

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received NOV 7 1983  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Clarksville High School ✓

and/or common Old Clarksville High School

2. Location

street & number Greenwood Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Clarksville N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Montgomery code 125

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Greenwood Associates

street & number P. O. Box 328

city, town Clarksville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37040

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse

street & number Madison Street

city, town Clarksville state Tennessee 37040

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Montgomery County Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission, 701 Broadway

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37203

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Clarksville High School is a two-story masonry building located on Greenwood Avenue in Clarksville, Tennessee. Constructed in 1907 and rebuilt in 1917, the Clarksville High School is a fine example of early 20th century vernacular architecture. When it was originally constructed the building was designed in the Victorian Romanesque style with rounded arch fenestration and a prominent bell tower. A fire in 1916 damaged this structure and it was rebuilt along with an addition in a simpler late Victorian vernacular style. The large arched entryways on the original building remain and are the most prominent features on the high school complex. The buildings served as Clarksville's high school for better than sixty years and few alterations have occurred since 1917. The nominated property includes annexes added to the main building in 1916 and 1935 as well as a separate shop building constructed in 1937. The complex retains a high level of architectural integrity.

The high school complex is located on a large six-acre lot near the corner of Greenwood Avenue and Madison Street near the downtown area. The complex is composed of two large adjoining two-story buildings set back from the street. At the rear is an attached one-story gymnasium and a detached one-story industrial arts building. All buildings in the complex are of masonry, concrete and steel construction. Concrete walkways lead to the front of the building while an asphalt driveway runs from Tyler Street to a parking lot at the rear of the complex. The buildings rest on a large lot which is surrounded by late 19th and early 20th century residential structures.

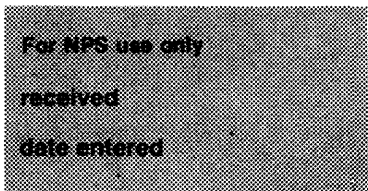
The original building was constructed in 1907 and designed by J. W. Gaddis, an architect from Vincennes, Indiana. Gaddis specialized in public buildings and he constructed other high schools in Tennessee and surrounding states. The building was initially designed to reflect the late Victorian Romanesque style with large rounded doors on the first floor and arched windows on the second story. The main feature of the building was a rectangular bell tower with open rounded arching. The roofline also displayed gable dormer windows and a hipped roof. The fire of 1916 destroyed the tower and the upper half story. A new flat roof with a brick and concrete stepped parapet was added in its place. The second-story windows were also altered to match those below. With these exceptions the facade was left in its original condition.

The east elevation of the original building faces Greenwood Avenue and is five bays wide with the central and end bays projecting from the facade. The basement level is faced with rusticated limestone and displays rectangular one-over-one sash windows and stone lintels. Each bay of the first and second floors contains one-over-one sash windows with stone sills and lintels. The prominent feature of this elevation is a rounded arch central entrance on the first floor. This arch is composed of rusticated limestone with radiating voussoirs and an acanthus leaf keystone. The arch is supported by two Tuscan columns with floriated Norman capitals. At the top of the arch is a stone lintel supporting small pedestal and ball finials.

The limestone arch encloses a double doorway flanked by sidelights. The doors are of wood and glass with a transom bar and tri-part transom. Above the arch the central bay also features a stone panel with a datestone inscribed "Clarksville High School 1906."

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Above this is a smaller elliptical datestone inscribed "1917." At the roofline is a continuous sheet metal cornice below the parapet. The parapet is stepped with pedimented design. On the end bays within the pediment field are small blind arches with stone keystones and shoulders. On the central bay the parapet is elliptical with stone capping.

The Tyler Street elevation is similar in design to that of the major facade facing Greenwood Avenue. The central bay configuration differs somewhat with both windows and a double doorway enclosed by the limestone surround. The stone surround is also highly decorative with Tuscan columns and Norman capitals resting on a rusticated base. A steel lintel supports the rectangular arch which features flaired rusticated stone and a ball and pedestal decoration above the surround.

During 1916 an annex to the existing high school was constructed directly adjacent to the older building. This building is also a two-story masonry structure and it was built to complement the original building. The annex is five bays wide with each bay containing three to four one-over-one sash windows. The basement level also features one-over-one sash windows, and stone sill separates this level from the first floor. Between the first and second floors are spandrels with rectangular soldier coursing and a corbelled brick belt course. At the roofline is a continuous sheet metal cornice above which is a stepped brick and stone parapet. The prominent feature of the annex is the extended central bay and first floor entrance. The entrance features a double doorway with a transom bar and six-light transom.

Connecting the original building and the annex is a two-story hallway. This connector is three bays wide with the first floor featuring an arcaded loggia with three open rounded arches. At the base of the arches and at the shoulders is decorative stone banding. Flanking the arches are two open rectangular windows with stone sills. Three large double doors open from the loggia into the first floor hallway. These double doors feature fanlight transoms with brick relief arching. The second story has one-over-one sash windows with corbelled brick molding over the window heads. At the roofline is a continuous sheet metal cornice and the central bay displays a triangular stone pediment.

At the west (rear) elevation of the building several additions adjoin the original structures. These consist of a two-story wing (1935), gymnasium (1935), and one-story shop building (1937). Both the two-story wing and gymnasium are interconnected with the main buildings and are of similar brick construction. The gymnasium has industrial casement windows and the large interior span is supported by a steel truss system. The shop building is a rectangular one-story brick building located at the southwest corner of the complex and is separate from the rest of the buildings. The shop has industrial type casement windows, brick soldier coursing and an interior of steel and concrete construction.

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The interior of both major buildings were remodeled during past decades but many of the original features remain. The school's hardwood floors are still intact as are the plaster walls. A dropped ceiling was added but the original plaster ceiling is intact above this addition. Most of the woodwork is intact and the doors feature transom bars and glass transoms with movable frames. The interior space consists of many classrooms on each floor interconnected by wide halls. The annex contains the school's auditorium which has a proscenium stage and Doric pilasters. The interior of the building has suffered some deterioration due to its vacancy over the past years but most of this damage is cosmetic rather than structural.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1907, 1916, 1917      **Builder/Architect** John W. Gaddis

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Located on Greenwood Avenue in Clarksville, Tennessee, the Clarksville High School is an architecturally and historically significant property of the early 20th century. The building has been nominated under criteria A and C because of its role in Clarksville history and its architectural features. The high school complex was Clarksville's major city school for over sixty years and it remains as one of the largest assemblages of buildings in the city. The complex is also architecturally significant as it reflects the building designs and techniques of the early 20th century. Although vacant, the high school complex is presently being examined for development by local investors.

In the late 19th century Clarksville citizens discussed the need for providing public education for the community. To meet this need Howell School, the city's first high school, was established in 1873 and served as the public school for several decades. By the early 1900s Howell School was becoming overcrowded and the elementary and high school grades required separation. City officials agreed that a new public high school building was necessary and on September 26, 1906, the Mayor and Aldermen adopted a resolution calling for the construction of a new high school. The city advertised the sale of high school bonds to finance the project and a lot near the corner of Madison Street and Greenwood Avenue was purchased for the site of the new building.

Selected as the building's architect was John W. Gaddis of Vincennes, Indiana. Gaddis was a noted architect who specialized in office buildings, courthouses, and especially schools. In addition to the Clarksville High School, Gaddis would also design the high school in Brownsville, Tennessee. Gaddis's design for the building incorporated elements of the Victorian Romanesque style in the arched entrances, second-story windows and bell tower. The stonework on the building was particularly noteworthy with rusticated limestone facing on the basement level and ashlar stone on the window hoods and sills. The most prominent features of the building were the elaborate limestone surrounds on the entrances which displayed short Tuscan columns with Norman capitals. The interior of the two-story brick building consisted of numerous classrooms, an auditorium and administrative offices.

Work was finally completed on the building by November 15, 1907, at a cost of \$50,000. Upon completion the school was hailed as one of the handsomest and modern of its day. The school was formally opened on November 22 and the high school students were moved from the Howell School to the new building. The school was opened with S. L. Smith principal, assisted by four teachers with an enrollment of 93. The high school not only met the needs of attendance in the city but in 1910 the city and county worked out an agreement to allow county students to attend the school as well. By 1914, the high school was nearing its capacity of 400 and it became apparent that an annex to the original building was needed. The firm of John Gaddis was again retained and in the summer of 1916 construction began on a new two-story brick building to interconnect with the original building.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 6.4 acres

Quadrangle name Clarksville, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	4	6	8	7	6	0	4	0	4	2	0	6	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

B 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phil Thomason

organization Thomason and Associates

date August 15, 1983

street & number 1700 Hayes Street

telephone 615-320-5732

city or town Nashville

state Tennessee

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Herbert L. Hayden*

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 10/31/83

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

*for Melvyn Byers*  
Keeper of the National Register

date 12/8/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The new annex was constructed adjacent to the original building's north facade and an enclosed two-story connector joined the two buildings. The annex's design reflected the more functional styles of the period with decoration limited to soldier coursing and inset stone and brick designs. The annex complemented the original building through its similar fenestration, scale and materials. The interior of the building provided much needed classroom space on the first and second floors. The first floor also featured an auditorium capable of seating 1,100 people. On the basement level a gymnasium for basketball and other sports was added and a forty-foot swimming pool was also installed. Altogether the facilities of the new annex made the Clarksville High School one of the best equipped in the state.

The celebration of the community over the completion of the annex was short lived, however. On the night of November 19, 1916, fire broke out in the upper floor of the original high school building and it quickly spread throughout the interior. Firemen decided the old building was beyond help and devoted their energies to saving the just completed annex. These efforts were successful and the new annex building was unharmed. The interior of the original building was gutted but the walls of the building remained standing. Insurance on the building was sufficient to rebuild the structure and again John Gaddis was called upon to redesign the building. The bell tower was removed and a new roofline with a stepped parapet and cornice to match the annex was added. A completely new interior with classrooms and administrative offices was also completed within the walls of the original building. The fenestration, limestone surrounds and datestone were all retained from the original structure.

Upon completion of repairs the Clarksville High School had a capacity of 700 students. This proved adequate for many years but as the population of Clarksville increased the need for additional space became apparent. In 1935, the school was again becoming overcrowded and a new \$35,000 wing was added on the west side of the building. This wing contained a new library, four new classrooms and a much larger gymnasium. Further construction occurred in 1937 when a one-story brick industrial and agricultural arts building was added to the complex. By 1938 the school contained 787 pupils and a faculty of 27 teachers.

For the next thirty years the Clarksville High School continued in its role of providing education for students from both the city and Montgomery County. An integral part of the community, Clarksville High School graduated thousands of students during these years. By the mid-1960s, however, larger and more modern facilities were needed. Land was purchased on the edge of Clarksville and construction began on a new high school building in 1967. Students moved to the new high school on September 18, 1968 and use of the original high school complex came to an end. During the past decade the buildings have been vacant.

Clarksville High School remains one of the city's most significant structures. Few alterations have occurred to the building and it retains its architectural character of the early 20th century. The craftsmanship of the original 1907 building is still visible in the elaborate limestone carvings on the facade, and the functional vernacular appearance of the 1916 annex is also intact. Few changes have occurred to

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the interior and the buildings continue to display the integrity of their original construction. The high school complex has been a major part of Clarksville's past and its proposed adaptive reuse into apartments may once again restore the complex to a position of prominence.



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Verbal boundary description

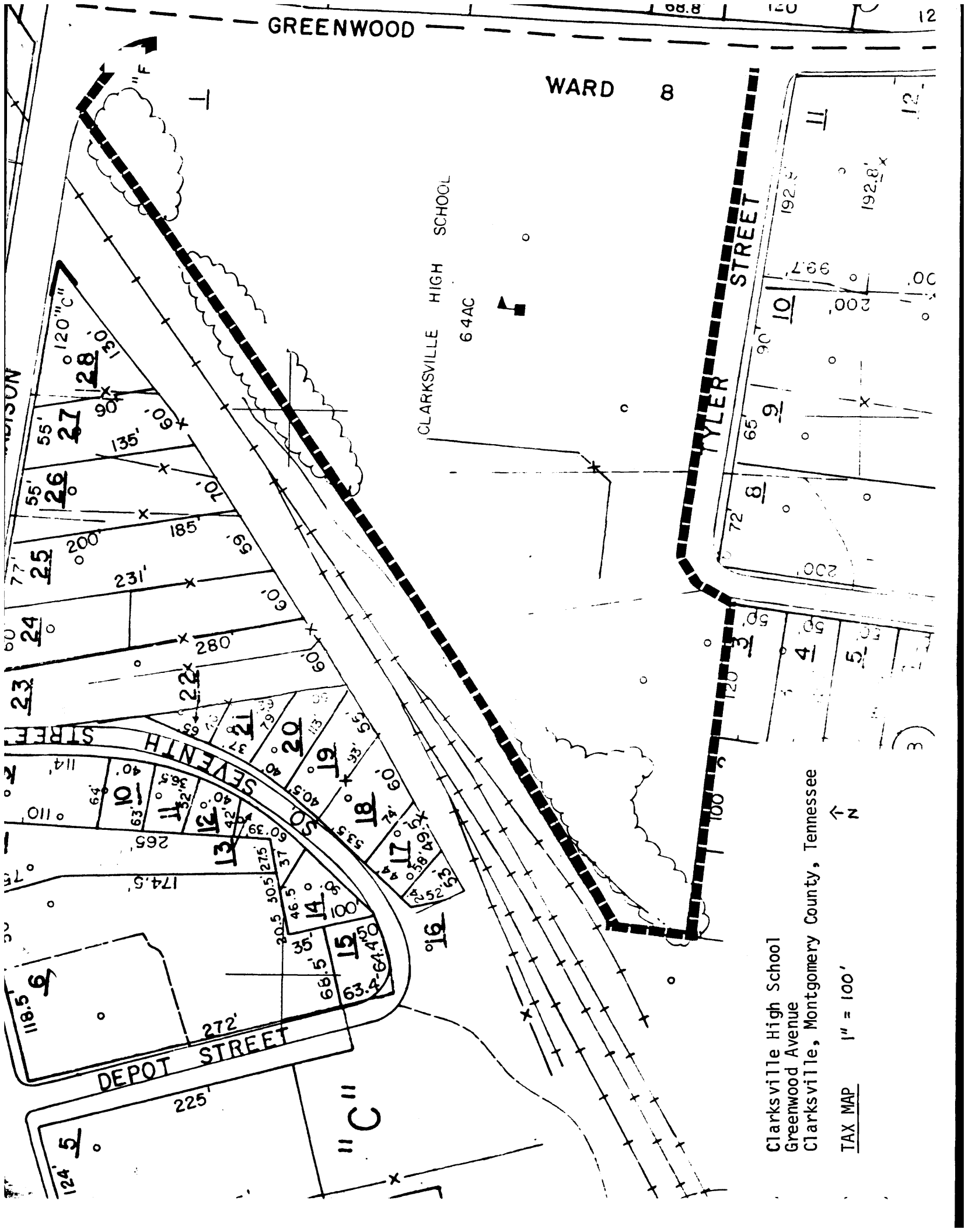
The nominated property is a triangular parcel of land bounded on the east by Greenwood Avenue, on the south by Tyler Street and adjacent property lines, and on the west/north by the Louisville and Nashville Railroad tracks. The nomination includes the buildings and grounds historically associated with the school.

GREENWOOD

WARD 8

CLARKSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL  
6.4 AC

TYLER STREET

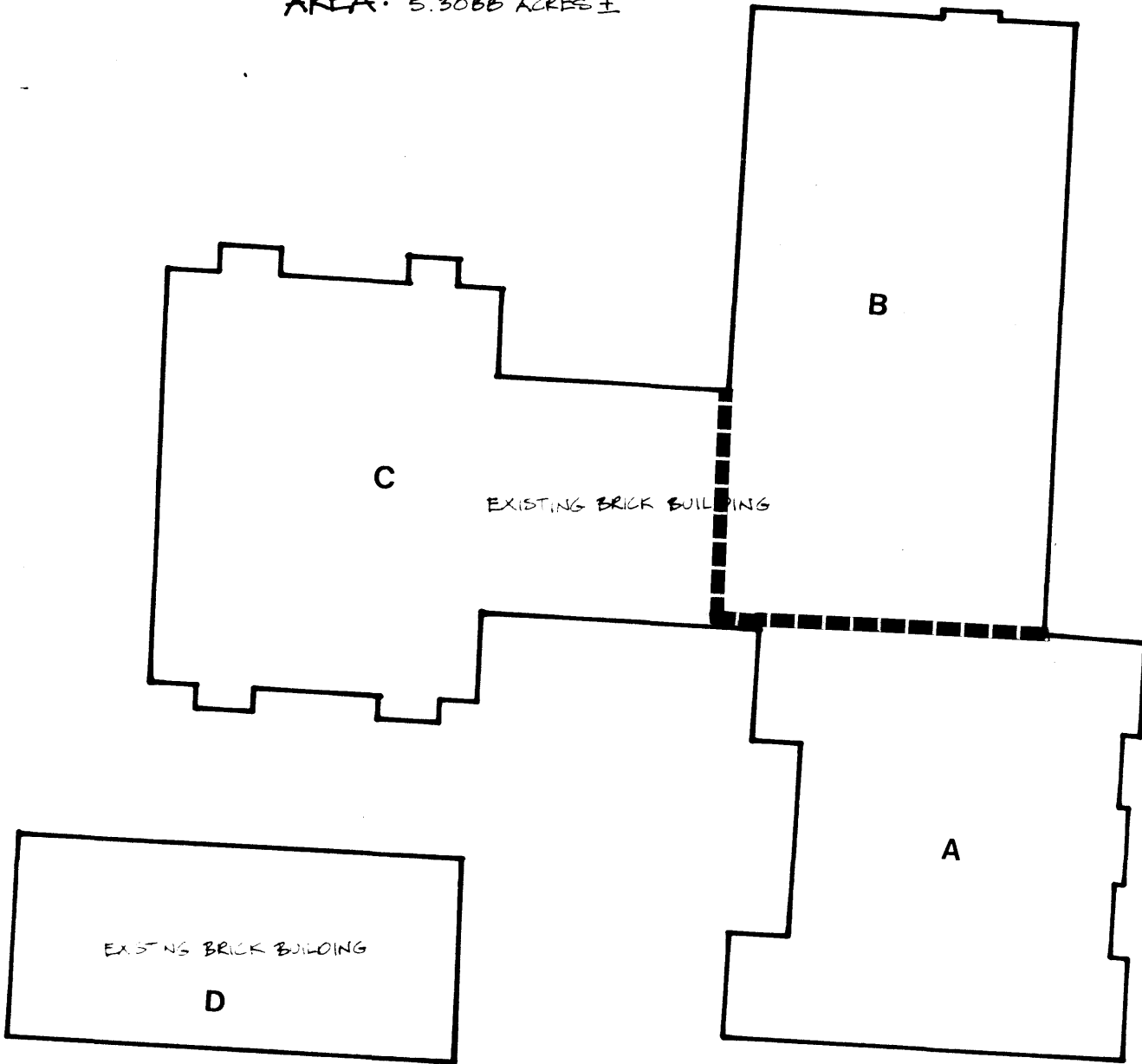


Clarksville High School  
 Greenwood Avenue  
 Clarksville, Montgomery County, Tennessee



TAX MAP 1" = 100'

AREA: 5.3066 ACRES ±



32.65'  
STREET (33' R.O.W.)

Clarksville High School  
Greenwood Avenue  
Clarksville, Montgomery County, Tennessee

Site Map

Clarksville High School Site Plan

- A. Original 1907 building.
- B. 1917 Annex.
- C. Added wing and gymnasium, 1935.
- D. One-story industrial arts building constructed 1937.

CURVE #1  
CURVE #2  
CURVE #3