy.

The first firm date for business construction is for the Bergh Hardware Store that was constructed in 1875. The Bergh family lived in the two small rooms above the store. It was located on its present lot, but was moved to the next lot west a few years later. Sam White's General Store was built on the present lot in 1881, and originally faced south toward Park Street. As the White Store grew and prospered, more space was needed and the Bergh building became part of the White Store. Two doctors, Dr. Porter and Dr. Scheidler, had an office on Park, and there were other businesses in the small community during these years, a shoemaker, wood carver, furniture store/undertaker, etc., but nothing remains of their establishments. In 1902 the building housing the I.O.O.F. Lodge burned and they built a new two story building at the northwest corner of Park and the highway (the present site of the museum parking lot). The lodge occupied the second

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 8 Page 10

floor, and the Anderson & Nelson General Store (the direct descent of Sam White's General Store) occupied the first. The White building was moved to a location immediately north of the new building, facing east. At some point during this development the Bergh building ceased to be used as a store and became a "huckster" barn, that is, it housed the wagon used to travel the area with various supplies and merchandise.

Not long after the turn of the century, Joe Lindeen closed what had originally been Abrahamson's store across from the church, and a new brick building was constructed on that lot in 1914 to house a bank. (Around 1962 this became the Swedesburg Post Office.) The blacksmith shop diagonally across the intersection had evolved first into a wagonworks, and later into an auto garage.

In 1928 the Anderson and Nelson Store (building and all) was moved two miles north to the town of Olds. This left Swedesburg without a store for the first in time in its history. When the Lutheran Church had burned the year before, the decision was quickly made to rebuild. The community faced the loss of its general store with the same attitude, and the Farmers Union Exchange was formed, to build and operate a new store. When this single story frame building was completed in 1928, it took advantage of the two small commercial buildings on the lot (Bergh and White) and moved them to the area immediately behind (west) of the new building. The White Store was attached by a corridor and two steps, allowing it to be used as another sales room. The Bergh building was not attached, but was placed in a convenient location for storage purposes.

The Farmers Union Exchange offered the basic merchandise and supplies required by the citizens of Swedesburg and the neighboring farms, plus it provided a cream station for local milk producers. Although it no longer housed the I.O.O.F. lodge hall, the store continued to serve as a social center, with customers gathering to exchange news on a regular basis. With the addition of the new store, Swedesburg could boast of all the amenities people might want on a daily basis: a church, a garage, a bank, and a general store. When the bank closed, the post office moved into the building and the other businesses continued in operation...the store until 1976, and the garage until 1998.

The three contributing buildings in this district illustrate the very simple type of commercial architecture found in many small communities. Each of the buildings is of wood construction, rectangular in shape, with a gable roof, and each features the entrance on the gable end. The only difference between the three is in size. The Bergh and White buildings are both small (19' x 29"), but the Bergh building is one and one-half stories with living space above. Although the Farmers Union Exchange is much larger than the others, it is only a single story and it features a "boomtown" front, giving it a more substantial appearance. None of these buildings fits neatly into a stylistic category or high style commercial type. Instead, these represent "Victorian Vernacular" as identified by Rifkind. The three illustrations included in Rifkind's book (p. 211) are all gable roof buildings of wood construction with gable entry, varying in size from one to two story, and one example has a "boomtown" front. Wood buildings like this were often the first commercial buildings in a town, being replaced by larger brick structures as the community grew. In small towns like Swedesburg (or Troy in Davis County or Kirksville in Wapello County) the early building type continued to be the norm. The Farmers Union Exchange shows the continued popular use as late as 1928.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 8 Page 11

The Swedesburg Historic Commercial District is a fine collection of vernacular commercial buildings which retains a high degree of integrity. The continued use and preservation of these buildings is to be encouraged.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number 9 & 10 Page 12

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Anderson, Carl A. "The Saga of Swedesburg," Annals of Iowa, Vol XXXV, No 3, Winter 1960, pp 187-205.

Brooks and Whiting. Atlas, Henry County, Iowa 1895. St. Louis: W.E. Stephens & Co., 1895.

Combination Atlas Map of Henry County, Iowa. Geneva, IL: Thompson & Everts, 1870.

Harper, Maorie (Ed.) History of Henry County, Iowa, Volume I. Henry County Bicentennial Commission. Dallas, TX: National Sharegraphics Inc., 1982.

Hult, Inez. Unpublished manuscript.

Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987.

Ogle, George A. Standard Atlas of Henry County, Iowa Including a Plat Book. Chicago: George A. Ogle Atlas Co., 1917.

Rifkind, Carole. A Field Guide to American Architecture. New York: New American Library, 1980.

GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 1, Lot 4, Original Town of Swedesburg. (Note: the lot number on the 1917 plat map does not agree with this legal description because the lots were renumbered sometime after 1917.)

Boundary Justification

This is the area historically associated with these commercial resources.

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

Swedesburg Historic Commercial
District
Henry County, Iowa

Section number Photos Page 13

These photographs were all taken for the Henry County Historic Preservation Commission. The first six were taken by Dennis Hult in December 1998 and the seventh was taken by Herbert Hult in January 1997. The negatives are on file in the State Historical Society of Iowa, Community Programs Bureau, Des Moines, IA.

1. Farmers Union Exchange, façade and north elevation looking SW.
2. Farmers Union Exchange, White Store, Bergh Store (right to left) looking NW.
3. Bergh Store, White Store (facades), and side elevation of Farmers Union Exchange looking NE.
4. White Store, façade looking NNW.
5. Bergh Store, façade looking NNE.
6. Rear elevations of Bergh & White stores, north elevation of Farmers Union Exchange, looking SE.
7. *Stuga*, façade looking SW.