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NATIONAL
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name New Evergreen Commercial Historic District

other names/site number same

2. Location

street & number see inventory not for publication N/A
city or town Evergreen vicinity N/A
state Alabama code AL county Conecuh code 035 zip code 36401

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 12/9/93
Signature of certifying official Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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] 1/21/94

[Signature] Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Property Name New Evergreen Commercial Historic District

County and State Conecuh AL

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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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>30</u>	<u>9</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>30</u>	<u>9</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	Sub: <u>Specialty Store</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Financial Institution</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Single family dwelling</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>Courthouse</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>Post Office</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Hotel</u>
<u>TRANSPORTATION</u>	<u>Rail-related</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	Sub: <u>Specialty Store</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Financial Institution</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Single family dwelling</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>Courthouse</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>Post Office</u>
<u>VACANT/NOT IN USE</u>	
<u>OTHER</u>	<u>Museum</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century

American Movements

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

roof Metal

walls Brick

Wood

other Tin

Asphalt

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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)

A. COMMERCE

A. TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance 1875-1943

Significant Dates See Inventory

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain significance on continuation sheet/s.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- Previous documentation on file (NPS) N/A
- 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 # _____

- 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 Approx. 12 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	16	504180	3477370	3	16	504440	3477400
2	16	504340	3477720	4	16	504300	3477280

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description See Continuation Sheet
Boundary Justification See Continuation Sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Ann Brown; Melanie A. Betz/AHC Reviewer
organization Alabama Historical Commission date 20 September 1993
street & number 468 South Perry Street telephone 205-242-3184
city or town Montgomery state AL zip code 36130-0900

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Additional Documentation
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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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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Narrative Description

The commercial buildings of Evergreen are largely undistinguished in style. As in most Alabama towns, the predominant building material is brick, with brick or sheet metal cornices. The building stock is about evenly divided between one- and two-story buildings. It is a cohesive group of buildings that surround the railroad and courthouse, and reflect the commercial development of the town. Of the buildings listed as contributing to the historic district, many have intact, original storefronts.

Along East and West Front Streets, the buildings maintain an almost continuous frontage along the railroad tracks, with only two lots open where buildings have been removed for parking lots. The Evergreen depot is the centerpiece of this area. The area along Rural Street maintains this same dense, commercial character, as does the south side of Court Street to the Courthouse, and along Jackson to the Courthouse. The dense commercial character of the area changes on Desplous Street, with more green space setting off the Methodist Church, the old White House Hotel, and the contributing frame house. This same more residential character exists to the east and southeast of the courthouse, where frame offices sit on open space.

Of particular note are the buildings occupied by Evergreen Grocery at 101 East Front Street. Once one of many intact Eastlake-styled storefronts in towns of this period, these three storefronts retain their original divided lite store front windows, beaded board bulkheads, and large wooden doors. These are important because they reflect the details typical of a vanishing style of commercial buildings. The most unusual building is the limestone-faced double building with the Belgian gable located at 109-110 West Front Street. Built as a bank and store, even the storefront with its Eastlake-like colored glass transom and window, is intact.

Two hotels remain as a testament to Evergreen's heritage as a winter resort: 144-146 East Front, is a brick 2-story building; and the other, a frame two-story building, the old White House Hotel, on Desplous Street.

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Contributing:

1. 110 Court Street (1896, Conecuh Co. Inv. 035-1440) Conecuh County Courthouse - Designed by Frank Lockwood and B. B. Smith, Architects, of Montgomery, this Romanesque, three-story buff colored brick veneer building accented by five octagonal turrets. The stories are highlighted with rusticated limestone belt courses, and the same rusticated limestone is used for window sills and lentils. There is terra cotta detailing on the third story, and a dentillated metal cornice. A once handsome and richly ornamented arched entry and clock tower were obliterated by a modern addition in 1956.
2. South Court Square (1936, Conecuh Co. Inv. 035-1441) - Rather unusual in that the building does not front onto a street, but onto a sidewalk on the south side of the Courthouse, this one-story buff brick veneer building contains nine storefronts. There is a continuous aluminum canopy covering the sidewalk. The typical storefront is two metal multi-light windows with a central door.
3. North Court Square (1936, Conecuh Co. Inv. 035-1438) Small, one-bay frame office with gable roof and 4/4 window sash and two front doors. There is a front porch across the front with turned posts. The siding is standard drop siding.
4. North Court Square (1936, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1439) - Small, one-bay frame office with gable roof. Window sash is mixed 1/1 and vertical 2/2. Round porch columns sit on small brick piers.
5. S.W. Corner of Jackson and Liberty (1903, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-____) - Small cottage-type Victorian residence, frame with lap siding. The unusual plan is very linear, only one-room deep in most places. The house has many Victorian features including three porches with spindle decorations and turned posts, two-bay windows, a pressed tin shingle roof, bracketed cornice, and a very nice Italianate double entry door with transom.
6. 200 Rural Street (1932, Conecuh Co. Inv. 035-1443) - Evergreen Post Office - A single block building with a five-bay front typical of the restrained classicism seen in the modern movement in architecture. The center three bays are picked out with a facing of ashlar marble. Windows in this section are wood 12/12 sash. The remainder of the building is brick veneer with windows being 9/9 wood sash. The centered entry is mounted by a flight of steps.
7. (No Number) Rural Street (C.1903, Conecuh Co. Inv. 035-1444) - A two-story pressed "brownstone" rusticated concrete block building. The storefront is a modern aluminum and the first story is covered with aluminum. The upper story has vertical 4/4 windows, two

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single sashes on each side and two pairs of 1/1 paired sashes in the center. Windows have a smooth head and sill, with the head slanted as though it were a jack arch, with an exaggerated keystone. There is a heavily bracketed sheet metal cornice in poor condition.

8. 202-208 Rural Street (1936, Conecuh Co. Inv. 035-1445, 1446, 1447) - Old Evergreen Ford Dealership - (Architect, Carl Cooper, Montgomery) A one-story buff colored brick building, divided into three storefronts on the left and a large open bay on the corner of Rural and Jackson Streets. Storefronts are wood with recessed angled entries and stucco bulkheads. The parapet has a concrete cap and over-scaled urn decorations. The open bay once used for display of automobiles at the corner has an arched opening with a lentil on a cut corner, set at a 45 degree angle, and a pressed tin ceiling.
9. 102 Rural Street (1910, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1448) - Old Bank of Evergreen - A two-story buff brick building with Colonial Revival detail. The entry is detailed in limestone with reeded pilasters flanking tinted storefront glass and a single modern storefront door. "Bank of Evergreen" is in cut limestone above the entry. The second floor has 4 window openings covered in plywood, and the side of the building facing West Front Street has 10 window openings covered in plywood.
10. 109 Rural Street (1943, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1449) - One-story red brick storefront with brick bulkhead and stepped brick parapet. The storefront and door are glass and are of the original type. A large aluminum awning covers the sidewalk in front of the store.
11. 109 West Front Street (1910, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1450) - A beautifully detailed ashlar limestone facade, the blocks having patent hammer finish. The first floor contains a storefront and a door to the upstairs on the right. The entire storefront is set back in a reverse curve limestone molding. The storefront windows are somewhat small and have marble sills and large obscure glass transoms of 4" X 4" panes framed in wood. There are double entrance doors with smaller transoms above flanked by pilasters. The second story has three large windows with exaggerated keystones in the heads. There is a large cove cornice of limestone surmounted by an elaborately decorated stepped parapet in the style of a Belgian gable.
12. 110 West Front Street (1910, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1451) - Veronica's Jewelry - Similar in style and materials to 109 West Front Street, this two-story building is also faced with ashlar limestone with a patent hammered finish. The storefront windows have been altered, but the single door is topped with a heavy limestone cornice. An intact transom features 4" X 4" leaded obscure glass. The second story contains three large 1/1 windows with the window crowned with a cornice bracketed with carved acanthus leaves. This is surmounted with a carved stepped parapet in the style of a Belgian gable.
13. 118 West Front Street (1910-1927, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1452) A two-story buff brick building with a modern aluminum storefront. The second story has five segmental arched

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window openings with poorly fitting aluminum awning-type windows. There is a very nice dentillated sheet metal cornice.

14. 130-140 West Front Street (1875, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1453, 1454) This is one of the first commercial structures in New Evergreen appearing on the 1885 Sanborn map. It is a stucco scored to look like stone over brick, two-story commercial building with two storefronts which are asymmetrically arranged. The storefront on the left is a double one and contains the door to the upstairs as well as to a store. It is covered with vertical aluminum. The smaller wooden storefront on the right is of the original type. There are eight segmental arched window openings on the second floor with 6/6 wood windows. Round attic vents above appear to have been stuccoed over. The cornice area is covered with flat aluminum, probably covering an area where a cornice has been removed.
15. 142 West Front Street (C. 1927, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1455) This is a one-story, buff brick building with a double modern aluminum storefront and a flat aluminum canopy. There is a corbeled and dentillated brick cornice line below the signboard area.
16. 146 West Front Street (1920-1939, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1456) - Bank of Evergreen- This triple storefront is stucco over brick, remodeled in the 1930s as the Pix Theatre in the Art Deco or Art Moderne style generally associated with movie houses. The center section has a raised parapet; horizontal ribbed trim bands the entire facade together above the transom line.
17. 148 West Front Street (C. 1927, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1457) A one-story brick building with a modern aluminum storefront. There is a transom area which appears to have been infilled with brick. A simple corbeled brick cornice adorns the top. While interior space is contiguous with #1456, the facade retains an individual character.
18. 150 West Front Street (After 1927, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1458) A one-story brick building set back from the line of commercial buildings on the street with a paved sidewalk area in the front. The storefront is of the original type, with a door to the right with a small single lite transom above, and a large multi-lite leaded-glass transom above both show window and door. There is a decorative brick bulkhead.
19. (No Number) East Front Street (1907, listed on the National Register of Historic Places April 3, 1975, Al. Inventory 035-1459) - Evergreen Depot - The one-story frame structure rests on a low concrete foundation and is cruciform in shape, with a hip roof and wide overhanging bracketed eaves. The southwestern section contains the baggage room and has a three-foot high loading platform extending around the north and west sides, and large sliding double freight doors. The southwest section contains waiting rooms and a ticket office.
20. 145-147 East Front Street (C. 1892, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1460, 1461)-Old Kendrick's Hotel-Brick, two-story double brick building with two storefronts. The left-hand side of

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the building appears to have been added later. The left-hand storefront has a bulkhead with perpendicular beaded board. Round cast-iron columns flank the doorway; the door is covered with plywood. The right doorway is similar; the show windows have four pane display windows. Upstairs there are four windows across the front with vertical 2/2 sash, with decorative cast-iron attic vents above. There is a simple corbeled brick cornice.

21. (No Number) East Front Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1464, 1465) - Powell's; Snowden's Barber Shop - Two-story stucco over brick building with two storefronts. Both storefronts appear to be original, with the storefront on the left having a cast-iron column to the right of the door and a beaded board bulkhead and wooden storefront door. The storefront to the right has a folding storefront designed to open the building to the sidewalk, and "Powell's" in tile at the doorway. The second story has three segmental arched windows with the center sash having 6/6 windows and flanking sash are 4/4.
22. 107 East Front Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1467) - A two-story brick building, with the storefront enclosed in a pressed siding and aluminum storefront windows. There is a brick bulkhead. There are four round arch second story windows with limestone spring blocks, a one-brick arch and exaggerated keystones and Palladian-styled round head windows. There is a heavy brick cornice and limestone cap.
23. 105 East Front Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1468) - Along with the two adjoining buildings, (035-1469 and 1470), probably the second oldest commercial buildings in New Evergreen, appearing on the 1885 Sanborn map. An Eastlake-styled brick building with a wood storefront containing a beaded board bulkhead and four-pane divided lite storefront windows flanking tall storefront doors which run to the top of the storefront. A shed canopy with wood posts cover the sidewalk in a typical South Alabama fashion.
24. 103 East Front Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1469) - Evergreen Grocery - A brick, one-story building with a very interesting asymmetrical storefront. One four-lite storefront window is to the right of a very wide storefront door, and a two-lite window is to the left. There is a transom above the door, and a typical shed canopy with wood posts covering the sidewalk.
25. 101 East Front Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1470) - Evergreen Grocery - An Eastlake-styled brick, one-story commercial building with an intact wood storefront. The show windows have nine lites and a wood bulkhead with beaded board at a 45 degree angle, and double storefront doors. A shed canopy with wood posts covers the sidewalk in a typical South Alabama style.
26. 104 East Front Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1471) - Firestone - A two-story brick building with a cut corner entrance at the corner of East Front and Cary. The entry has a decorative cast-iron column at the corner, and two storefronts: One faces East Front Street and the other faces the corner. On the second floor, the Front Street facade has three window openings with segmental arches and a simple corbeled brick cornice. The

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Cary Street facade has seven pairs of segmental arched windows on the second floor. The cornice turns the corner over the first pair of windows and then ends. There is a large arched brick opening which may be an old freight entrance at the rear of the Cary Street facade.

27. (No Number) Cary Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1472) When it appears on the Sanborn map in 1892, this building is indicated as a black business. One-story brick commercial building with brick detailing in the parapet and a double row of bricks over segmental arched windows.
28. (No Number) Cary Street (Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1473,1474) Indicated as a black business on the 1892 Sanborn map, this two-story brick building has an elaborately detailed brick parapet cornice. There are three intact wooden storefronts, with the one on the right having a 6-lite window and the two on the left being smaller with 4 lites. The wooden storefront doors have a wide rail on the bottom and are divided into two equal panes on the top. The second story has three window openings with vertical 2/2 sash. The letters I. H. C. are spelled out in a brick pattern in the parapet.
29. (No Number) Desplous Street (1910, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1475) A symmetrical wooden Victorian Cottage with a hip roof and a small gable in the center. A modern porch goes all the way across the front. Novelty siding in the "double teardrop" or "double waterfall" covers the sides, and the windows are vertical 2/2.
30. (No Number) Desplous Street (1903, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1476) One of Evergreen's tourist hotels, this frame clapboard two-story building has a T-shaped plan. There is a double portico on the front, with the first story having square columns and the second story having round ones. There is a double entrance door with sidelights and transom and the windows are vertical 2/2. The leg of the T extends out the back with a double gallery and separate entrances for the guest rooms.
31. (No Number) Desplous Street (1906, Conecuh Co. Inventory 035-1477) The Evergreen Methodist Church was probably designed by the Montgomery architecture firm of Okel and Cooper. This brick building has a dominant front gable with Gothic arched windows and leaded glass. There is a side tower entrance. Two additions have been made to the building, the older designed by Carl Cooper in his later years.

BUILDINGS WHICH DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISTRICT

1. (No Number) Court Street - Two-story red brick building with no ornamentation. There are four wooden storefronts, all original except the one on the far left which is modified with a multi-light storefront window. There are four steel monumental second-story windows on the front which are multi-light with operating hoppers and awning lights.

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2. (No Number) Rural Street - (Next to the old Bank of Evergreen) - Carter Hardware - One-story brick building with an aluminum storefront and canopy. This building replaced a two-story building which has burned.
3. (No Number) West Front Street at Rural Street - Large one-story buff brick building with four storefronts on West front Street and three storefronts on Rural Street. Replaced the old Evergreen Hotel which burned in the 1950s.
4. (No Number) West Front Street - (Between 110 West Front and 118 West Front) - A double width one-story brick building with the entry to the far left. Anodized aluminum storefront windows are higher than a traditional storefront. Replaced another building which burned in a fire.
5. (No Number) East Front Street - (Next to 147 East Front Street) - Jernigan's Home and Auto - One-story brick building, the facade of which is heavily rebuilt of old brick. There is a double mill-finish aluminum storefront.
6. (No Number) East Front Street - D and B Restaurant - Heavily modified one-story brick storefront. Rustic siding fills some of the storefront opening, and there is a metal canopy.
7. (No Number) East Front Street - Dress for Less - One-story painted brick building with a mill finish aluminum storefront and canopy.
8. (No Number) East Front Street - First Alabama Bank - One-story brick building heavily modified in the late 1980s with an exterior insulation finish system (E.I.F.S.). There is a pediment and a metal awning over a central door. The storefront windows have been closed in and false quoins added to the corners.
9. (No Number) East Front Street - (South of 107 East Front) - One-story commercial building with painted corrugated metal covering the facade. There is a new aluminum storefront.

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Statement of Significance

Criterion A: Commerce

Significant in the area of commerce, the New Evergreen Commercial Historic District embodies the development of the city's commercial area. The town was drastically changed and the district developed when the Alabama and Florida Railroad (now the Louisville and Nashville) was chartered. In 1858, the first depot was constructed and the first train passed through Evergreen. Land on either side of the tracks was then subdivided and sold for commercial development. From 1875 until 1943, the commercial area prospered with hotels, retail space, and light industry. Today, the historic district reflects the commercial development of Evergreen.

Criterion A: Transportation

Significant in the area of transportation, the New Evergreen Commercial Historic District reflects the impact of the railroad on the early growth and development of the community. Like other towns laid out on the Alabama and Florida Railroad, and other railroads in Alabama, the depot and tracks are the centerpiece of the New Evergreen Commercial Historic District. The emergence of the railroad resulted in the development of the commercial area of town, and later the moving of the courthouse from Sparta to Evergreen in 1866. Train service brought tourists from the North during the winter months. The location of the railroad in the town was responsible for cotton ginning, warehousing, shipping, and production of cotton seed oil.

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY

One of the first people to settle in Conecuh County at what is now called Evergreen was a Revolutionary War soldier, James Cosey, who came to the area in 1818. He built a double log house and established a farm (1) which included land on a ridge in the eastern part of Evergreen today. Cosey sold his land and moved away in 1821, but the community that had begun to grow in the area bore the legacy of his name, being called "Cosey's Old Field."

The town grew along a road (now Main Street) which runs on a ridge from Northwest to Southeast in present day Evergreen. Like most small 18th- and early 19th-century towns there was not a commercial or residential area, but a group of buildings which might be used by one owner as a residence, and by the next owner as a commercial establishment. Both residential and commercial uses existed side-by-side along this road. In 1838 and 1839 there seems to have been a burst of development with the establishment of a tinsmith and two stores, one of them brick.(2) There was by 1838 a non-denominational Union Church in the town, and it was the first Baptist minister of this church, the Reverend Mr. A.B. Travis, who proposed the building of a school in Cosey's Old Field. It is said that it was he who felt that the name of the town was too unclassical, and although there was the suggestion of Perryville to honor the prominent Perryman family, "Evergreen" was chosen for the verdant foliage found in the area.(3) A small school had first been established in 1838, but the response to The Reverend Mr. Travis' initiatives for a new and larger school was great. The new school was so successful the first year that a girls' section was added in the second year, and the school was chartered by an act of the Alabama State Legislature in 1840 as the Evergreen Male and Female Academy.(4) The site selected for the school was on a hill in a field, overlooking the site of the double log house built by James Cosey in 1818. It was prominent not just in the way it was sited, but in reputation, drawing students from surrounding counties. The site remains the location of the present Evergreen High School. The town incorporated in 1839, naming boundaries of one square mile around the school.(5)

Events which would change the town of Evergreen were set in place in 1850 when the Alabama and Florida Railroad (now the L & N), was chartered by persons in Pensacola, Florida, and in Conecuh, Butler, Lowndes, and Montgomery counties in Alabama.(6) Many believed that the new railroad station for Evergreen would be best located at Salter's Crossing on Main Street, in the northern part of town. The ridge on which the town was so beautifully sited provided a grade too steep for the location of the station on Main Street, and the location of the station was set for an area below the ridge. Land was acquired and the station was built with the first train arriving in early 1858.(7) Prominent local men who had invested in the railroad then subdivided the land along both sides of the railroad tracks and sold these lots for commercial development.(8) "Old Evergreen," as Main Street came to be called, became a residential area as the commercial center of town gradually grew up along the railroad. This thriving new area was called "New Evergreen."

Town planning for "New Evergreen" is not as organized as that for some other railroad towns. Although the streets are generally laid out at right angles the grid is irregular and incomplete. Buildings which are usually accorded places of prominence in the town plan, in this case the courthouse and the Methodist church, appear to occur casually and in insignificant places. As with several other towns laid out on the Alabama and Florida Railroad the tracks are the centerpiece of New Evergreen, with Front Street laid out along either side. In the development of New Evergreen there is an acknowledgment in the town plan that the reason for being is the railroad.

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By the time the first Sanborn map was completed in 1885, the train station was on East Front at Cary, and the corners of Rural and West Front Street and Cary and East Front were the most intensely developed. A brick general store (Alabama Inventory 1453, 1454) was already built about halfway down the block on West Front Street. While the building that was on the southwest corner of Rural and West Front, the Evergreen Hotel, was destroyed by fire in 1956, the three well-detailed Eastlake-style stores shown on this early map at the southeast corner of East Front and Cary remain. The area just east of Front on Cary was, and continues to be, an area of African-American business. Business listed on the map in 1885 included 2 hotels, a saloon, a billiard parlor, carriage shops, liveries, general stores, a millinery shop, cobbler, and drug stores.

By 1892 a newer train station was located on the site of the present station at East Front and Mill Streets, and development was drawn down the street. In spite of a fire in 1894, Front Street continued to develop, until by 1927 both sides of the street were completely built out.

With the attraction of the railroad, Evergreen attained a new level of prominence in the county. There was a great deal of talk about moving the county courthouse to Evergreen from Sparta after 1858. When the courthouse in Sparta burned (some said under mysterious circumstances) the move seemed ordained, and a new courthouse was located in Evergreen in 1866.(9) It is perhaps this late arrival of the courthouse to the town that explains the lack of prominence of the building in the town plan. The first building was frame and burned in 1882, when another building was built of brick with a double set of entry stairs. By 1896 complaints arose about the condition of the building, and in 1899 it was torn down and the present building constructed.(10)

Like many small towns across Alabama, Georgia and Florida, the extension of the railroad southward made passenger travel from the North a practical reality. Many of these towns, such as Thomasville, Georgia, DeFuniak Springs, Florida, and Evergreen developed hotels for wintering tourists from the North. Evergreen became a popular wintering spot due to the area's moderate winter weather, fresh air laden with the healing powers of turpentine and tar from the verdant pines, and the mineral waters available at the mineral springs. As many as four hotels flourished as late as 1910,(11) and many families operated boarding homes. The tourist industry flourished from the 1890s until the 1920s, when the fashion for mineral water passed, and the railroads were opened into central and southern Florida where truly mild winters could be enjoyed and where malaria was no longer a problem. By 1927 all but two of the hotels, one of them only half as large as originally, seem to have vanished from the town plan.(12)

Another industry which centered itself in New Evergreen in the early 20th century was the packing and shipping of fresh evergreens to the North. In 1892 George Cauldwell of Evergreen provided foliage for President Grover Cleveland's inauguration, and that same year the Sanborn Fire maps indicate a building on E. Front Street used for packing Evergreens. In 1913 Knud Neilsen arrived in Evergreen and started a fresh foliage business which has expanded into the dried flower business in Evergreen today.(13)

The location of the railroad in Evergreen also meant that it was a center for cotton ginning, warehousing, shipping, and production of cotton seed oil. Early maps and photographs show cotton warehouses on both sides of the railroad tracks. While cotton production has waned in this part of the state, the wholesale floral business seems to be thriving. Evergreen, still the county seat, continues to be a regional trade center in Conecuh County.

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¹Burnett, page 1.

²Rabb, page 71.

³Burnett, page 3.

⁴IBID., page 3.

⁵Rabb, page 38.

⁶Owen, page 161.

⁷Rabb, page 82.

⁸Burnett, page 8.

⁹IBID., page 8.

¹⁰EVERGREEN COURANT, February 15, 1899.

¹¹SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAP, 1885.

¹²IBID., 1927.

¹³Wilson.

Justification of the Period of Significance

The period of significance for the historic district extends from the date of the earliest contributing building at 130-140 West Front Street (1875), to the date of the most recent contributing building at 109 Rural Street (1943).

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Verbal Description of Boundary

Beginning at the southwest corner of Mill Street and Desplous Street, continue northwest on Mill Street across East Front Street, behind the Depot, across the railroad tracks and West Front Street to Cooper Street. Continue northwest down Cooper Street and turn northeast and run behind the buildings facing West Front, on a line with the northwest wall of 109 Rural Street. At the front corner of 109 Rural Street turn northwest and run to the northwest corner of the Post Office, turn and run northeast to the northeast corner of the Post Office, and then run southeast to the center of Court Street. Turn Northeast on Court Street, and run past the Courthouse to Liberty Street and turn southeast and run until West Front Street. At West Front Street, turn southwest and run to a point parallel with property C 26, turn southeast and run to the southeast corner of that building, turn southwest and run to Cary Street. Turn southeast on Cary Street, and run to a point behind the properties C 29 and C 30 on Desplous Street. Turn southwest and run to the southwest corner of property C 30, turn northwest and run to the center of Desplous Street. At that point, run northeast to the rear of the buildings C 27 and C 28 facing Cary Street turn northwest and run to the rear of the buildings facing East Front Street. Turn and run southwest to the property line of the Evergreen Methodist Church. At this point, turn southeast and run to the middle of Desplous Street. At the middle of Desplous Street, turn southwest and run to the beginning at the center of Mill Street.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the area with the highest concentration of commercial buildings within the period of significance.

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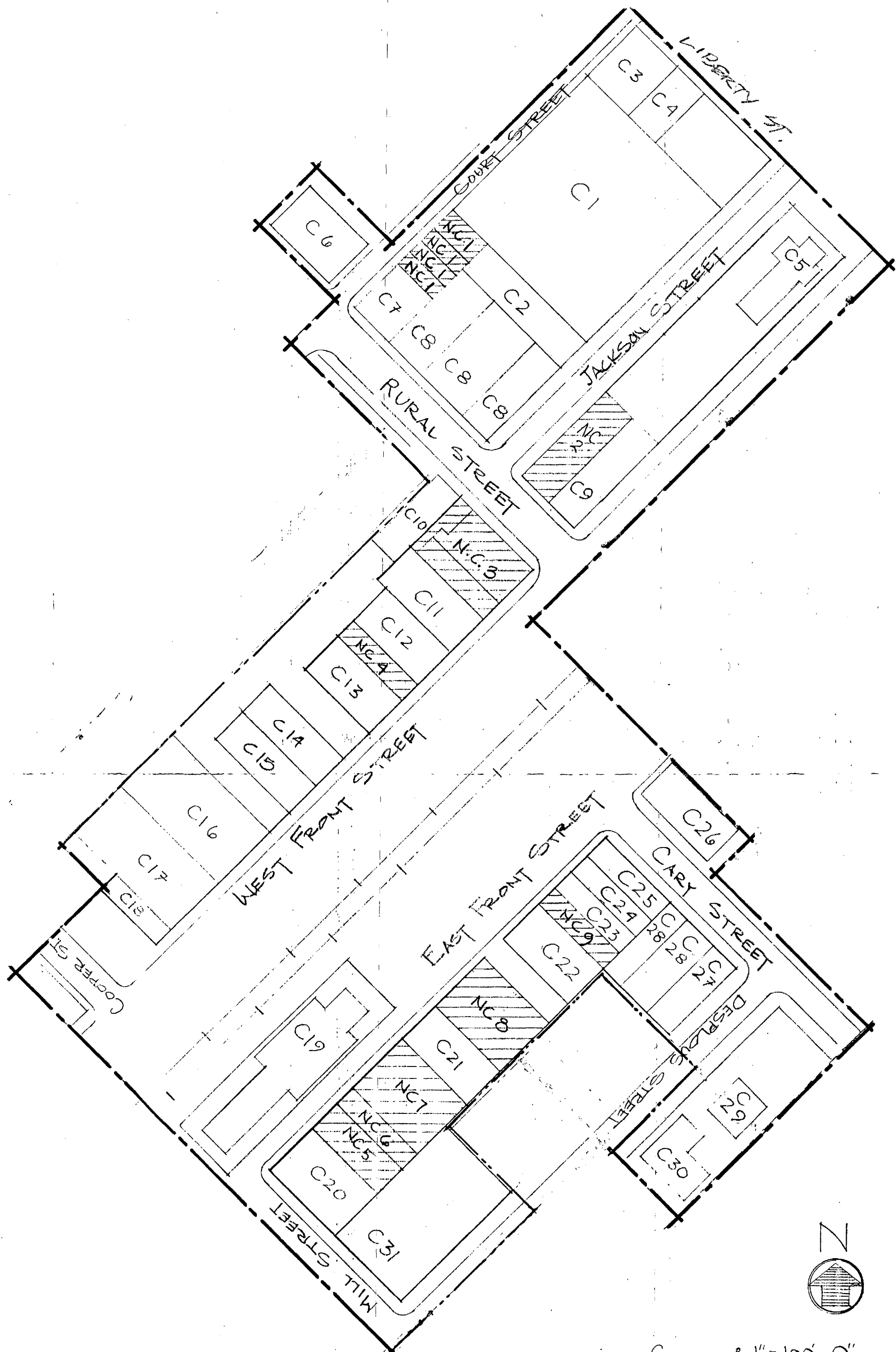
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NEW EVERGREEN COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
EVERGREEN, ALABAMA - CONECUH COUNTY

Photographer: W. Edward Hooker III
Date of Photos: 09-20-93
Location of Negatives: Alabama Historical Commission


Photo Number:

1. Rural Street, camera facing South East
2. Court Street, camera facing North East
3. Court Street, camera facing South
4. Court Street, camera facing South West
5. Court Street, camera facing East
6. West Front Street, camera facing North
7. West Front Street, camera facing North West
8. West Front Street, camera facing West
9. East Front Street, camera facing South
10. East Front Street, camera facing East
11. East Front Street, camera facing East
12. East Front Street, camera facing East
13. East Front Street, camera facing South
14. Cary Street, camera facing North West
15. Corner of Mill Street and Desplous Street, camera facing North



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SCALE : 1" = 100'-0"

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