

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" on the appropriate line 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 THE MAINE  
other names/site number THE MAINE FLATS, THE MAINE APARTMENTS

2. Location

street & number 1635 6th Avenue N/A not for publication  
city or town Des Moines N/A vicinity  
state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50314

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 Chertini DSHPO 9-12-96  
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)

Elson B. Beall  
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action  
10-25-96

Entered in the National Register

The Maine  
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many lines as apply)

Category of Property  
(Check only one line)

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
	2	0
		sites
		structures
		objects
	2	0
		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

Towards a Greater Des Moines

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

foundation Tile  
walls Brick  
roof Asphalt  
other Glass  
Stone

Narrative Description

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

The Maine  
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all the lines 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.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
TRANSPORTATION  
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1913

**Significant Dates**

1913

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** - (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

**9. Major Bibliography 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):**
- previous determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
  - previously listed in the National Register
  - previously determined eligible by the National Record
  - designated a National Historic Landmark
  - recorded by American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
  - recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository \_\_\_\_\_

The Maine  
Name of Property

Polk County, Iowa  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 15 | 447 | 915 | 4606 | 380 |

Zone Easting Northing

2 |     |     |     |     |     |

Zone Easting Northing

3 |     |     |     |     |     |

Zone Easting Northing

4 |     |     |     |     |     |

**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 William C. Page, Public Historian

organization River Bend Neighborhood Association date March 31, 1995

street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue telephone 515-243-5740; FAX 515-243-7285

city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50313

**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 Sixth Avenue Apts. Investors., L. P.

street & number 1251 University Avenue, Suite E telephone 515-244-8308

city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50314

**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

Section number 7 Page 1

CFN-259-1116

The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This is a 3-story, apartment building of wood frame construction clad with brick veneer. Built in 1913, it features a compound "H" shaped footprint arranged to accommodate 18 residential units. Architectural embellishments include a series of ribbon windows, bands of stone trimwork and stone lintels and decorative stone trimming. A 2-story, contemporary automobile garage is situated at the rear of the property. It is clad with brick veneer. The upper floor may originally have served as an apartment for the building superintendent.

### APARTMENT BUILDING

Each of the building's three principal floors contains approximately 6,500 square feet. Each floor contains six apartments, the building's original floor plan.

The building rests on brick and concrete footings. Although there is a space beneath the first floor, there is no basement as such. The facade of the building is clad with mottled orange-red colored brick above the first floor window sills and a dark red colored brick below them. The mortar employed on the facade is pinkish in color and blends with that of the brick. Natural-faced and polished ashlar stone trimwork decorates the facade, south, and north elevations. This includes a belt course, which also serves as window sills on the first floor, as well as a belt course, which also serves as window lintels on the second and third floors, although here the belts wrap only partially surrounds the south and north elevations. A cast stone coping is situated above the third floor. Another cast stone belt course is situated above the attic floor. This attic floor also features brickworked quoins on the southwest and northwest corners. These quoins feature a yellow colored brick. The south, north, and rear elevations feature brick in a pinkish color, with mortar colored to match.

Fenestration consists mostly of multi-paned, double hung sash windows. On the facade, the fenestration features 4/4 sash, while on the side and rear elevations, most sash are 3/3 in configuration. The attic story contains 4-paned windows.

The facade features two entrances, each located in one of the ells formed by the "H" shape of the building's footprint. Between these two ells, building's facade features on each of its floors a series of ribbon windows. These windows feature double hung 1/1 sash. These windows provide light to the solarium (or sunrooms) for the front apartments. (See Figure 7-7.)

On the interior, the front stairwells feature terrazzo floors, now covered with carpeting.

Overall the apartment building is in good condition.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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CFN-259-1116

The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

**AUTOMOBILE GARAGE**

An automobile garage stands at the rear of the apartment building. This is a 2 story building constructed of wood frame structural members and clad with brick veneer on the exterior. It measures approximately 32' x 32'.

The automobile garage is covered with a flat roof of composition materials. The exterior walls feature an orange colored brick with smooth finish. A rough-faced, red-colored brick is employed as trim, including quoins on the southwest and northwest corners, segmental arches above the doors and windows, window sills, and a bulkhead under the windows on the first floor. Fenestration features 1/1 double hung sash. The wooden garage door appears to be original. It features a paneled configuration with "x" braces.

On the interior, the first floor features a concrete floor with unfinished walls. The second floor, which was designed as a dwelling unit, features hardwood flooring and plastered walls.

The automobile garage may have constructed in 1913 at the same time as The Maine itself. It is also possible that it is the 2-story building illustrated in the 1901 Sanborn fire insurance map standing on the site. The automobile garage in the past has sometimes been used as two apartment units. The automobile garage is in good condition.

**SITE**

This building is situated on Lot 9 in Block 3 of Polk County Homestead & Trust Company's Addition to the City of Des Moines. This lot measures 100' x 295'.

The immediate site of this property is generally level in topography. About two blocks to the north, 6th Avenue slopes steeply downward into the Des Moines River valley. About five blocks south, 6th Avenue slopes into the floodplain of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, where downtown Des Moines is located.

The visual impression of 6th Avenue all along this course is that of a densely built area. Although many single-family dwellings occupied this portion of 6th Avenue in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, only a few remain. Most city lots have been redeveloped for commercial or multi-family purposes. As a four-lane artery into downtown Des Moines from the north, 6th Avenue carries heavy traffic. Land use to the west and to the east of the site remains residential, most of which is in single-family dwellings.

The Des Moines City Assessor's Office describes this site as a "blighted area." The federal Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) has designated this neighborhood as "slum blight."

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

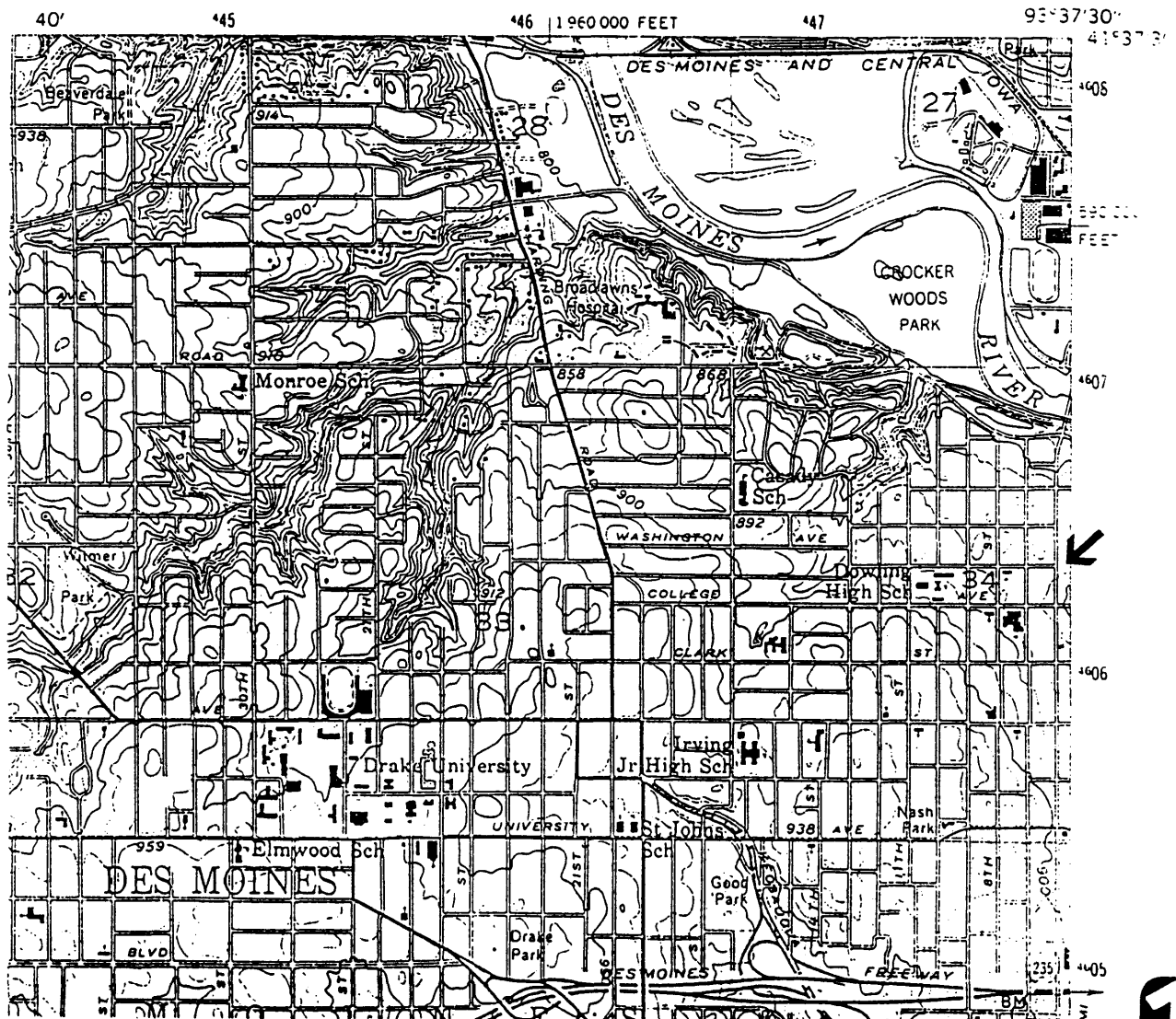
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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## SITE MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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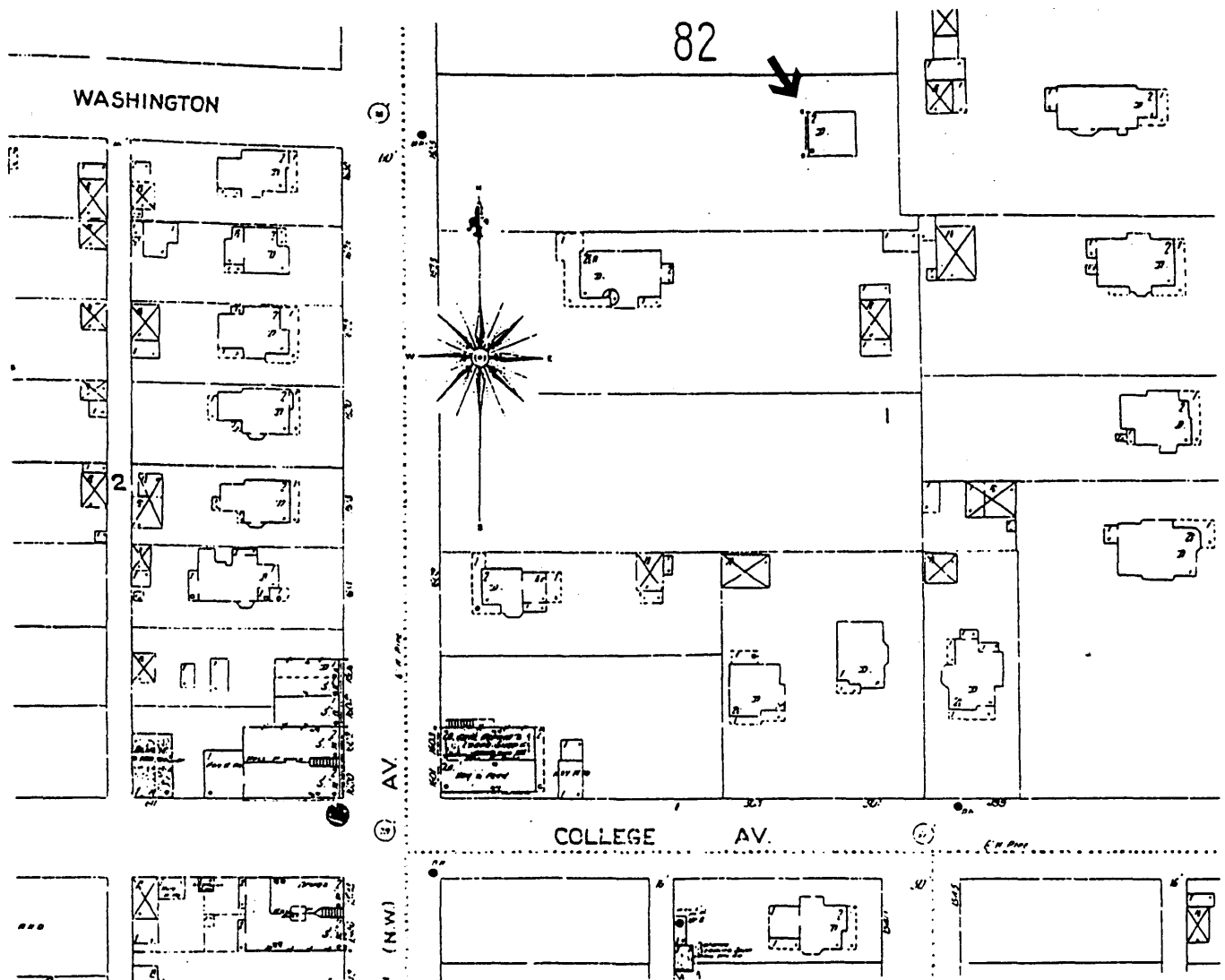
Page 4

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## 1901 PLAT MAP

ARROW LOCATES PREVIOUS IMPROVEMENTS ON THE SITE





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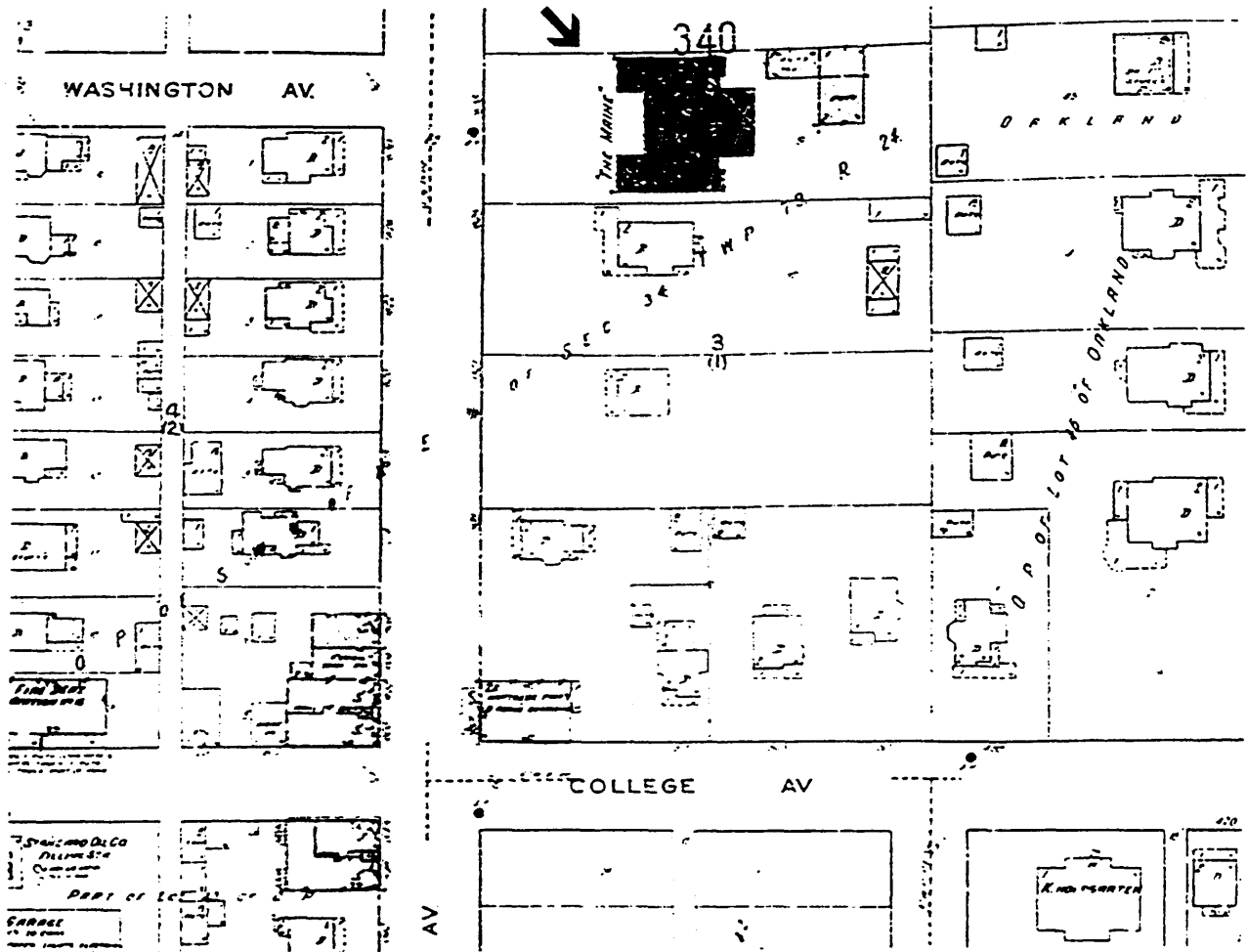
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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## 1920 PLAT MAP

ARROW LOCATES PROPERTY



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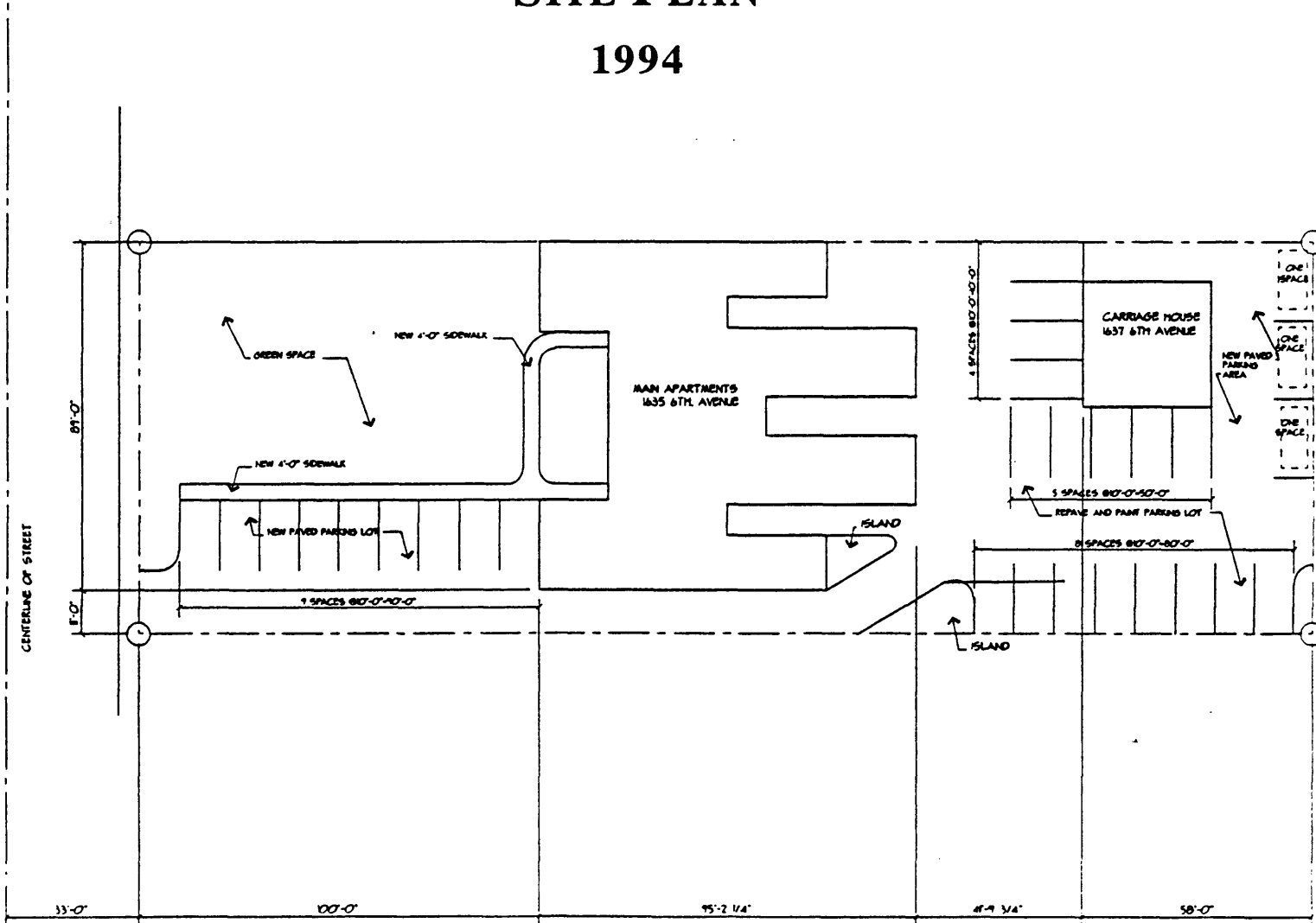
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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## SITE PLAN 1994

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

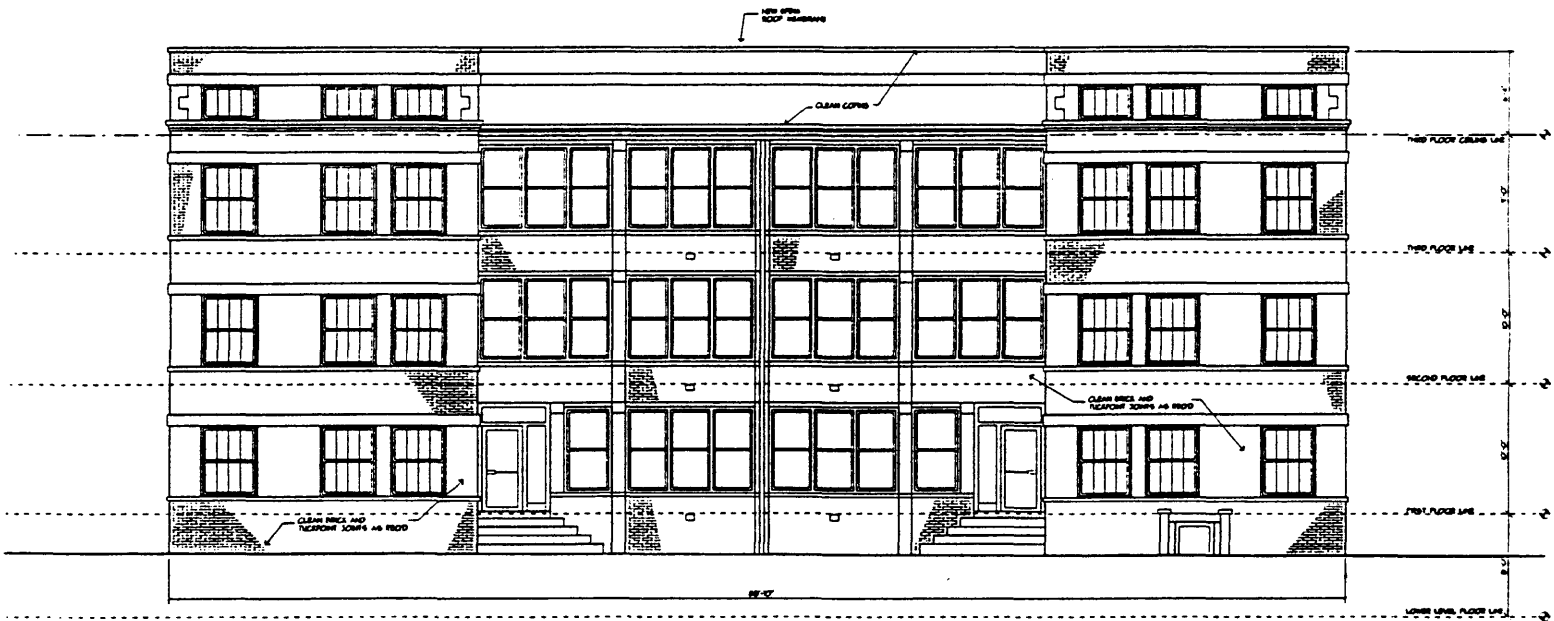
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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## FRONT ELEVATION



Source: Ben E. Allers, P. C., Architects.

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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## SOUTH ELEVATION



Source: Ben E. Allers, P. C., Architects.

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National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

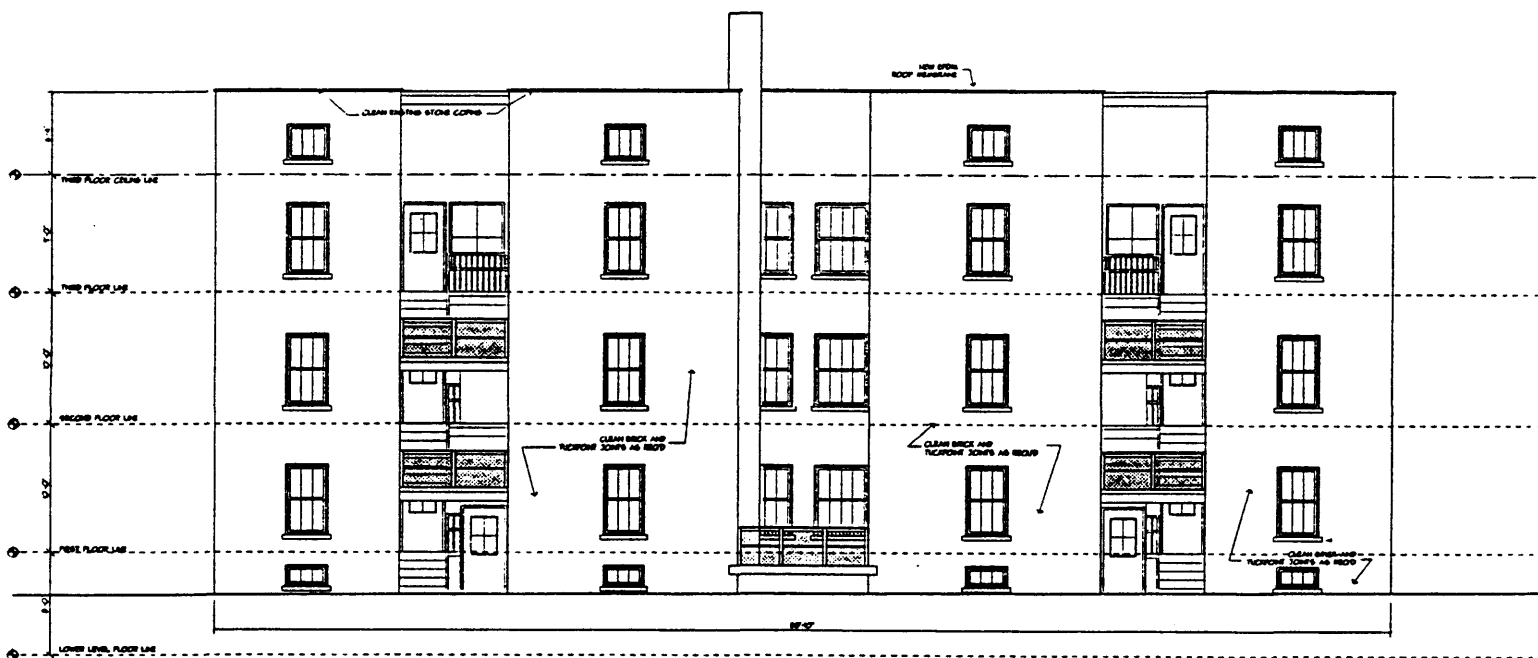
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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## REAR ELEVATION



Source: Ben E. Allers, P. C., Architects.

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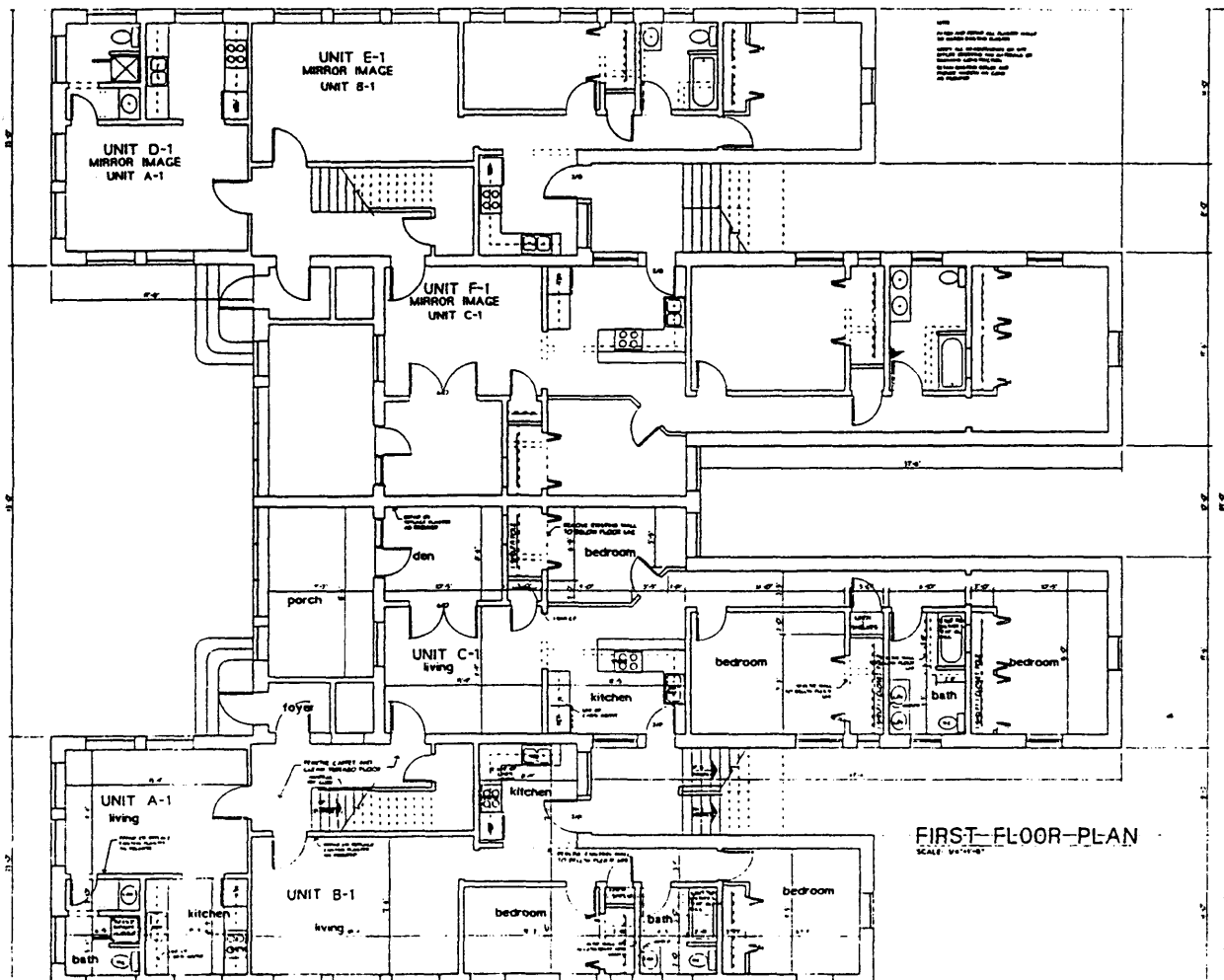
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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## FIRST FLOOR PLAN



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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

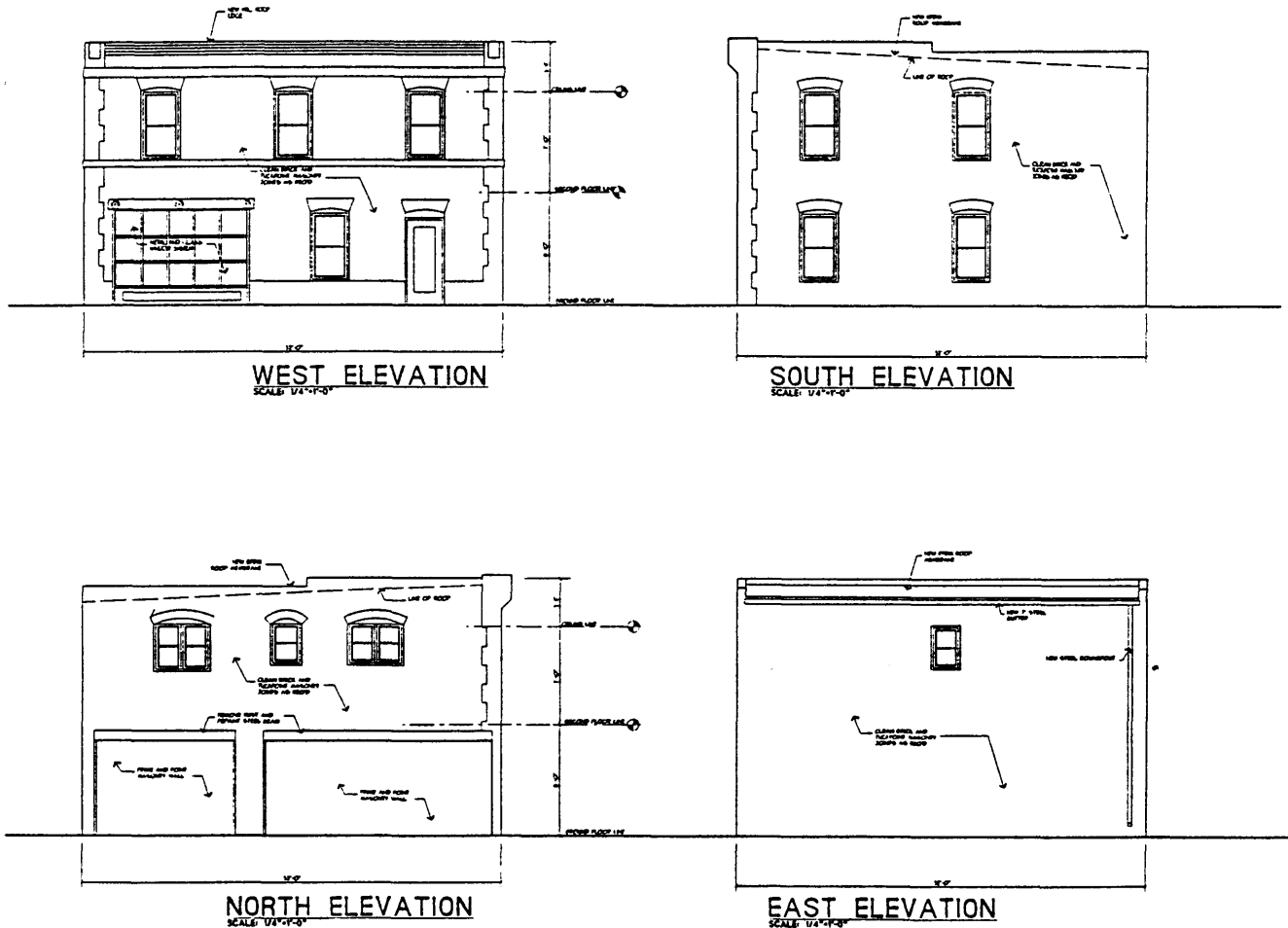
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## AUTOMOBILE GARAGE ELEVATIONS



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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

**SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Built in 1913 as a multiple-family dwelling, The Maine possesses historical significance, under National Register Criterion A, in calling attention to the evolution of 6th Avenue as a transportation corridor and the resultant land development and redevelopment which then transpired. By the turn of the Twentieth Century, 6th Avenue had emerged as a major streetcar and vehicular route in Des Moines. Constructed in a city block then occupied exclusively by single-family dwellings, The Maine illustrates how proximity to such routes encouraged the development of land into higher residential use, an important community development pattern in Des Moines' history.

The building is additionally significant under National Register Criterion C. Massively-scaled yet home-like in appearance, The Maine calls attention to several architectural influences on its design. The Prairie School of architectural is evident in the bands of horizontal stonework, which trim the building and relieve its visual mass, as well as the ribbon windows on the facade, which serve the same purpose. At the same time, the upper sash of these windows show the influence of Craftsman styling. The building is additionally significant under Criterion C because it illustrates a new building type in Des Moines, the suburban luxury apartment.

The period of significance, under Criterion A, for The Maine is 1913, the year during which 6th Avenue as a transportation corridor prompted land development on this site. The period of significance, under Criterion C, is also 1913, the year the building was completed.

The property contains two contributing resources for this nomination--the apartment building and the automobile garage.

**SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT**

The Maine illustrates how 6th Avenue attracted real estate developers to erect residences of ever higher density along its route. Constructed in 1913 by the James Maine & Sons Company of Des Moines, this apartment building was the largest such edifice erected to that time in North Des Moines.

The development and redevelopment of land into ever higher uses illustrates how rapid public transportation affected community development in the metropolitan area of Des Moines. North Des Moines provides an outstanding example of such a streetcar suburb, whose growth stemmed largely from this phenomenon. The evolution of residential property types along 6th Avenue--a principal streetcar route in the area--provides a dramatic illustration. First generation single-family dwellings (themselves indebted to the streetcar for their birth), gave way to double houses, then to apartment buildings, and finally, in one case, to an apartment complex of seven buildings.

Already by 1890, electric-powered streetcar service provided public transportation to North Des Moines along 6th Avenue. Additional service was also provided by horse-drawn streetcars along 9th Street. Somewhat later, 2nd Avenue became a third streetcar route in the area, crossing the Des Moines river at that street to link Highland Park in the north to points south of the river and



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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

downtown. In the downtown itself, the intersection of 6th Avenue and Locust Street had emerged during this period as the principal crossroads of the city's central business district. Construction in the 1890s of the Equitable Life Assurance building on the northwest corner of that intersection guaranteed its status as a major arterial crossroads. For all these reasons, 6th Avenue was perceived as a major street in the city.

Considerable construction of first-generation housing occurred along 6th Avenue in North Des Moines. Already in 1891, for example, plats were sufficiently developed in the area to be mapped by the Sanborn-Perris Map Company. The level of this residential construction warranted more maps than any other of the city's suburbs. That company's 1901 map of the city reinforces this generalization. It also shows how most of the residential dwellings along 6th Avenue were single-family. The map also indicates, however, the existence of an appreciable number of double houses. By 1920, the number of double houses had increased, according to the Sanborn for that year. Construction of major apartment buildings had also taken place--at 1443-1449 6th Avenue (Kromer Flats) in 1905; at 1245 6th Avenue (The New Lawn) in 1915; and at 1815 6th Avenue (The Ayrshire) in 1920.

Within this context, The Maine's construction in 1913 is significant for the suburban development of North Des Moines because it epitomized this redevelopment. As a successful and highly visible example of an income-producing property, the building demonstrated that such investments along 6th Avenue in North Des Moines could succeed. This in turn appears to have encouraged nearby the somewhat later construction of The Ayrshire Apartments at 1815 6th Avenue and the Bailey Court Apartments, an apartment complex of six buildings located in the 2000 block of 6th Avenue.

#### **ARCHITECTURE**

The Maine is architecturally significant because it illustrates a new building type in Des Moines and because it shows how eclectic architectural styling could influence the design of a large building. It also calls attention to the contractor-builder firm of James Maine & Sons Company.

#### **Apartment Building**

The Maine stands as a fine and early example of a new type of residential architecture emerging in North Des Moines during the early Twentieth Century--the apartment building. The apartment building was distinct in many ways from earlier kinds of multi-family dwellings. Prior to the apartment building, most suburban multi-family dwelling units were located on the upper floor or floors of commercial establishments.

The Maine possesses a complicated floor plan. (See Continuation Sheet 7-10.) Each of its three floors features six apartments. They consist of two studio apartments, two two-bedroom apartments, and two three-bedroom apartments. The three-bedroom units also feature a solarium.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

This floor plan illustrates how a compound "H" shaped apartment building could multiple the number of units. For example, a simple "H" shaped apartment building, the nearby New Lawn at 1615 6th Avenue, contains only two units per floor.

### James Maine & Sons Company

Constructed by the James Maine & Sons Company, The Maine provides one example of an important early Twentieth Century contractor-builder working to supply new residential housing for Des Moines. Few buildings in Des Moines have, to date, been identified as constructed by this firm. Although National Register Criterion C is not claimed in this regard, future research may place this building within the opus of that firm's work and find that The Maine is also eligible in this regard.

James Maine & Sons Company was a family business. It included James Maine as president, Herbert A. Maine, Vice-president and General Manager, and Orin E. Maine, Secretary-Treasurer. In addition to its operations as contractor-builders, the James Maine & Sons Company also manufactured building brick (city directory 1913).

It is possible that the brick used in The Maine is a product of this firm. This likelihood is particularly strong for the automobile garage. The design of this building features exuberant contrasts. Brick in different colors and brick with different surface textures are combined in a manner redolent of the desire to showcase building materials.

### Eclectic Architecture

The Maine shows how eclectic architectural styling could influence the design of a large building.

The Maine's strongly horizontal configuration points to the influence of the Prairie School of architecture. On the facade, a series of ribbon windows, each containing double hung sash, lend a horizontal feeling to the building. This is further emphasized by stone trimwork. A belt course of smooth faced stone surrounds three elevations at the level of the first floor window sills. Belt courses of rough faced stone decorate the first, second, third, and attic floors above their windows. The horizontal feeling of the building is further heightened by a design, which continues these rough faced belt courses around the facade corners on the north and south elevations.

The exterior brickwork of The Maine calls further attention to the building's horizontal feeling. While dark red brick is employed for the bulkhead of the building below the first floor windows, the balance of the facade employs brick of a mottled orange-red color. The attic story, with its small windows, also provides an important horizontal element to the design. The building's parapet is very restrained. Designed without central element or other vertical embellishment, it lends a further horizontal note.

In contrast, the building's fenestration shows the influence of Craftsman styling. The 4/4 and 3/3 multi-pane double hung sash point to this influence.

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# **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

## **CONTINUATION SHEET**

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

### **REPRESENTATION IN OTHER CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS**

This apartment building was surveyed in 1994 as part of the "Towards a Greater Des Moines" reconnaissance survey of Des Moines' Victorian suburbs. As one resource within the intensive survey of the River Bend neighborhood, (another part of this project), this building was evaluated as individually eligible, under Criterion C, for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historical Society of Iowa concurred in this determination.

### **POTENTIAL FOR HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

Although the site's potential for archaeological research is, as yet, unevaluated, there appears to be little if any in this regard.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

As additional culture resources surveys gather information about apartment buildings in Des Moines, it will become clearer how the "dumb-bell" or "H" shaped configuration of The Maine relates to other examples of this format in Des Moines. Connections between these buildings and the evolution of its precursor, the dumb-bell tenement house in New York City, should also be studied and analyzed. Also the architectural styling of The Maine resembles that of many Chicago apartments buildings from the same era. The connections between these designs are also worthy of further research.

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Please refer to Section I of the Multiple Property Documentation Form for complete bibliography.

#### PRIMARY

Des Moines City Directories for 1908, 1912, 1913, and 1915.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for 1901 and 1920.

#### SECONDARY

Brigham, Johnson; *Des Moines, the Pioneer of Municipal Progress and Reform of the Middle West together with the History of Polk County, Iowa, the Largest, Most Populous and Most Prosperous County in the State of Iowa*; Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company; 1911; 2 volumes.

Page, William C., and Joanne R. Walroth; *Towards a Greater Des Moines: Early Suburbanization and Development, circa 1880-circa 1920*; Intensive cultural resources report prepared for and on file at the Des Moines Historic District Commission and State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines; 1992.

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

# **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET**

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

## **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Lot 9 in Block 3 of the Polk County Homestead & Trust Company's Addition to the City of Des Moines, Iowa.

## **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The National Register boundary contains all land associated historically with this resource.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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The Maine, Polk County, Iowa.

### LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. The Maine  
1635 6th Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
Apartment building  
Looking southeast  
William C. Page, Photographer  
August 16, 1995
  
2. The Maine  
1635 6th Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
Apartment building  
Looking northeast  
William C. Page, Photographer  
August 16, 1995
  
3. The Maine  
1635 6th Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
Apartment building  
Looking west  
William C. Page, Photographer  
November 23, 1995
  
4. The Maine  
1635 6th Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50314  
Automobile garage  
Looking northeast  
William C. Page, Photographer  
November 23, 1995