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# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

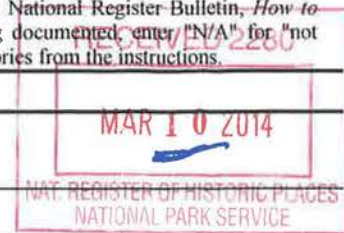
## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Happy Holler Historic District

Other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing \_\_\_\_\_

Historic and Architectural Resources in Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee



## 2. Location

Street & Number: 1200-1209 and 1211 N. Central Street; 103 and 105 East Anderson Avenue; 109 and 115 West Anderson Avenue.

City or town: Knoxville State: Tennessee County: Knox

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

## 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

*Claudia ...*

3/3/14

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official:

Date

Title:

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

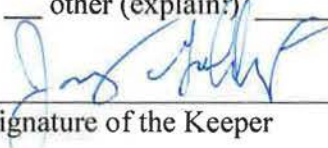
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

  
 Signature of the Keeper

4-23-2014  
 Date of Action

**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	
13	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
13	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store,  
Restaurant  
RECREATION AND CULTURE: Theater,  
Movie Theater

**Current Functions**

COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store,  
Restaurant

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

OTHER: One-Part Commercial Block

**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; CONCRETE: concrete block; CERAMIC TILE

**Narrative Description**

**Summary:** Happy Holler, a fine example of an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century one-part commercial block community shopping district, is located 1.2 miles north of the center of downtown Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee. Originally part of North Knoxville (incorporated in 1889), it was annexed by the City of Knoxville in 1897. The proposed district consists of fourteen buildings. Thirteen of these are considered contributing resources. The district is compact, with most of the buildings fronting on North Central Street and a few lining the south-facing side of East and West Anderson Avenues. Before commercial development was underway, the area contained several small houses. They appear in the 1903 Sanborn map but were subsequently demolished and replaced with commercial buildings. A church and other stores existed just beyond the boundaries of the district, but those buildings have been lost or altered too greatly to have been considered contributing resources. The community was formed at the hub of two streetcar lines that provided transportation between “trolley suburbs,” downtown, and manufacturing and railroad districts.

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**Narrative:** The majority of the Happy Holler buildings are one-story commercial buildings that were built during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> The buildings formed the core of a community-oriented shopping district that was established along a trolley line in 1905. Residents of Old North Knoxville, a Victorian-era neighborhood lying to the east, were served by the area, as were the textile, railroad, and iron workers, and their families who resided in the blocks to the west. The trolley line provided the means for other Knoxvilleans (like those of the nearby late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Lincoln Park subdivision and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Oakwood subdivision) to travel to the grocery store, drug and hardware stores, the movie theater, and other venues in Happy Holler.

The buildings form a one-part commercial block and were constructed with characteristically minimal ornamentation. The simple coping of red tile or ornamental brick is typical of these types of buildings. With one exception, all the historic buildings were constructed with no setbacks along the sidewalks – creating the classic American “Main Street” appearance. Almost all of these were built lot-line to lot-line, with walls adjoining neighboring buildings. The principal construction material was brick. The front elevations are characterized as simple commercial street-level storefronts, consisting of sidewalk-oriented entrances and display windows. Entrances are usually, though not always, centered on the facades, and doorways are often recessed, emphasizing the display windows. Fenestration is punctuated by large display windows that rest upon bulkheads and are capped with multi-light transoms.

While the buildings in Happy Holler are all primarily constructed of masonry with minimal decoration, there are subtle differences between pre-1920 buildings and the 1920- to 1940-era buildings. These differences portray the evolution of building materials and architectural styles. Simply stated, the evolution includes: (1) Unpretentious brick work and modest cornices (see photograph of 1209 North Central Street; Photograph 0010); (2) Modest Art Deco influences, including such variations in color as smooth faced, buff brick and dark accent brick (see photograph of 1206 North Central Street; Photograph 0006); and (3) later buildings (see photograph of 115 West Anderson Avenue; Photograph 0013) constructed with concrete block with rug textured face brick veneer and steel-cased metal and plate glass display windows. These windows represent the advancement in fire-protection technology that was sweeping American cities in the 1920-1950 era.

The uses of commercial space evolved in response to changing ownership and economic conditions; moving from just meeting the day-to-day needs of the surrounding neighborhoods to a range of commercial establishments such as a tearoom and pub, specialty shops selling antiques and bridal dresses, that served the needs and attracted the business of a wider community.<sup>2</sup>

## Property Inventory

### **1200 N. Central Street 1924 (C)**

Originally built in 1924, this single-story, stuccoed brick building first housed a restaurant. The building is located on the corner of N. Central Street and E. Anderson Avenue. The front elevation is composed of three large display windows, set above wood bulkheads. Beyond the display windows is a fourth division that

<sup>1</sup> Knoxville City Directories, 1890-1950.

<sup>2</sup> Interviews with Daniel Schuh, Architect, who oversaw the restoration of several properties in Happy Hollow (by Keiana Hunter, June 2009).

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contains the entry door. The entry door is wood with two raised panels on the bottom with a single light above. Transoms are present above the storefront display windows and the door. The entrance door is accented with a smaller transom above and a sidelight. Above the transoms is a modern copper awning installed in 2008. A recessed rectangular panel that is trimmed in corbelled brick spans the storefront, providing a signboard location. There is a low parapet on the façade of two courses of brick that wraps from the front elevation to the side elevation. The side elevation consists of two display windows each set over a brick bulkhead and topped by a transom. Above the transoms is a modern copper awning. Above this is a recessed rectangular panel framed in one course of corbelled bricks which matches the same detail on the front elevation. (Photographs 0001, 0002 and 0003)

**1202 N. Central Street 1926 (C)**

Built in 1926, this single-story running bond brick commercial building first housed A. J. Campbell's Grocery Store. The façade is composed of two large display windows set above wood bulkheads. Directly above the display windows are single light transoms. The entry door is located in the center of the building, between the two display windows. The door is composed of wood with raised panels on the bottom and a single glass light above. Above the door is a transom, with another fixed wood and glass window above it, centered between the transoms over the display windows. The buff colored brick is original, representing a typical design feature of the era. A metal awning installed in 2008 covers the width of the building. (Photograph 0004)

**1204 N. Central Street Circa 1925 (C)**

Built in the late 1920s, the building's first occupant was White Stores Grocery. The façade of this single-story commercial building is composed of buff brick, laid in running bond, capped by red tile coping. The four large display windows are set above wood bulkheads. Above the display windows are wood and single light transoms. The entrance to the building is through a centrally located wood double door. Each door has raised panels on the bottom and a single light above. A metal awning installed in 2008 covers the width of the building. (Photograph 0005)

**1206 N. Central Street Circa 1930 (C)**

This commercial building features very modest Art Deco brickwork, typical of its 1930 era of construction. North Central Radio originally occupied the building. The red brick walls frame four display windows, which are located over wood bulkheads. Entrance to the building is through a wood raised panel entry door with a single glass light on the upper half and a rectangular transom above. Five transoms are set in line with the windows and the entry door transom. A 2008 copper awning covers the width of the store windows. There is simple decorative brickwork on the upper portion of the building above the awning, including inset brick panels in line with the windows above and a centrally placed rectangle that features brown brick in line with the entry door. Above this area is a line of brown brick placed on their long side. Above, there is stone coping along the length of the building. (Photograph 0006)

**1208 N. Central Street 1920 (C)**

This brick commercial building is slightly larger (in terms of height, width, and depth) than its adjoining counterparts to the south (1200 to 1206 North Central). It is also slightly earlier, having been constructed in 1920. White Stores moved up the street to this location in 1943 as its business expanded. The hand-painted White Stores sign, uncovered and preserved during renovation, attests to the building's early use. The front elevation is broken into three equally proportioned segments with its entrance framed by matching sets of wood and single-light display windows, brick bulkheads, and transoms. The recessed entrance to the

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building features wood raised panel doors each with a single glass panel on the upper half. A contemporary metal awning was added during the building's restoration in 2008. (Photograph 0007)

**1201 N. Central Street** 1932 (NC)

Built circa 1932, this Commercial Vernacular structure is one of the second generation buildings in Happy Holler. Its corner entrance, at the intersection of N. Central Street and West Anderson Avenue, is set back a car length from the street, a reflection of the need for parking as automobiles came into common use. The two-story building is largely composed of brick, although the second story is cinder block, suggesting this space was an addition built after World War II. Steel casement windows are inset in the second story, the majority are nine lights. Downstairs are continuous display windows with a large five-light display window on its N. Central Street elevation and a two light window on the West Anderson Avenue elevation. A small one-story retail shop was later added to the N. Central Street-oriented façade. This building is sided in vinyl which continues along the side of the original building. Because of this change 1201 N. Central Street is the district's one non-contributing building. Both floors are now used for selling antiques. (Photograph 0008)

**1205 N. Central Street** 1916 (C)

Upon completion in 1916, this two-story brick building became home to Happy Holler's movie theater, which ceased operation in 1955. The second story of the façade is original, featuring three one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows, common bond brick with the top six courses a darker brick, and is capped with original tile coping. The ground-floor facade was altered from the original theater configuration sometime during the late 1950s (after the theater closed its doors). The first floor now has one bay of three aluminum frame display windows and an aluminum door, which replaced the original theater features. The glass of the transom windows are now covered over with wood panels. (See the building to the left in photograph 0009).

**1207 and 1209 N. Central Street** 1909 (C)

Two almost mirror-image storefronts compose these brick commercial buildings, which were constructed in 1909. In 1920 Southern Household Supply Company took over the 1209 North Central space, and when the company expanded around 1930, occupying both addresses, matching façades with framed transoms were created, each with a recessed wood and three-quarter length glass panel entry door. 1207 features eleven light wood-framed transoms while 1209 has thirteen light wood-framed transoms. Decorative black ceramic tile is set under the display windows in the bulkheads which extend into the inset entries. The façade features common bond brick above the storefronts and running bond along the sides of the storefronts. The storefronts are capped by stone coping (Photograph 0010).

**1211 N. Central Street** 1917 (C)

This building, dating from 1917, is very similar to the buildings next door (1207 and 1209 North Central Street), although the brick used in its construction is a slightly darker shade. Like its neighbors it has black ceramic tile under the display windows in the bulkheads. The display windows are large plate glass set within thin metal frames. The windows continue into the recessed entry, which is accessed by wood and three-quarter length glass panel entry door. Unlike the buildings at 1207 and 1209 N. Central, the original transoms at this address have been covered over in wood panels. (See the building to the far right in photograph 0009).

**Anderson Avenue Resources**

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The North Central Street buildings are complemented by the corner properties along East and West Anderson Avenue. Descriptions follow:

**103 and 105 E. Anderson Avenue** 1930 (C)

These two slot-commercial buildings were both built in 1930, and are contiguous with 1200 N. Central Street. Their stuccoed brick façades are each accented with a rectangular brick inset framed by header bricks on the parapet face. The continuous low parapet is capped with tile coping. The brick and tile coping have been more recently painted to accentuate these features. Both facades have been restored and feature display windows that are topped with wood framed transoms, single light on 103 and six light on 105. Entrances are centered on the façades with wood doors that feature two raised panels on the bottom half and a single light on the top, these doors were replaced during the 2008 restoration work. Above each door is a single light transom. Metal awnings were also added, in 2008, above each of the entrances. (Photograph 0011)

**109 W. Anderson Avenue** 1932 (C)

This utilitarian brick commercial building was constructed in 1932. The brick façade has been painted and is laid in a running bond pattern. The façade is punctuated by two aluminum-frame plate glass display windows. Above the windows is a cloth awning. There are two wood doors, each is composed of two horizontal panels, extending to waist height and capped by four, vertical lights above. The top of the building features original red tile coping. (Photograph 0012)

**115 W. Anderson Avenue** Circa 1945 (C)

As the Happy Holler commercial district expanded in the late 1940s, this two-story building was constructed to house Central Furniture and Appliances. As a second generation building, its modest commercial style architecture features two structural advancements of the era. Steel-framed windows were used, having become the material of choice for construction nationally because of their proven capacity to minimize fire hazards. Also typical of the time is this building's construction from concrete block with the use of textured rug face brick veneer only on the facade. The brick veneer is laid in a running bond pattern. The building features two second story steel-framed windows, one with twelve lights and the other with nine (the central pane includes a vent in lieu of glass). The parapet is stepped, with a taller central portion and lower smaller sides. The parapet is topped a simple row of red tile coping. The ground-level façade is also intact, and contains a recessed metal double-door, each door with a single glass pane. This entrance is framed by large steel-framed two light display windows. Dog-tooth bricks run vertically at the corner of the inset entry. (Photograph 0013)

**Summary**

This early community-oriented shopping district contains a remarkable collection of small-scale, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century commercial buildings. The architecture is unpretentious and reflects the essence of the establishments that served the needs of the residents of North Knoxville's streetcar suburbs. The district retains a high degree of integrity: a visitor today can readily appreciate the atmosphere of day-to-day shopping and provision of services that transpired over 80 years ago.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- 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 N/A**  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes 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.  
less than 50 years old or achieving
- G significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

COMMERCE  
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

**Period of Significance**  
1909-1961

**Significant Dates**

**Significant Person**

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**  
Unknown



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**Statement of Significance Summary**

This early 20th-century district, known by its Depression-era moniker as “Happy Holler,” located in Knoxville (Knox County), Tennessee, is eligible under Criterion A as an example of an early “one-part block” suburban shopping district. Its establishments were created in response to the development of Knoxville’s trolley suburbs and the growth of nearby textile mill housing. The district, with its modest early 20th-century commercial buildings, maintains the setting, location, design, materials, and feeling of a place where generations shopped and patronized service businesses and entertainment venues. Happy Holler’s period of significance extends from 1909, when the oldest extant building was constructed, to 1961 when the district ceased to be a thriving commercial enterprise following the closing of nearby Brookside Mills in 1956, and the end of prohibition in the district in 1961.

Happy Holler was at the heart of business expansion that occurred north of the city, part of the development of the “trolley suburbs” enabled by the extension of the streetcar system up North Central Street. The streetcar system facilitated travel between downtown and the district, delivering customers for groceries, services, and entertainment; producing an influx of business and economic vitality to Happy Holler. Later, as North Central Street was incorporated into the U.S. highway system in the mid-twentieth century, it became a major route between Knoxville and destinations to the north, south, and east. The “one-part commercial block” suburban type of developments were built to take advantage of road construction in other areas of the city, but none of these business areas exhibits the degree of intactness of early structures and building pattern as does Happy Holler.

Happy Holler’s early popularity as an “entertainment” venue arose from its reputation as a place where alcohol could be easily purchased from establishments along its back alleys during Prohibition (beginning in 1907 in Knoxville); hence the name “Happy” Holler. Later, in 1916, the area was associated with another type of entertainment venue: the first suburban movie theater in Knoxville. The theater was a favorite destination for local residents as well as people from surrounding areas who could now enjoy motion picture entertainment without having to travel into the central business district. The silver screen in Happy Holler provided entertainment for Knoxvilleans from the silent-film era through the advent of Technicolor; from the 1920s through the 1950s. The long term success of the area as an entertainment venue—comprising bars and restaurants, as well as the movie theater—in a compact space outside the central business district made it unique in the city.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Happy Holler is the most intact early 20<sup>th</sup>-century shopping and service district outside of Knoxville’s central business district. The use of the word “happy” in the name results from the popularity of the area during many years of prohibition. The term “holler” is derived from Appalachian dialect describing a *hollow*, recognizing the lower-lying topography in this area.

Three movements played a role in the area’s development: (1) the construction of Brookside Mills and Brookside Village, starting in 1886; (2) the Elmwood Street Railroad Company which ran a streetcar line beginning in 1890; and (3) Knoxville Railway & Light Company’s development of a Central Street trolley line in 1905. All three generated residents with enough buying power to enable the growth of this shopping district. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and City Directory records show that development began in the area in

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1890; however, the earliest extant building in the district dates to 1909. This era was marked by steady industrial and population growth in Knoxville, leading to modest economic prosperity in the nearby neighborhoods.

The district runs along both sides of the 1200 blocks of North Central Street, and was positioned between two transit routes. The Elmwood Street Railroad Company, the first streetcar line to operate in Knoxville, was in operation by the early 1890s, with one of its steam-powered engines operating along Woodland Avenue (a block to the north of Happy Holler). This streetcar system, like similar lines across the country at that time, was known as a “dummy line” because its steam engines were incorporated into the design of a trolley car, rather than having the look of a standard railroad locomotive. This line became known as the Fountain Head Railroad at the turn of the century. The line ended at a round-about in Fountain City, a resort area five miles to the northeast.

In 1905, the Knoxville Traction Company, a streetcar business that had gained control of all the existing lines, extended the routes to provide trolley service to the north, opening up additional residential and business development opportunities, particularly along North Central Street.<sup>3</sup> Happy Holler was centrally located among the trolley-era suburbs of North Knoxville, Oakwood, and Lincoln Park and near the midpoint of the streetcar line. That line enabled laborers and railroad workers to reach their work places, most of which were along the railroad corridor less than one-quarter mile to the west. It also made it easy for shop owners and businessmen to travel to and from downtown.<sup>4</sup>

Happy Holler is one of seven neighborhood or community-based commercial districts that grew around streetcar systems (see Figure 3: the streetcar route map from the Knoxville General Plan, 1927).<sup>5</sup> Other commercial districts emerged in Fountain City, Lonsdale, Emory Place, Edgewood, Burlington and Vestal. The districts had stores and services that catered to nearby residents and, occasionally, factory workers. Small groceries, drug stores, barber and beauty shops, hardware stores, and cleaners were typical uses. Occasionally, businesses could be found along the streetcar lines but none formed hubs like Happy Holler and the other aforementioned districts. The architecture of three of the districts; Happy Holler, Fountain City and Emory Place (NR listed 23 December 1994), is appreciably more intact and less altered than the other places, with the exception of Emory Place.

There were clear differences between mill villages, streetcar suburbs, and automobile suburbs, particularly in regard to the street systems and the dependence of residents on small commercial areas. The shopping opportunities grew markedly with the more widespread use of the automobile in the 1920s, decreasing dependency on the sidewalk-oriented, local commercial districts.

<sup>3</sup> Patton, Edwin P., *Transportation Development in Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville*. (Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1976).

<sup>4</sup>Two portions of North Knoxville have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places as Old North Knoxville (NR listed 14 May 1992) and Fourth and Gill (NR listed 29 April 1985).

<sup>5</sup> Various streetcar lines emerged between 1890 and 1905 when consolidation took place under the banner of the Knoxville Power & Light Company. By 1913 there were 53 miles of streetcar track. Ridership grew into the 1920s, peaking at 19,600,000 passengers during the year 1923. Edwin P. Patton’s “Transportation Development,” which is a chapter in *The Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville, Tennessee* (Lucile Deaderick, Editor; Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1976) captures the essence of Knoxville’s streetcar history.

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The mill villages and streetcar suburbs were products of Knoxville's rapid industrial and suburban growth in the period from 1880 to 1920. Knoxville's population rose from 9,693 in 1880 to 77,818 in 1920 (that latter year reflects a massive annexation of the streetcar suburbs in 1917). Industrialization and the streetcar suburbs were accompanied by the development of the commercial districts near the villages or at the end of the streetcar lines. The Happy Holler, Edgewood, Lonsdale and Vestal shopping districts were clearly related to nearby industries and the associated workers' housing as well as the streetcar routes. The industries were as follows: Brookside Mills (Happy Holler), Standard Knitting Mills (Edgewood), Candoro Marble (NR office building, DOE quarry) and Vestal Lumber Company (Vestal), and the Knoxville Iron Company (Lonsdale).

In two cases, the districts grew in response to leisure opportunities and speculative real estate development, specifically Burlington which was near Chilhowee Park (complete with a swimming lake and amusement rides) and a horse race track, and Fountain City that boasted mineral springs and a hotel. In the case of Fountain City, the real estate office was at the hub where the Fountain Head Railway turned around for its return to Emory Place, a market district just north of downtown Knoxville.<sup>6</sup>

Streetcar operations were negatively impacted as automobile travel became more common by the early 1930s. In 1945, the City of Knoxville decided to start closing streetcar routes and switched to bus service. By 1947 the trolley lines had all been dismantled or covered with asphalt.<sup>7</sup>

### Commerce Significance

During its peak, Happy Holler was an important commercial destination that served mill, metal manufacturing, railroad workers, and their families. 1200 N. Central Street was constructed in 1924 and was first occupied by a restaurant; by 1930, Week's Drug Store had moved in and remained for over 60 years. 1202 N. Central was constructed in 1926 and the building's first occupant was A.J. Campbell's Grocery Store. Another grocery, White Stores Grocery, was located in 1204 N. Central, which was built circa 1925. White Stores was a popular market throughout the south which evolved into the Food City Corporation chain. White Stores moved to the larger space at 1208 N. Central, constructed in 1920, in 1943 when their business had expanded. This building still retains the original White Stores painted sign on its façade. 1201 N. Central was built in 1932 for the owners of S&T Quality Corner, a grocery store that included a retail and wholesale meat market. Additionally, the second story once served as a boxing training center where well-known boxing coach, Ace Miller, trained the champion boxer, John Tate. Tate was a 1976 Olympic bronze medalist and became the world heavy weight champion in 1977. 1206 N. Central was built in 1920 and first housed North Central Radio. 1205 N. Central was completed in 1916 and housed the first movie theater outside Knoxville's central business district. First opened as the "Picto" movie theater, the names for the theater then successively changed: Central (1920), Liberty (1922), Central (1925), Cameo (1931), Joy (1935) and, finally, Center (1948). The theater ceased operation in 1955.

<sup>6</sup> The context for suburban growth and development was documented in a Multiple Property Submission, "Historic and Architectural Resources in Knoxville and Knox County" (1994).

<sup>7</sup> Patton, 228-230.

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The evolution of businesses and the physical fabric of the buildings themselves as a result, are seen in other buildings in the Happy Holler district such as 1207 and 1209 N. Central, which were both constructed in 1909. 1207 N. Central was first occupied by a restaurant known as Eating House while 1209 housed Henry Brothers Grocery. In 1920 Southern Household Supply Company took over the space at 1209 and by 1930 the business had expanded to occupy both 1209 and 1207. At this time the buildings were altered to match, including the addition of framed transoms, with recessed doors on both sides. Decorative ceramic tile is set under the display windows. 1211 N. Central was constructed in 1917 for Brantley Brothers, an automobile garage, and parts store. By the early 1920s, however, the building became a dry goods store known as Wright's Cash Store, which continued to serve this purpose for at least three decades under the names Chesney and Yates Dry Goods and, subsequently, Chesney and Son Dry Goods. 115 West Anderson Ave. was built circa 1945 to house Central Furniture and Appliances.

Within its first 25 years, Happy Holler's businesses included a dry goods store, a furniture store, a barber shop, a shoe repair shop, grocery stores, a drug store, a milk depot, a billiard hall, a dry cleaner, a livery stable, a theater, restaurants, and a funeral home.<sup>8</sup> Happy Holler remained a bustling commercial district until Brookside Mills, a nearby textile mill that was one of the largest employers of workers in Knoxville during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, began to decline in the mid-1950s. By 1954, this textile operation was foundering; its machinery was outdated and management decided that modernization was too costly. In 1954, the mill's employment dropped from 1,050 to 150, and by 1956 its doors were closed.<sup>9</sup>

Another factor resulting in changes to Happy Holler was highway travel. North Central Street became part of the U.S. highway system (late 1950s to early 1960s) as a major route between Knoxville and destinations to the north, south, and east. At that time, businesses that catered to travelers, such as drive-in restaurants and filling stations, began to appear around Happy Holler. Although other areas of the city developed similarly along highways that were part of the U.S. system, none have retained the built resources and development pattern of the first half of the twentieth century as has Happy Holler.

### Entertainment Significance

The district reportedly received its nickname, "Happy Holler," as an outgrowth of prohibition. Prohibition was first enacted by Knoxville in 1907, then the State in 1917, and finally nationally with the Volstead Act in 1919. The prohibition on liquor sales did not end in Knoxville until 1961.<sup>10</sup> Happy Holler was notorious for the bootleggers operating from back rooms in the district and adjoining blocks.<sup>11</sup>

As the home of the first suburban movie theater in Knoxville, Happy Holler became popular for an entertainment venue of another type. The original name of the theater when it opened, during the latter half of the silent film era in 1916, was the "Picto" (1205 Central Street). It provided a convenient alternative to

<sup>8</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1917-1924.

<sup>9</sup> McDonald, Michael J. and William Bruce Wheeler (1983). *Knoxville, Tennessee: Continuity and Change in an Appalachian City*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 96-99.

<sup>10</sup> "Knoxville's Ban on Liquor Fails," New York Times, Feb. 9, 1908; R.S. Keller, *Prohibition in Tennessee, 1917*. Also, note that Knoxville finally ended prohibition with a referendum in 1961. As longtime Knoxville resident explained in a December 13, 2012 interview, the alleys of Happy Holler were notorious for backdoor liquor sales. A patron could merely ring a doorbell; in turn, a bootlegger would ask what was wanted and a transaction followed.

<sup>11</sup> *Knoxville News Sentinel*. "A Little Too Happy Community Infamous for Wild Weekends" Amy R. Miller. July 26, 1995.

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
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attending the movie theater in Knoxville’s central business district. Going to the movies provided a pleasant leisure activity for area residents, including the many mill and industrial workers and their families. Many of these mill workers were employees of Brookside Mills. The theater thrived up until the closing of Brookside Mills and was further negatively impacted by competition from new suburban theaters. The theater in Happy Holler had several names over the course of its operation, but in the last few years before it closed its doors in 1955, it was known as the Center Theatre.<sup>12</sup>

**The district’s status today:** Many buildings have been restored and commercial space is being used for businesses addressing the needs and taste of current residents including an antique store, a tea room, a pub, a record store, a bridal shop, and a beauty shop. The restorations were completed in conjunction with “Façade Improvement Grants,” enabled by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Empowerment Zone Program. These restorations were consistent with the U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation. These facade restorations were significant in Happy Holler’s recent renaissance. Happy Holler retains a unique identity that has not diminished with the passage of time, and it remains a distinctive and vital retail and service area.

<sup>12</sup> *Cinema Treasures*. Accessed 15 September 2013, [www.cinematreasures.org/theater/14353](http://www.cinematreasures.org/theater/14353).

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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### Bibliography

Cinema Treasures. 16 Feb 2009. [www.cinematreasures.org/theater/14353](http://www.cinematreasures.org/theater/14353)

Happy Hollow District on North Central Street. 16 Feb 2009.  
<http://www.oldnorthknoxville.org/virtual%202008/happyholler.htm>

“Historic and Architectural Resources in Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee.” National Register Nomination Form, Listed 11 August 1994.

Insurance Maps of Knoxville Tennessee. Sanborn Map Company 1917-1924

Knoxville City Directory, Numerical Telephone Directory: A Buyers Guide and Complete Classified Business Directory. 1890-1950.

McDonald, Michael J. and William Bruce Wheeler (1983). *Knoxville, Tennessee: Continuity and Change in an Appalachian City*. The University of Tennessee Press, 1983.

Miller, Amy R. (1995). Little Too Happy Community Infamous for Wild Weekends. *Knoxville News Sentinel*.

Patton, Edwin P., Transportation Development in Heart of the Valley: A History of Knoxville (Edited by L. Deaderick). Knoxville: East Tennessee Historical Society, 1976.

Interviews with Daniel Schuh, Architect and Owner of several properties in Happy Holler. With Keiana Hunter on 21 January 2009, and with Michael Carberry on several occasions in October 2010.

Interview with Jack Sharp, nephew of the original owner of S & T Quality Store on several occasions, 2011 and 2012. (Sharp grew up in Knoxville and served on City Council and Vice Mayor.)

Happy Holler Historic District  
 Name of Property

Knox TN  
 County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	x	State Historic Preservation Office
previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency
previously determined eligible by the National Register		Federal agency
designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #		University
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #		Other
recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #		Name of repository:
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):		

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
County and State

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** 1.698 acres **USGS Quadrangle** Knoxville-147 NW

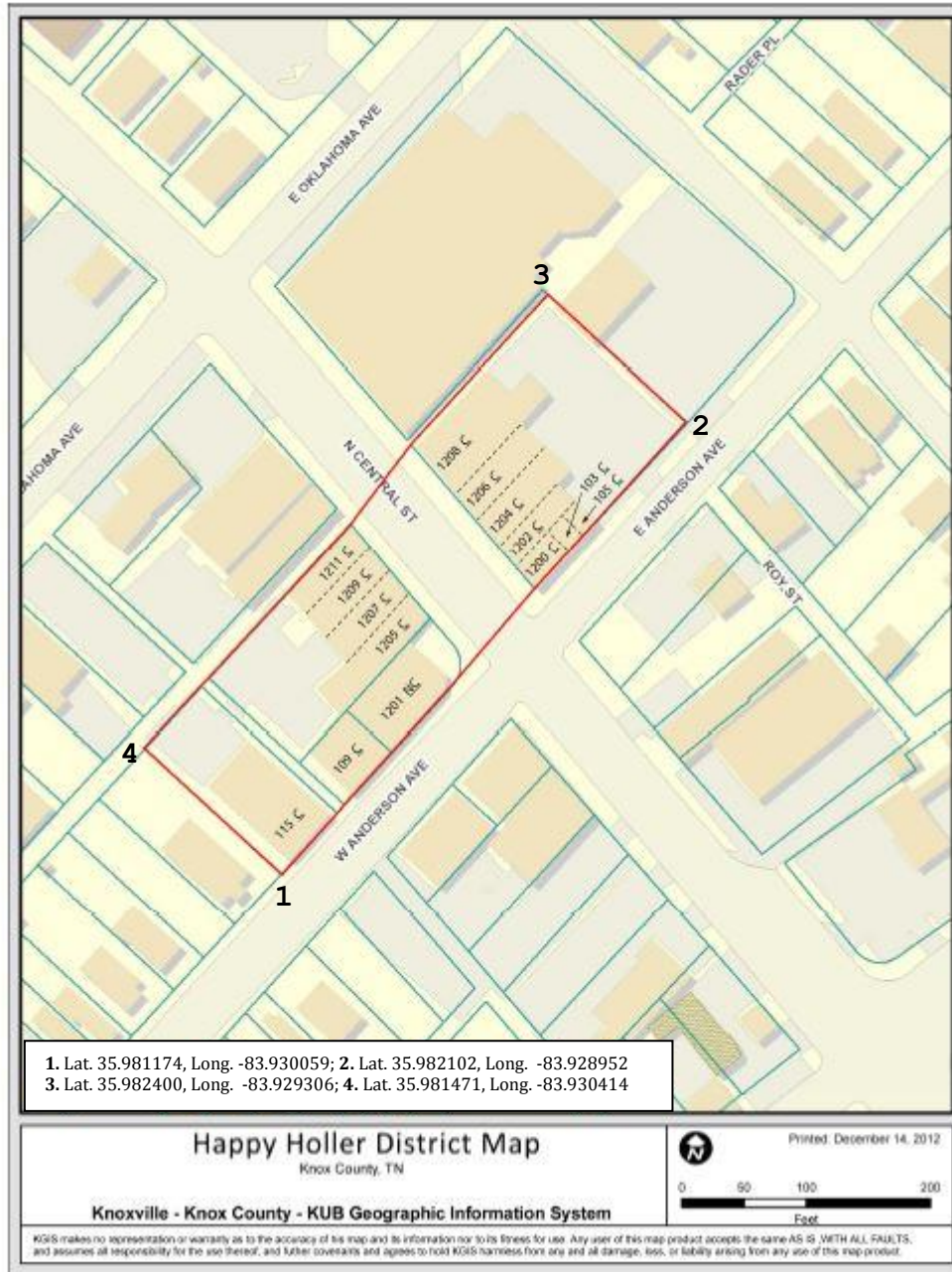
**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.981174 | Longitude: -83.930059 |
| 2. Latitude: 35.982102 | Longitude: -83.928952 |
| 3. Latitude: 35.982400 | Longitude: -83.929306 |
| 4. Latitude: 35.981471 | Longitude: -83.930414 |



Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

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Happy Holler Historic District  
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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The legal parcel numbers (Knox County, TN) are: 081MA038, 081NH011, 081NH012, 081NH01201 and 081NH013. These are rectangular parcels abutting North Central Street and West Anderson Avenue.

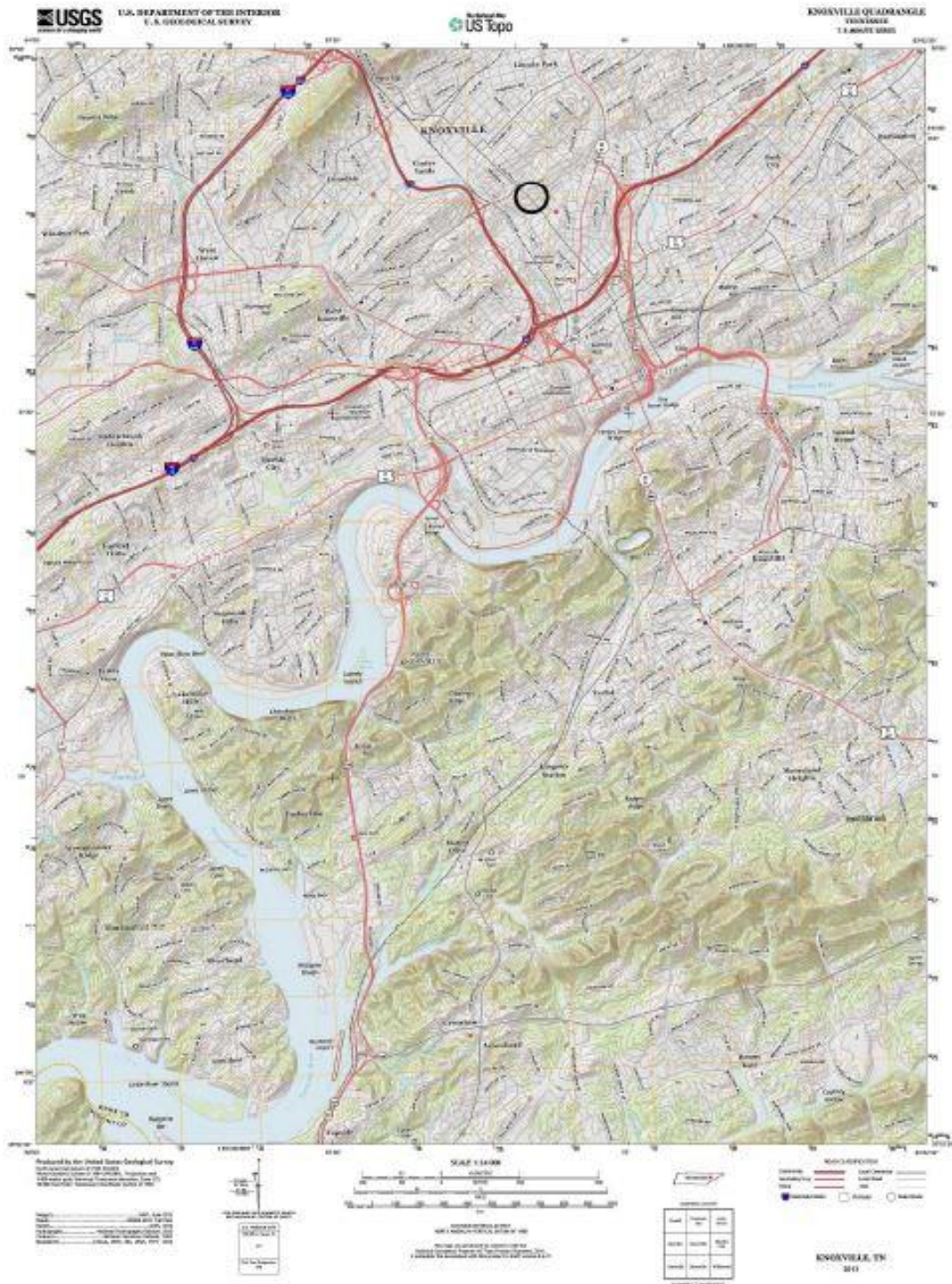
**Boundary Justification**

The properties are contiguous and the district's buildings are primarily attached to each other. The buildings that are included in this designation were and continue to be the heart center of Happy Holler. The original lot lines were used to precisely mark the edges of the district.

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

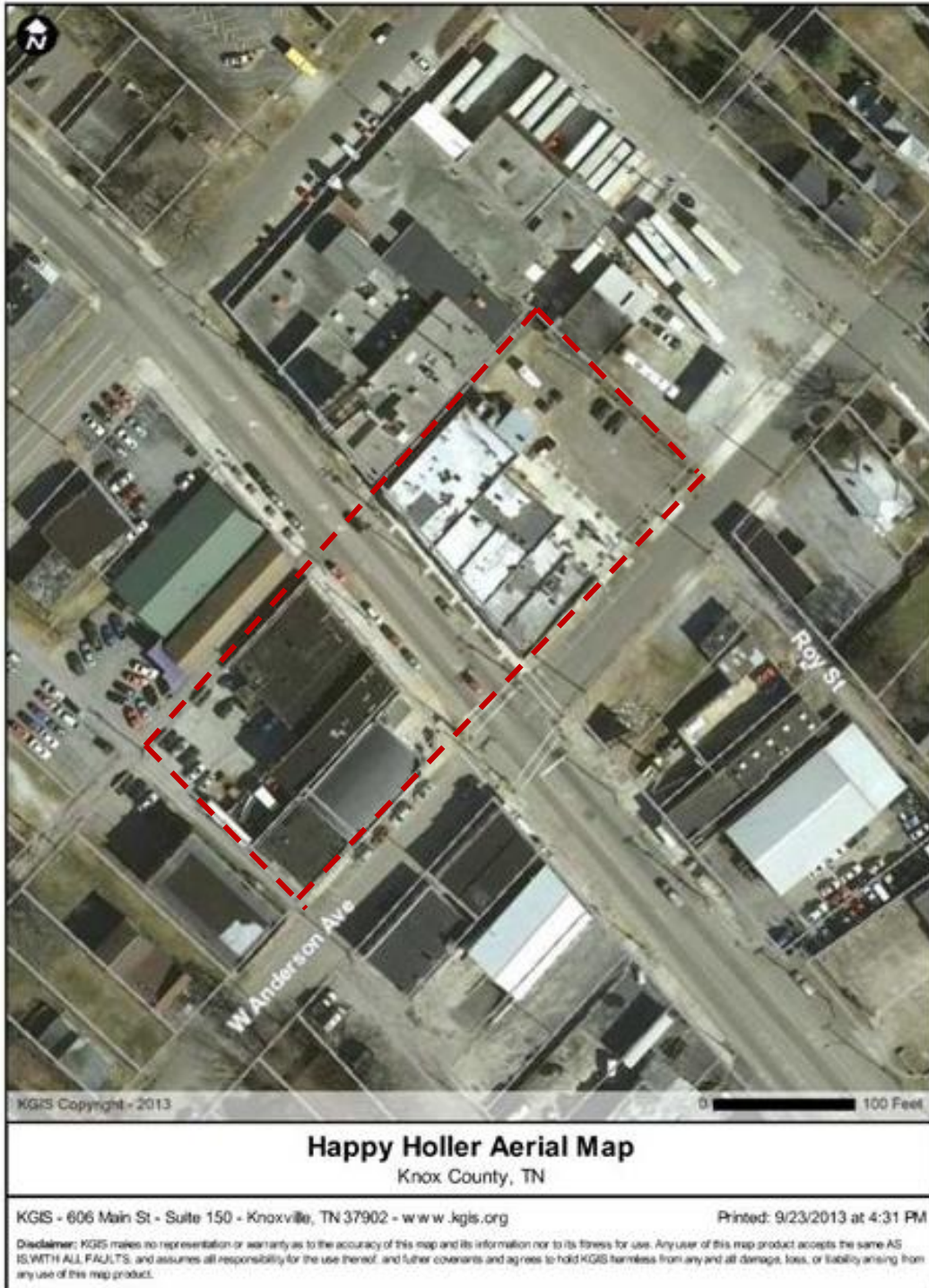
Knox TN  
County and State

*USGS Knoxville US Topo Revision 2013*



Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
County and State



Happy Holler Historic District Knox TN  
 Name of Property County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name Michael Carberry, Comprehensive Planning Manager, Keiana Hunter and Eric McTravers, Interns, and Michael Reynolds, Planner II, in concert with Ann Bennett and Kaye Graybeal, Historic Preservation Planners

Organization Knoxville/Knox County MPC

Street & Number 400 Main Street Date 11-27-2013

City or Town Knoxville Telephone (865) 215-3825

E-mail mike.carberry@knoxmpc.org State TN Zip Code 37902

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
County and State

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Happy Holler Historic District

City or Vicinity: Knoxville

County: Knox County

State: TN

Photographer: Michael Carberry

Dates Photographed: various dates, 2011 into 2013 (depending on angles of the sun and traffic)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

0001. Façade of 1200 N. Central Street. Photographer facing northeast.

0002. Façades of 1200 to 1206 N. Central Street. Photographer facing east.

0003. Façades of 1200 to 1208 N. Central Street. Photographer facing east.

0004. Façade of 1204 N. Central Street. Photographer facing northeast.

0005. Façade of 1204 N. Central Street. Photographer facing northeast.

0006. Façade of 1206 N. Central Street. Photographer facing northeast.

0007. Façade of 1206 N. Central Street. Photographer facing northeast.

0008. Façade of 1201 N. Central Street. Photographer facing southwest.

0009. Façade of 1205 to 1209 N. Central Street. Photographer facing west.

0010. Façade of 1207 and 1209 N. Central Street. Photographer facing west.

0011. Façade of 103 and 105 East Anderson Avenue. Photographer facing north.

0012. Façade of 109 West Anderson Avenue. Photographer facing north.

0013. Front façade of 115 West Anderson Avenue. Photographer facing north.

0013. Front façade of 115 West Anderson Avenue. Photographer facing north.

0014. Façade/Street Scene of 1206, 1204, 1202 and 1200 N. Central Avenue. Photographer facing south.

0015. Facades of 1200 and 1202 N. Central Avenue. Photographer facing north.

0016. Rear elevations of 1204 and 1206 N. Central Avenue . Photographer facing west.

0017. Rear elevations of 1208 N. Central Avenue Photographer facing west.

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
County and State

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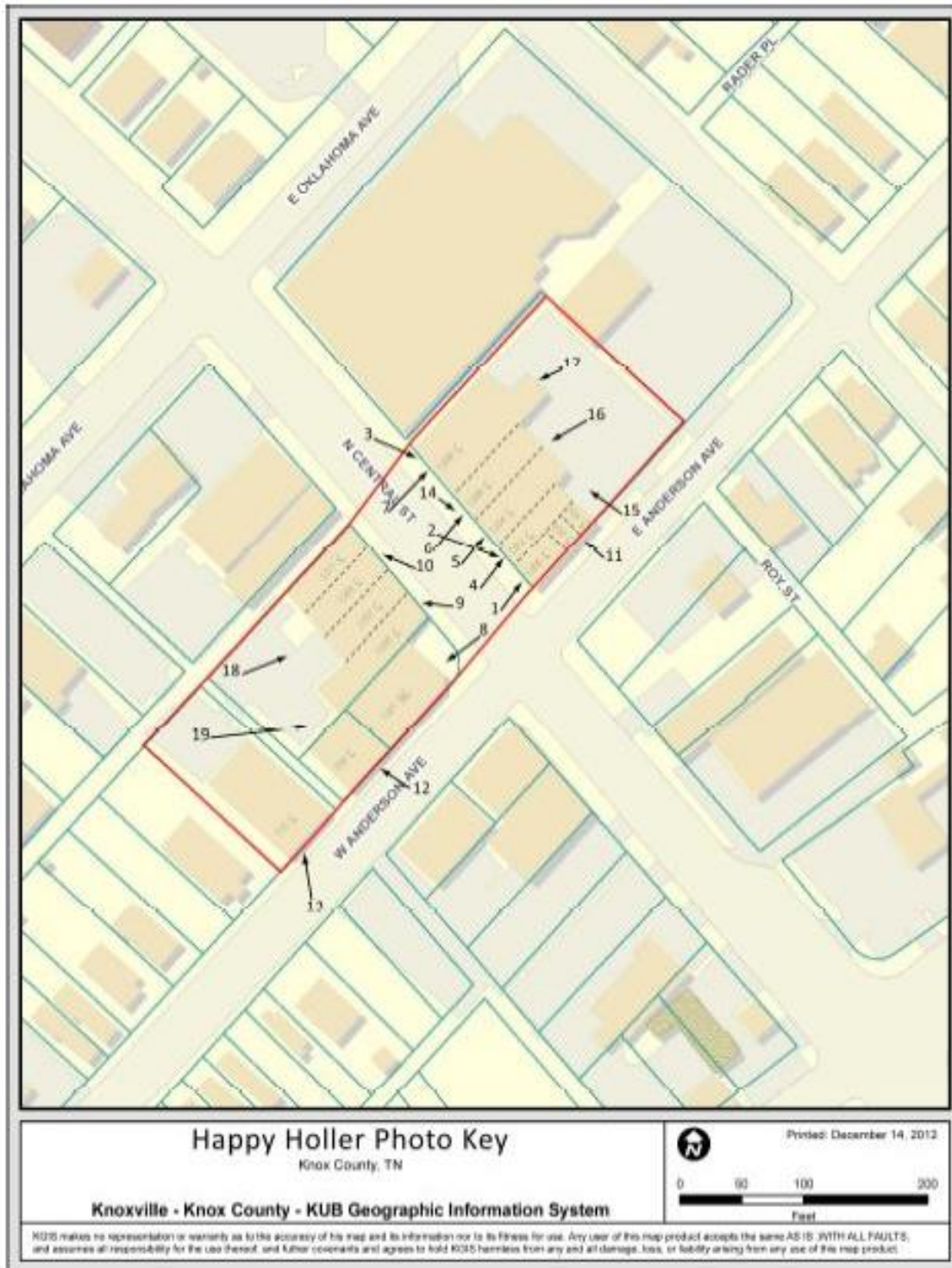
0018. Rear elevations of 1209 and 1211N. Central Avenue. Photographer facing east.

0019. Rear elevations of 1205, 1207 and 1201 N. Central Avenue. Photographer facing southeast.

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox TN  
County and State

Site Plan





United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Happy Holler Historic District
----- Name of Property
Knox County, Tennessee
----- County and State
N/A
----- Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 25

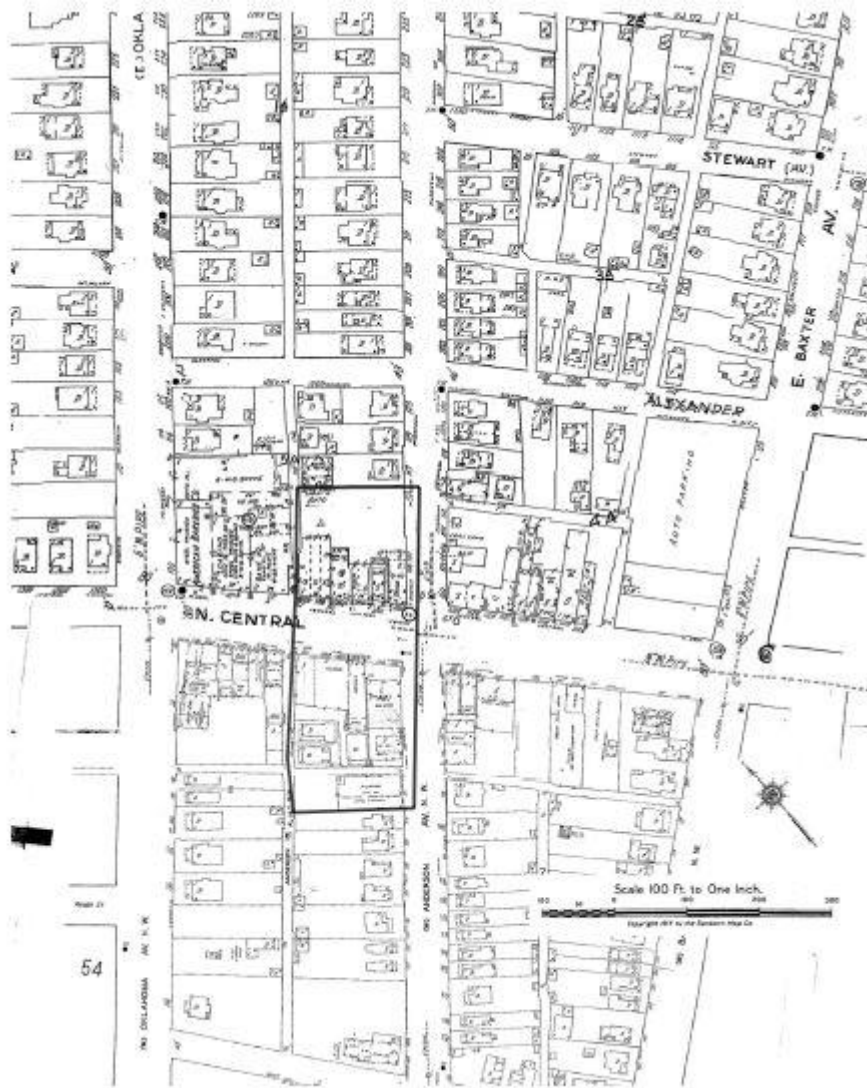


Figure 1. Historic Image: 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Happy Holler Historic District

Name of Property

Knox County, Tennessee

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 26



**Figure 2.** Historic Image (c. 1935): This building was constructed for use as a movie theater in 1916. The Joy Theatre opened here in 1934 or 1935 and closed in 1950 according to Knoxville City Directories. City Directories also indicate that the movie house was called the Center Theatre from 1951 until the business closed in 1955. Today this building is 1205 N. Central Street. (Photo courtesy of Daniel and Rose Moriarty)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Happy Holler Historic District  
Name of Property  
Knox County, Tennessee  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Figures Page 27

Locations of the Streetcar Commercial Districts

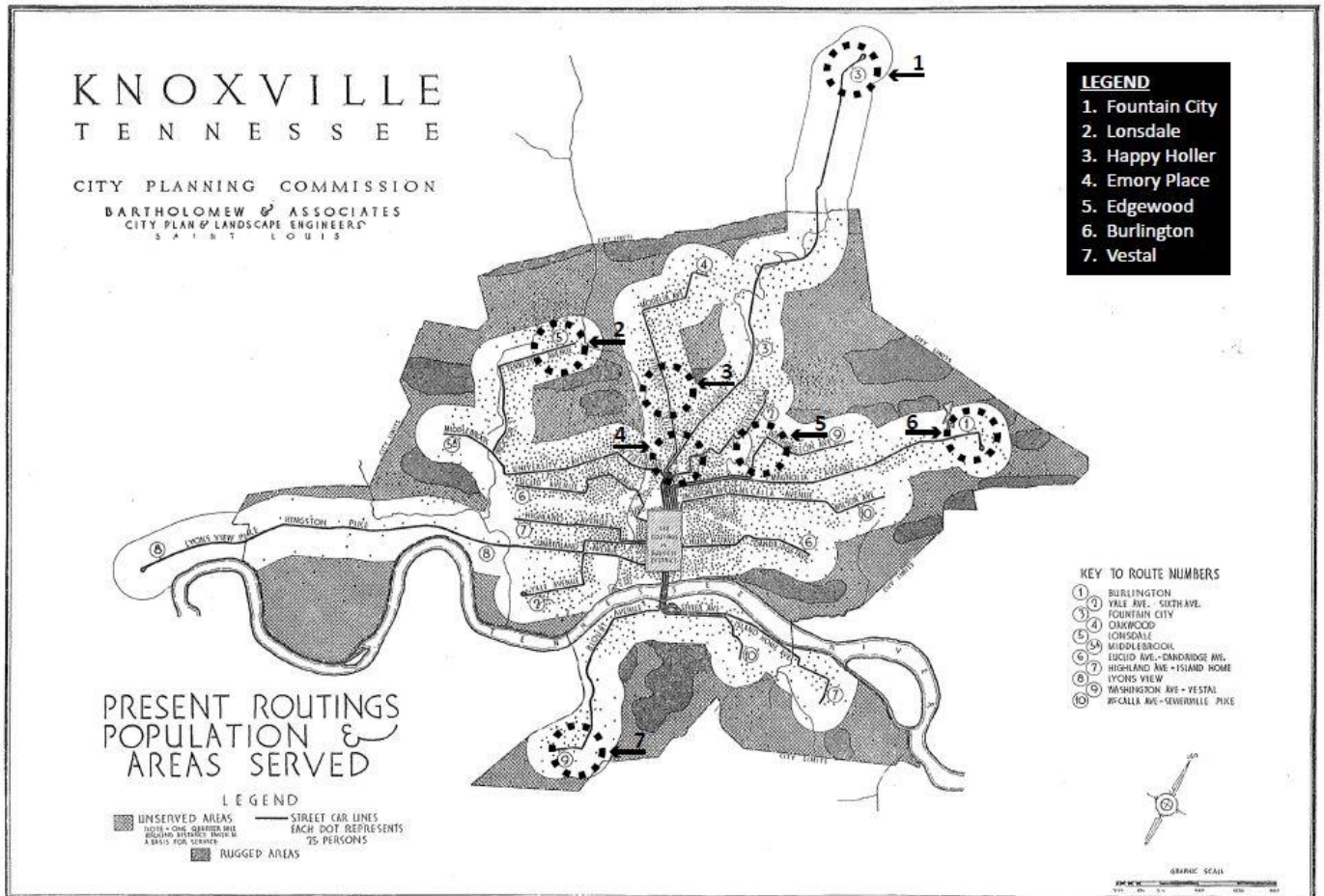


Figure 3. Locations of Streetcar Commercial Districts



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1001



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1204



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HOUR  
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1206

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RAMP-GUY  
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Handwritten graffiti on a white trailer, including the name 'Mick D'.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Happy Holler Historic District  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Knoxville and Knox County MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TENNESSEE, Knox

DATE RECEIVED: 3/10/14 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/07/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/22/14 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/26/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000185

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 4-23-2014 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Meets Registration Requirements of MPS*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A

REVIEWER J. Gubbart DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



**TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
2941 LEBANON ROAD  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37214  
OFFICE: (615) 532-1550  
[www.tnhistoricalcommission.org](http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org)  
E-mail: [Claudette.Stager@tn.gov](mailto:Claudette.Stager@tn.gov)  
(615) 532-1550, ext. 105  
<http://www.tn.gov/environment/history>



February 28, 2014

Carol Shull  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service  
National Register Branch  
1201 Eye Street NW  
8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the documentation to nominate *Happy Holler Historic District* to the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the *Happy Holler Historic District* to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, please contact Christine Mathieson at (615) 532-1550, extension 125 or [Christine.Mathieson@tn.gov](mailto:Christine.Mathieson@tn.gov).

Sincerely,

Claudette Stager  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

CS:cm

Enclosures(4)