

# District Survey Form

<b>1</b> <u>DISTRICT</u> (Reedsburg MPA) Main Street Commercial Historic District		<u>SURVEYOR</u> Claudette Stager	<u>SHSW STAFF</u>
<u>CITY</u> Reedsburg	<u>COUNTY</u> Sauk	<u>SURVEY</u> Reedsburg Intensive Survey	<u>DATE</u> April 1984

FILM ROLLS/NEGATIVES

SK8/14-17, 24-26, 28-32; SK30/2; SK42/19; SK45/23-26 ; SK46/2

<u>STREETS:</u>	<u>NUMBERS:</u>	<u>STREETS:</u>	<u>NUMBERS:</u>
Main Street	201, 204, 216, 223, 233, 234,	Walnut Street, South	115 and 117
	236, 237, 244, 249, 251, 260,		
	266, 272, 273, 275, 283, 296,		
	297, 305, 307		

**2** BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is a one block area on Main Street with two additional adjacent buildings included. This boundary is as follows: beginning at the northwest corner of the property line at 305 and 307 Main Street, the boundary moves south to a point parallel with the north property line of 297 Main Street. Then the boundary moves west across North Park Street to the northeast corner of the property line of 197 Main Street, just south of the alley; the boundary continues west to the northwest corner of the property line of 201 Main Street and then moves south along the property line to the east side of North Walnut Street and continues south past Main Street to the southwest corner of the property at 204 Main Street, on the east side of South Walnut Street. The boundary continues south.

See Continuation Sheet

**3** BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is a distinct element in the larger commercial area that concentrates itself on Main Street. The two and three story commercial buildings have retained much of their late nineteenth and early twentieth century styles and integrity. The area immediately north is primarily residential and to the south are parking lots and buildings with lesser integrity. West of the district, the commercial area continues.

See Continuation Sheet

**4** SOURCES OF INFORMATION See Continuation Sheet

- A. Dwinnell, Solomon A., Sauk County, Town of Reedsburg, written c. 1872 and repro-
- B. "Reedsburg Free Press", June 25, 1860.
- C. "Wisconsin Industrial Review", March, 1912 (Vol. XIII, No. 147).
- D. Sanborn-Perris Maps at State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.
- E. "Reedsburg Free Press", May 10, 1877.

**5** MAP REFERENCE Acreage: 2.5 acres

USGS quad: Reedsburg West  
scale: 1:24,000

<u>UTM references:</u>		<u>H.</u>
<sup>1a</sup> A.	15-741775-4824110	I.
<sup>1b</sup> B.	15-741775-4824070	J.
<sup>1c</sup> C.	15-741920-4824110	K.
<sup>1d</sup> D.	15-741920-4824040	L.
E.		M.
F.		N.
G.		O.

**6** OPINION OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

date: 4/30/84 initials: CS

- eligible     not eligible     unknown  
 national     state     local



HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
WISCONSIN

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Main Street Commercial Historic District

Boundary Description con't:

ues south along the same property line, past the alley and to the southwest corner of the property at 115 and 117 South Walnut Street. Turning east, the boundary continues to the southeast corner of the property and moves north to the northeast corner of the property and then north across the alley to the south property line of 204 Main Street, north of the alley. Moving east to the southeast corner of the property line at 296 Main Street, the boundary turns north on South Park Street to the northeast corner of this same property and continues across Main Street to the southeast corner of Main Street and North Park Street. It continues east to the southeast corner of the property at 305 and 307 Main Street, continues to the east property line, then north to the north property line, then west to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification con't:

area buildings have suffered a loss of integrity or were built after a 1957 fire. To the immediate east are late twentieth century buildings and buildings with a loss of integrity. Past this on the east begins a residential area. The Main Street Commercial Historic District is an area of mainly contiguous business blocks of the late nineteenth century that still reflect this era.

Sources of Information con't:

- A. (con't) duced by Donald V. Hyzer, Reedsburg in 1980. It is the same as Sketch No. 6 in W. H. Canfield's Sketchbook of Sauk County, Wisconsin.
- F. "Reedsburg Free Press", May 7, 1891.
- G. "Reedsburg Free Press", June 28, 1877.
- H. "Reedsburg Free Press", June 8, 1882.
- I. "Reedsburg Free Press", March 19, 1885.
- J. "Reedsburg Free Press", September 27, 1887 and February 14, 1889.
- K. "Reedsburg Free Press", November 1, 1888.
- L. "Reedsburg Free Press", November 15, 1888.
- M. "Reedsburg Free Press", March 14, 1889 and October 17, 1889.
- N. "Reedsburg Free Press", July 25, 1895.
- O. "Reedsburg Free Press", July 16, 1896.
- P. "The Reedsburg Times", October 31, 1913 and "Reedsburg Free Press", January 6, 1916.
- Q. "Reedsburg Free Press", August 20, 1920.

# 7 Description

General character, building types, styles, environment, important natural and man-made features, qualities that distinguish district from surroundings, nature of intrusions and generally excepted properties.

The Main Street Commercial Historic District consists of 21 buildings constructed between 1874 and 1920. They are located on parts of blocks 14, 15, and 19 of the original plat of the city. All but one business block, the Times Block at 115 and 117 South Walnut Street, front Main Street which is a two lane (east and west) street and has diagonal on-street parking. The terrain is flat and devoid of landscaping. All but two of the buildings are two stories (the exceptions: Townsend Garage at 305 and 307 Main Street and Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street) and all but two, the Townsend Garage at 305 and 307 Main Street and the Times Block at 115 and 117 South Walnut Street, abut adjoining businesses. The buildings in the district present a cohesive streetscape because of their style, location and integrity.

Of the 21 buildings, eight are pivotal and 13 contributing. None of the properties are non-contributing. Pivotal properties have architectural and/or historical significance because of their excellence of design or association with historical events or people. They retain a high degree of integrity and are considered individually eligible for nomination to the National Register. Pivotal properties give the district its unique character. Contributing properties do not have an outstanding or significant architectural design or are not strongly associated with historic events of persons of significance. They retain enough of their original integrity to add to the character of the district. Non-contributing properties have lost most of their integrity through alteration or do not meet the 50 year age requirement. They are visual intrusions on the streetscape. Of the pivotal buildings, seven are significant for their architectural merits and one for its historical and architectural contribution to the area (Free Press Block, 272 Main Street). Three business blocks were built in the early twentieth century (present Reedsburg Bank Block at 201 Main Street; the Times Block at 115 and 117 South Walnut Street; Townsend Garage at 305 and 307 Main Street).

Stylistically, the majority of the business blocks are a commercial vernacular type often found in smaller cities and villages in Wisconsin around the turn of the century. Often the elaborate metal cornices and stone window trim are the outstanding features of these business blocks. Highlights of the district are the 1920 Classic Revival Reedsburg Bank at 201 Main Street, two Queen Anne buildings (the Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street and the George Hilbert Block at 260 Main Street) and the Romanesque Revival Free Press Block, designed by a locally prominent architect, Edward M. Hackett, at 272 Main Street. Another strong feature of the Main Street Commercial Historic District is the cluster of three of the eight business blocks in the 200 block built c. 1877-1878 after a fire destroyed most of the block (the N. W. Sallade Block at 237 Main Street; the Giles Stevens Block at 249 Main Street; and the William Dierks Block at 251 Main Street).

Two of the business blocks were built as banks (present day Reedsburg Bank at 201 Main Street and former Reedsburg Bank at 233 Main Street) and two were built as newspaper offices (Free Press Block at 272 Main Street and the Times Block at 115 and 117 South Walnut Street). Most of the business blocks were built or designed by local people but in 1877 Chicago architect S.V. Shipman designed the N. W. Sallade Block at 237 Main Street and the former Reedsburg Bank at 233 Main Street. Childs and Smith of Chicago designed the present Reedsburg Bank at 201 Main Street in 1920. Buildings at 296 and 283 Main Street were built and owned by lumberman and merchant, Thomas R. Young.

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Description    con't:

Morgan Building and Lumber of Reedsburg built the Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street in 1896 and the George Kelley Block at 234 Main Street in 1889. William Dierks of Reedsburg built both the 1874 Kelsey Block at 297 Main Street and his own furniture store at 251 Main Street in 1878. Edward M. Hackett, an architect and founding member of Reedsburg Building and Lumber Company, designed the Free Press Block at 272 Main Street in 1888, built and probably designed the similarly styled J. L. Green Block at 275 Main Street in 1885 and built (as Hackett and Buckley) but did not design the N. W. Sallade Block at 237 Main Street in 1877.

All but three of the business blocks are brick. The Townsend Garage at 305 and 307 Main Street was built in 1913 and 1916 and has rockfaced concrete block surface material. The present Reedsburg Bank at 201 Main Street is faced with smooth dressed limestone. The bank expanded eastward twice (c. 1927 and 1977) and absorbed two other business blocks and they are now also faced with limestone in the same Classic Revival style as the bank. The three story 1896 Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street has brick on much of it but has large expanses of rusticated limestone on the first story facade. Brick on most buildings is either pressed cream (usually from Jefferson, Wisconsin) or red brick.

In addition to the Reedsburg Bank expansion, other recent alterations in the district occurred in 1982-1983 on the Young Block at 296 Main Street when the original first story columns were exposed and the building renovated and with the current remodeling of the Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street. The hotel building is being remodeled into apartments, retail space and offices with Community Development Block Grant funds. Throughout the years the first stories of most of these businesses have been altered as tastes have changed, different economic considerations have occurred, or when new owners have taken over a business. Some have lost metal cornices, but all have retained enough elements of design to contribute to the district. Taken as a whole, the district still represents Reedsburg's turn of the century commercial district.

# 8 Significance

## Areas of significance

architecture: Significant examples of commercial architecture from 1874-1934

history: Development of a Community Commercial Development

Period of significance: 1874-1934

## Historical development and statement of significance.

### Introduction

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is historically significant for its association with the development of Reedsburg as a trade center for the basically rural area around the turn of the century. The business blocks are not only physical representations of this time but, taken as a whole, present an excellent example of commercial architecture of a small Wisconsin city. Numerous buildings have enough integrity and style to stand on their own as architecturally significant structures; one building is also individually historically significant.

### Historical Background

The first store opened in Reedsburg in 1850, with a scattering of businesses soon following until the depression of 1857 slowed growth (A). The first issue of the "Reedsburg Free Press" in 1860 noted that few places in Sauk County had as much trade, but that the crash left many buildings unfinished (B). Soon after this the hop crash of the 1860's dealt another blow to the local economy. The Chicago & North Western Railroad arrived in Reedsburg in 1872, placing the village on the main line to Chicago, and the commercial area of the village again prospered, with over 40 retail businesses or services listed in an 1872 city directory (A).

One of the reasons Reedsburg was settled in the 1840's was because of its strategic location on the Baraboo River and its potential as a trading center. The village became a shipping center for agricultural products and at various times there were lumber, flour and woolen mills, lumber yards and creameries. Farmers came to the village to sell produce or grain and, in turn, bought retail goods or used services they could not obtain at home. A 1912 promotional magazine noted that the city had ". . . a strong commercial representation, made up of modern, wide awake business houses and of a number, making keen competition. In fact its business aggregate is equal to the demands of a city of 10,000 people", (although its population was only 2,615.) (C)

The commercial area in Reedsburg has always been near or on Main Street, with some development heading south on Walnut Street toward the railroad. The Main Street Block between Park Street and Walnut Street (the proposed district) developed slightly earlier than the block and one-half west of it that comprises the downtown commercial area today (D). A fire in 1877 on the north side of Main Street between Park and Walnut Streets destroyed all but the easternmost business block (E). J. V. Kelsey's solid brick general store at 297 Main Street was the only building left standing, but the other destroyed buildings were frame with one of brick veneer. In 1891 a city ordinance was passed requiring all new commercial buildings to be constructed of solid brick (F).

Eight businesses were destroyed in the 1877 fire and within two years, eight new brick blocks were built, with only one (now demolished) of brick veneer. Not all of the businesses destroyed were rebuilt; new ventures

Main Street Commercial Historic District

Significance con't:

replaced some as old businesses found new locations. Among those rebuilt after the fire was S. J. Dearholt's dry goods and grocery at 223 Main Street, the former Reedsburg Bank at 233 Main Street, and N. W. Sallade's Drugstore at 237 Main Street (G). They are adjacent to each other and immediately to the east, Giles Stevens, an attorney, built an office at 249 Main Street in 1878. He used the second story himself and rented out the first story. In most other business blocks, the owners used the first story and rented the second. East of Stevens' office, William Dierks built a furniture store at 251 Main Street. By 1879 both Peter Byrne's block (now the location of the 1920 bank), George Hagenah's meat market with the Masons above, and one other retail store had been rebuilt. All are now part of the present Reedsburg Bank at 201 Main Street.

Dierks soon sold his furniture store (and went into the brewery business) to a company known as Reedsburg Furniture. In 1882 this company decided to build larger quarters at 273 Main Street, just east of the Dierks Block (H). The block at 275 Main Street was built by J. L. Green, a former lumberman, flour mill owner and local investor, as a rental hardware store (I,D). By 1885 Paul Bishop, burned out in 1877, had re-established a boots and shoes shop at 236 Main Street.

Thomas R. Young, a lumberman, builder and investor built two blocks, one on each side of Main Street in the late 1880's. The post office, a millinery store, a bazaar and the Granger's hall rented the block at 296 Main Street, while a feed store rented his building at 283 Main Street (J). At various times Young, who had a furniture store and a hardware store, used his buildings himself, as well as renting other blocks.

In 1888 David D. Russell built a solid brick block for his boots and shoe store at 266 Main Street (K), and the new Free Press Block was built at 272 Main Street (L). George Kelley's Block at 234 Main Street, rented as a restaurant, and the Vorlop Brothers Tailor Shop at 216 Main Street were built in 1889-1890 (M).

The last nineteenth century business blocks built in the Main Street Commercial Historic District were George Hilbert's 1895 block at 260 Main Street that was rented as a drugstore, restaurant and hotel (N), the three story Queen Anne Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street built in 1896 (O), and E. J. Gallagher's grocery and bakery at 244 Main Street. Prior to construction of the hotel, all of the blocks were two stories with flat roofs and cornices and fairly flat profiles. Businesses were service and goods oriented operations, characteristic of a small city retail district area. The hotel provided a spot for travelers to eat and sleep and was one of several hotels then in Reedsburg. Only one other one, outside the district, still exists.

There are three twentieth century buildings in the district. South of the hotel the Reedsburg Times Block was built in 1910 at 115 & 117 South Walnut Street. It bought the older "Reedsburg Free Press" in 1939 and the local newspaper still maintains offices there. In 1913 the Townsend Garage and Knights of Pythias Hall at 305 & 307 Main Street was built on the northeast corner of the district. It was added to in 1916 and offered auto sales and

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Significance con't:

repairs (P). In 1920 the Reedsburg Bank built a Classic Revival bank (tearing down an 1877 brick veneer building) at 201 Main Street. It expanded again in about 1927 and 1977 (Q).

Architectural Significance

The Main Street Commercial Historic District is an excellent representation of commercial architecture around the turn of the century. Developed between 1874 and 1934, much of the area consists of commercial vernacular styles that are highlighted by elaborate metal cornices and second story facade and window treatment. Excellent examples of this are the William Dierks Block at 251 Main Street, the Giles Stevens Block at 249 Main Street and the N. W. Sallade Block at 237 Main Street. The district also contains buildings in Classic Revival, Queen Anne, and Romanesque styles. The Hotel Stolte at 204 Main Street and the George Hilbert Block at 240 Main Street are two fine examples of Queen Anne commercial buildings in Reedsburg. The Classic Revival style is represented by the 1920 Reedsburg Bank at 201 Main Street. A fine example of Romanesque detailing is seen on the Free Press Block at 272 Main Street. While all of the buildings have some alterations, as a group, they present an aesthetically pleasing streetscape, representative of their period of construction. Some buildings are individually architecturally significant. There are no intruding buildings in the district and all buildings retain much of their original integrity. Because of the overall and individual style and integrity of the district, the Main Street Commercial Historic District has local architectural significance.

Historical Significance

The Main Street Commercial Historic District has commercial significance for its association with the development of Reedsburg as a trade and retail center for the surrounding area. In addition, the former Free Press Block has additional significance because of the role the newspaper played in promoting local business, industry and politics.

Strategically located on the Baraboo River, Reedsburg became a market place and shipping center for agricultural products. Farmers traveled to the village to sell produce and grain and in turn bought retail goods and used services they could not obtain at home. The city and countryside soon became dependent on one another. As the county developed and farm production increased, Reedsburg prospered and grew, in part because of the increased trade and business it received from the outlying areas. This development was further promoted by the arrival of freight and passenger railroad service in 1872. As more prosperity came to the city, more services and businesses were generated. Substantial brick business blocks replaced old wooden ones. More business meant a higher tax base which provided money for fire, police and educational services. On an individual level, an increase in trade meant people in the city could build new houses or business blocks, or improve their old ones. This continuous relationship between Reedsburg and the surrounding area and the resulting commercial development is reflected in the Main Street Commercial Historic District. Other areas of the commercial district have not

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Main Street Commercial Historic District

Significance      con't:

retained their integrity to the extent this group of business blocks has. From the 1870's until the 1920's (and continuing into the present) the Main Street Commercial Historic District has played a vital role in the development of Reedsburg.

The "Reedsburg Free Press", Reedsburg's first newspaper, occasionally published special promotional sections on businesses, industries and prominent individuals. More often, the weekly newspaper reported on produce shipments, hop cultivation, grain markets, the woolen mill and creameries. The paper not only reported on these industries but, more often than not, editorialized upon and promoted them. The comings and goings of businesses, changes of ownership and new buildings were noted and lamented or praised. Politically, the Republican oriented paper espoused its philosophy often, reflecting and/or influencing the generally Republican political bent of the city. The newspaper grew and prospered along with the city it promoted. The 1888 Free Press Block is the first permanent home of the paper and is a significant physical representation of the role the newspaper played in the promotion of the city.



BUILDING INVENTORY FOR MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>Address</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>State</u>
Main Street: 201	The Reedsburg Bank	Pivotal
204	Hotel Stolte	Pivotal
216	Vorlop Block	Contributing
223	S. J. Dearholt Block	Contributing
233	Former Reedsburg Bank	Contributing
234	George Kelley Block	Contributing
236	Business Block	Contributing
237	N. W. Sallade Block	Pivotal
244	Gallagher Block	Contributing
249	Giles Stevens Block	Pivotal
251	William Dierks Block	Pivotal
260	George Hilbert Block	Pivotal
266	D. D. Russell Block	Contributing
272	Free Press Block	Pivotal
273	Reedsburg Furniture Block	Contributing
275	J. L. Green Block	Contributing
283	T. R. Y. Block	Contributing
296	Young Block	Pivotal
297	J. V. Kelsey Block	Contributing
305 & 307	Townsend Garage & Knights of Pythias Hall	Contributing
Walnut Street, South: 115 & 117	Times Block	Contributing

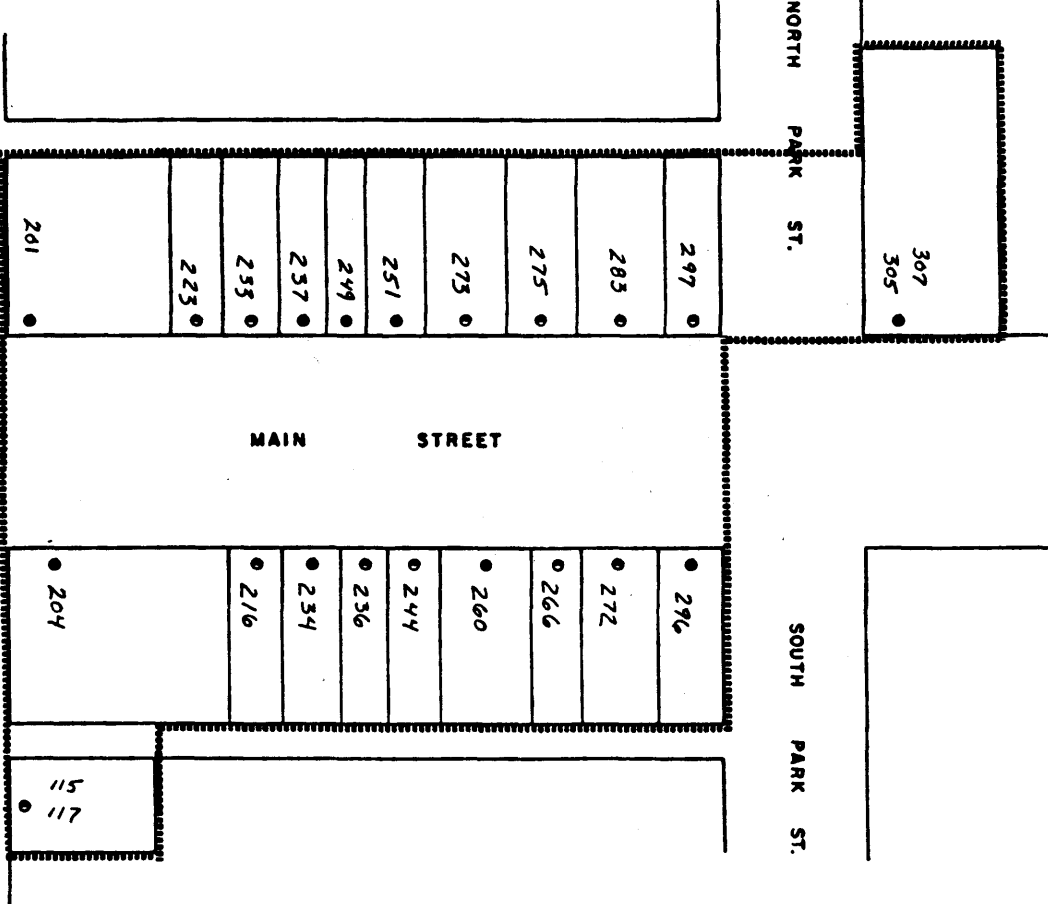
NORTH WALNUT ST.

SOUTH WALNUT ST.

NORTH PARK ST.

SOUTH PARK ST.

MAIN STREET

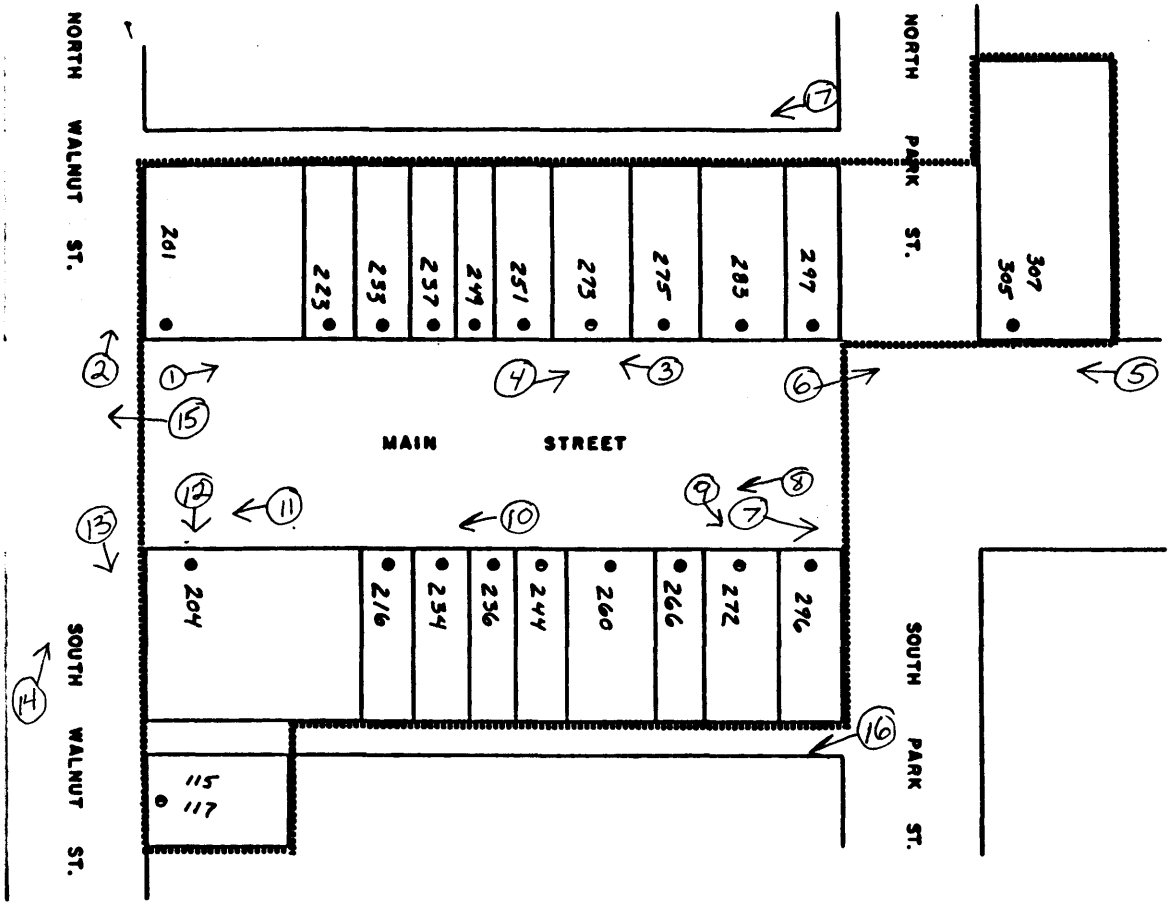


SCALE 1" = 50'

LEGEND

- PIVOTAL STRUCTURE ●
- CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE ●
- NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE ○
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY .....

MAIN STREET  
 COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 REEDSBURG, WISCONSIN



SCALE 1" = 50'

**LEGEND**

- PIVOTAL STRUCTURE ●
- CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE ○
- NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE ○
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY .....

**MAIN STREET  
COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
REEDSBURG, WISCONSIN**