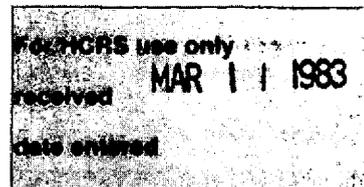


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



JUN 10 1982

1. Name

historic STOESSER BLOCK AND ANNEX

and/or common STOESSER BLOCK AND ANNEX

2. Location

331--341 Main St.

street & number 331-335, 337, 339, 341 Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Watsonville; N/A vicinity of _____ congressional district 16th

state California code 06 county Santa Cruz County code 087

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Berkeley Leasing and Realty, c/o Stewart Kett

street & number Post Office Box 428

city, town Watsonville, N/A vicinity of _____ state California 95076

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Recorder

street & number 701 Ocean Street

city, town Santa Cruz, state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Watsonville Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Watsonville City Hall, Planning Department

city, town Watsonville state California

7. Description

Condition
 excellent
 good
 fair

Check one
 deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one
 unaltered
 altered

Check one
 original site
 moved

date _____ N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Stoesser Block, situated across Main Street from Watsonville City park, consists of an original rectangular Italianate brick and concrete commercial building (1872) and annex (1926). The 54 year difference between the age of the original structure and the Annex is very evident in the differences of architectural style between the two sections. However, the Annex was built as an extension of the original Stoesser's Block, sharing a common wall and the older building's single stairway access to the second floor. There is no separate stairway access to the second floor of the Annex.

The 1st floor facades of both the original building and the Annex have been remodeled. Use of aluminum framed plate glass display windows and an aluminum awning creates an inconsistent appearance in relation to the second floor (original) facade. This is primarily the result of the remodeling by the architect William H. Weeks, who was commissioned after Otto Stoesser's death to create a "modern storefront" in 1903. The second floor of the 1872 structure retains nearly all original features, although some brackets have been removed and the brick face was stuccoed during Week's remodeling. There are 10 double-hung, arched windows with Italianate lintels, a decorative bracketed cornice and projecting parapet.

The second floor of the Annex has a facade of red brick (not stuccoed), with decorative brick pilasters and lintels. The Annex is a "modernized" interpretation of Renaissance Revival styling, with its symmetrical fenestration, posts and lintel window construction, continuous parapet and cornice.

In all respects except the common access to the second floor, the Annex is a separate building, and is architecturally and historically less distinguished than the original Stoesser Block. However, both buildings occupy the same parcel.**

The dimensions of the original section and Annex are 61 x 148 feet and 68 x 148 feet respectively for a total of 22,821 square feet. Current uses are limited to the first floor of both sections with three retail stores in the original and one in the Annex. Only the original section has been evaluated as being of National Register architectural quality by Professor Kenneth Cardwell, Dean of Architecture at U.S. Berkeley (Watsonville Historical Building Survey, 1976.)

**The parcel has never been divided since Otto Stoesser's time.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 1872/CA 1926 **Builder/Architect** James Waters (1872 portion)

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Stoesser's Block (1872) and the Annex (1926) are significant as; (1) the only remaining monuments to Otto Stoesser, pioneer merchant, prominent citizen and first millionaire in Watsonville; (2) fine examples of early Italianate and Second Renaissance Revival architecture (respectively); and (3) for their association with prominent local builder James Waters and famous local architect William H. Weeks. As a whole, the two buildings are also significant in that (4) they represent two distinct periods in Watsonville's history - its early development as a center of commerce for the Pajaro Valley in the 1870's, and its expansion as a commercial center in Santa Cruz County in the 1920's.

(1) Otto Stoesser (1825-1902) was a German immigrant who established a wood-frame merchantile store on the site of the present Stoesser's Block in 1853, which was the early foundation of one of Watsonville's wealthiest and most prominent families. The old store was demolished and replaced with the present Stoesser's Block in 1872. This "new" store utilized the entire first floor of the Block, which had several large offices on the second floor. These included the early headquarters of the Odd Fellows, various doctors, dentists and lawyers, and the Watsonville office of architect William H. Weeks (from 1897 to 1905). Stoesser was also a gentleman farmer, one of the charter stockholders and founders of the Pajaro Valley Bank, and City Treasurer from Watsonville's incorporation (in 1868) until 1898, when he retired after running unopposed in every election. When Stoesser died in 1902, he was found to have amassed the greatest fortune in the history of the Pajaro Valley. The Annex was built in 1926 by Otto Stoesser's heirs as an extension of both the (ground floor) merchantile store and the (top floor) professional offices.

(2) The architecture of the original Stoesser's Block is one of the best examples of commercial Italianate styles in Santa Cruz County (see Section 7 and photos). This is remarkable in that it was designed and built by James Waters, a carpenter/builder and horticulturalist with no formal training in architecture. The Annex is Renaissance Revival styling and may have been designed

by William H. Weeks. That Weeks remodeled both the store front facade and upstairs offices of the original Stoesser's Block in 1903 is documented, as is the fact that he himself had branch offices in it, until 1905 when he built his own new office building at 444 Main Street (source: Betty Lewis' unpublished draft of her Biography of William H. Weeks). In any event similarities between Weeks' "modern storefront" of the original Stoesser's Block and the storefront of the Annex (in addition to its delicate blend of architectural styles) are reminiscent of Weeks' later work. In view of Weeks' prominence, and his long association with both the Stoesser family and the Stoesser's Block itself, he certainly would seem to have been the logical choice as architect for the Annex.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Stoesser Family History File, Genealogy Library, Pajaro Valley Historical Association. Betty Lewis, (1977).
 "Parade of the Past". Margaret Koch, (1973)
 Watsonville's Historic Bldg. Survey & parcel index file, Betty Lewis, (5-81) personal communication.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.44 acre
 Quadrangle name Watsonville Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	1 0	6 1 0 8 7 0	4 0 8 5 3 6 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Assessor's Parcel 17-111-05. Property is located at midblock between Main Street and Stoesser's Alley, between Second Street and West Beach Street. Property occupies its historic parcel, roughly 130' x 148' in size, as shown on attached map.

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

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger D. Owen, Principal
 organization Harp Associates date January 12, 1982
 street & number Post Office Box 677 telephone (408) 426-4855
 city or town Soquel state California 95073

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *K. M. Ell*
 title State Historic Preservation Officer date 3/1/83

For HCRS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.
 Entered in the National Register date 4/7/83
 Keeper of the National Register
 Attest: _____ date _____
 Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE 2

(3) James Waters (1828-1911) came to Santa Cruz after brief sojourns as a carpenter in San Francisco and a miner in the gold fields (1849-1850). In 1851 he formed a partnership with Thomas Beck (a future brother-in-law), and together they built (and rebuilt) many prominent buildings and homes in Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Salinas. In Santa Cruz, these include rebuilding the Catholic Church (after the 1857 earthquake), the first official Santa Cruz County Courthouse (1866), and in Watsonville, the Blackburn House; Fire Engine House; Hildreth Block, the first Saint Patrick's Church, and the elaborate homes of Patrick Kelly and James Rodgers in addition to the Stoesser's Block. Waters and J.A. Blackburn, (another brother-in-law) founded the first commercial apple orchard in the Pajaro Valley in 1859 (on Salsipuedes Creek); and founded the Pajaro Valley Nursery in 1868. Waters' last building project was the Monterey County Courthouse in Salinas. He became one of the founders of the Bank of Watsonville in 1874, and was a County Supervisor for two years afterwards.

(4) William H. Weeks (1864-1936) was the most prolific and prominent architect ever to reside in Watsonville. He designed over 1200 schools, 50 churches, 50 banks, and at one time, all of the Carnegie Libraries in Central California. He designed many fine homes, churches, hotels, and schools in both Santa Cruz (Palomar Hotel, Branciforte Elementary School, Dominican Hospital, Santa Cruz High School) and Watsonville (Saint Patrick's Catholic Church, Tuttle Mansion, Madison House). Weeks began his career in Watsonville (in 1892), and by 1920 had offices in Watsonville, San Jose, Palo Alto, Oakland and San Francisco. He was honored in the May 1915 issue of the Architect and Engineer for the many award - winning designs throughout the United States, and was eulogized in the 1937 edition of the Encyclopedia of American Biography.

(5) The original Stoesser's Block was built toward the end of the pioneer era, when Watsonville was in its early heyday as a growing center of commerce, agriculture and merchantilism. In the late 1800's the area was still largely agricultural, but the timber industry was also gaining in importance as vast areas of the foothills behind the city were logged through the turn of the century. Following the decline of the timber industry, Watsonville itself began a period of slow decline which was marked by delining population until 1919-1920. During the early 1920's, Watsonville's population increased dramatically with the construction of many packing plants and revitalized agriculture, and the general economic "upswing" of the "Roaring 20's". The construction of the Annex appears to reflect the population increase and the increasing wealth of the area, as this addition housed an enlargement of Stoesser's merchantile store as well as additional offices for doctors and lawyers and an expanded public library, which were needed presumably, to serve the City's burgeoning population. Thus, both buildings represent important periods in the commercial development of Watsonville.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

(State use only)
 UTM 000215 0 NR 3 SHL
 Lat _____ Lon _____ Era _____ Sig _____
 Adm _____ T2 _____ T3 _____ Cat _____ HABS _____ HAER _____ Fed _____
 UTM 10/610870/4085380

IDENTIFICATION

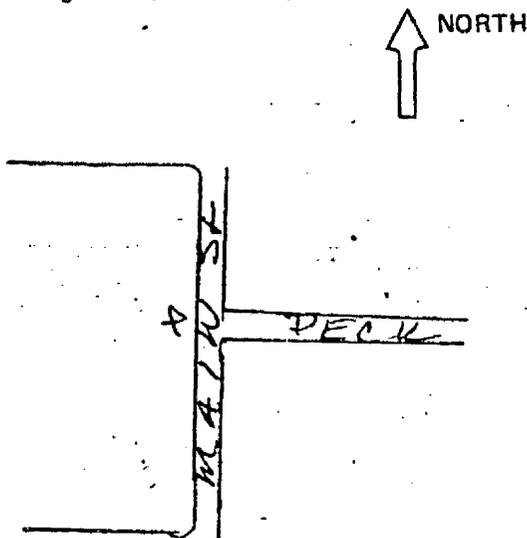
1. Common name: _____ 44-5076-60
2. Historic name, if known: Otto Stoesser Block
3. Street or rural address 335 Main Street
- City: Watsonville ZIP: 95076 County: Santa Cruz
4. Present owner, if known: Fred Hudson, Trustee Address: P.O. Box 1019
- City: Watsonville ZIP: 95076 Ownership is: Public Private
5. Present Use: Commercial Retail Original Use: Comm. Retail, Residence
- Other past uses: none known

DESCRIPTION

6. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

Two story stucco building with entry at side. Three shops in first story. Wooden cornice with heavy dentils and bracketing above first story partially removed. Second story with segmental arched double hung windows with hood trim. Parapet above with alternating bracket and console supports. Central arched parapet projection.

7. Locational sketch map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):



8. Approximate property size:

Lot size (in feet) Frontage 130
 Depth 145
 or approx. acreage _____

9. Condition: (check one)

- a. Excellent b. Good c. Fair
 d. Deteriorated e. No longer in existence

10. Is the feature a. Altered? b. Unaltered?

11. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary)

- a. Open land b. Scattered buildings
 c. Densely built-up d. Residential
 e. Commercial f. Industrial
 g. Other

12. Threats to site:

- a. None known b. Private development
 c. Zoning d. Public Works project
 e. Vandalism f. Other

13. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s): 7/76

NOTE: The following (Items 14-19) are for structures only.

14. Primary exterior building material: a. Stone b. Brick c. Stucco d. Adobe e. Wood
f. Other
15. Is the structure: a. On its original site? b. Moved? c. Unknown?
16. Year of initial construction 1872 This date is: a. Factual b. Estimated
17. Architect (if known): James Water, First story remodeled by W. Weeks, 1903
18. Builder (if known): _____
19. Related features: a. Barn b. Carriage house c. Outhouse d. Shed(s) e. Formal garden(s)
f. Windmill g. Watertower/tankhouse h. Other i. None

SIGNIFICANCE

20. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site when known):

The best preserved commercial facade in Watsonville of the Italianate mode. The original lower story sensitively remodeled by William Weeks has suffered some detractive changes, however the total design remains an excellent example of 19th century commercial architecture. Eligible for nomination to the National Register.

21. Main theme of the historic resource: (Check only one): a. Architecture b. Arts & Leisure
c. Economic/Industrial d. Exploration/Settlement e. Government f. Military
g. Religion h. Social/Education

22. Sources: List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews, and their dates:

Professor Kenneth Cardwell, field survey, 1976
Betty Lewis, local historian, 7/76

23. Date form prepared: 7/23/76 By (name): V. Thompson & E. Rosevall
Address: 250 Main Street City Watsonville ZIP: 95076
Phone: 722-3551 Organization: Watsonville City Planning Department

(State Use Only)

