NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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OMB No. 10024-0018

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions is not complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

| ISIONE NAME N. O. LA | aralseth Company | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Traisech Company | |
| her names/site number <u>Taralset</u> | th Building | |
| Location | | |
| reet & number 427 N. Main S | Street | □ not for publication |
| y or townWarren | | □ vicinity |
| ate <u>Minnesota</u> code | e MN county Marshall | code <u>089</u> zip code <u>56762</u> |
| State/Federal Agency Certification | | |
| Signature of certifying official/Title Ian Deputy State Historic Pres State of Federal agency and bureau Mi | | |
| Signature of commenting official/Title | Date | |
| State or Federal agency and bureau | | |
| National Park Service Certification | - Ins | |
| nereby certify that the property is: Mentered in the National Register. See continuation sheet. | Signature of the Keeper | Beall 9/6/07 |
| ☐ See continuation sheet. ☐ determined eligible for the National Register ☐ See continuation sheet. | | |
| determined eligible for the National Register | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · | |

Marshall County, Minnesota County and State

| Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) | Category of Property (Check only one box) | Number of R (Do not include | Resources within Propert previously listed resources in the | y e count.) |
|--|--|---|---|-----------------------|
| □ private □ public-local □ public-State □ public-Federal | ☑ building(s)☐ district☐ site☐ structure☐ object | | Noncontributing | sites structures |
| | | | 0 | • |
| Name of related multiple p (Enter "N/A" if property is not part | property listing t of a multiple property listing.) | Number of c in the Nation | ontributing resources pr nal Register | eviously listed |
| N/A | | 0 | | |
| 6. Function or Use | | | | |
| Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) | | Current Function (Enter categories from | | |
| COMMERCE/TRADE/depart | tment store | WORK IN PRO | GRESS | |
| COMMERCE/TRADE/busine | ess | | | |
| SOCIAL/meeting hall | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| 7. Description | | | | |
| Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) | | Materials (Enter categories fro | om instructions) | |
| LATE 19th AND 20th CI | ENTURY REVIVALS/ | foundation | Brick | |
| Tudor Revival | | walls | Brick | |
| | | | | |
| | | roof | Asphalt | |

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

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record #_

| 10. Geographical Data | |
|--|--|
| Acreage of Property <u>less than one</u> | |
| UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.) | |
| 1 1 1 5 6 6 5 4 9 0 5 3 4 0 3 2 0 Northing | 3 Zone Easting Northing 4 See continuation sheet |
| Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) | |
| Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.) | |
| 11. Form Prepared By See continuation sheet | |
| name/title | |
| organization | date |
| street & number | telephone |
| city or town | state zip code |
| Additional Documentation | |
| Submit the following items with the completed form: | |
| Continuation Sheets | |
| Maps | |
| A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property | erty's location. |
| A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having la | arge acreage or numerous resources. |
| Photographs | |
| Representative black and white photographs of the proper | erty. |
| Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items) | |
| Property Owner | |
| (Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.) | |
| name | |
| street & number | telephone |
| city or town | state zip code |
| | |

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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The K.J. Taralseth Company is a commercial building with Tudor Revival characteristics (Whiffen 1992, 183-190). The building, built in 1911, measures seventy-five feet by one hundred-forty feet comprising 31,860 square feet on its three levels with a small, protruding loading dock. It stands in the center of the central business district that extends approximately four blocks in any direction and is mainly comprised of one and two story brick buildings (Sanborn 1927). The orientation of the streets surrounding the building in downtown Warren do not match with cardinal directions; the avenues that would normally run east and west are approximately thirty degrees north of east with streets perpendicular to them. For the sake of clarity from this point forward directions will be noted by their closest cardinal coordinate which assumes avenues to run east and west, streets north and south. The north and east facades of the building face the two major thoroughfares of Main Street and Johnson Avenue while a one story commercial building is located to the south and an alley followed by more one and two story buildings to the west.

The two story brick building is constructed using load bearing brick walls around the perimeter which rest on a brick masonry foundation and cast iron columns supporting iron beams and wood structure floors. A flat asphalt roof tops the building and is concealed by a parapet with varying heights and ornamentation. The north and east facades are made up of Twin City variegated brick, while the south and west facades exhibit a light colored common brick (Warren Sheaf, 5 October, 1911). On the north and east sides, a molded belt course runs along the top of the building below the parapet and another stretches underneath the second floor windows where it is incorporated into the limestone sills.

The east façade, which displays a symmetrical design, is divided into three bays; the center bay is set back approximately three inches from the outside bays. The center bay is made up of a glass storefront with four large viewing windows each topped with a transom and spanned with a limestone lintel. Three equally spaced windows with individual limestone sills and lintels are seen on the second floor. The outer bays are identical to each other with a centered double doorway covered with a triangular pediment and flanked by large windows and pilasters. On the second floor of the outside bays, three equally spaced windows are again found except now capped by a continuous limestone lintel and ornamented on each side with two small blocks of limestone. A limestone pediment with a small stepped gable and tracery design pattern is seen at the center peak of both outside bays.

At the cornice the north façade is also symmetrical and comprised of seven bays. The center bay holds two large storefront windows separated by mullions each topped with two transom windows as well as a continuous limestone lintel. The second floor of this center bay displays four equally spaced windows with limestone sills and lintels. A pair of thinner bays flanks the center bay on either side, slightly outset from the center. Each bay has a replacement doorway flanked by large storefront windows all spanned by transoms and a limestone lintel. On the second floor of these bays are two equally spaced windows capped with a continuous limestone lintel with two decorative limestone blocks on either side. Above these windows is a decorative limestone inlay. Outside these bays lie the smallest bays set back to the same plane as the center bay with only a single glass storefront window spanned by transoms and a limestone lintel. The second floor shows two equally spaced windows with individual limestone sills and lintels. The two outside bays are again pulled out equal to the bays that flank the center bay. These bays each have a double entry door with a triangular pediment, windows on both sides, with transoms and limestone lintels above. On the second floor three windows are grouped and capped with a single limestone lintel and two limestone blocks on either side. Above the second floor on these bays rise stepped triangular pediments with inlayed limestone tracery flanked by raised parapets. These outside bays are detailed very similarly to the outside bays on the east side with only one exception, the second floor windows are set closer together.

The west façade displays an asymmetrical design. Six windows with limestone sills, placed in three sets of two are evenly spaced on the second floor. A second floor doorway, accessed by an iron fire escape/stairway, divides the westerly and middle sets of windows. The first floor of the façade has three small windows with sills approximately five feet above grade. Limestone sills are located directly below the second floor door and the middle set of windows. Two windows are located below the south set of windows on the second floor.

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A window matching the other first floor windows is located on the southwest side of the addition. On the westernmost corner, there is a brick chimney that rises about four feet above the parapet. Another unique feature occurs at ground level of the south and west corners of the building where large, monolithic granite bumpers protect the building from traffic.

After the closing of the building, of which the exact date is unknown but estimated as sometime in the mid 1970's, the elements and illegal occupants have taken their toll on the building. The first floor was completely gutted of any interior walls, and this large open space was littered with various items that had been stored there for a long time, in addition to building materials from the original construction as well as subsequent renovations. The original floorboards were exposed and the floor was severely rotted and buckled with several areas of open holes ranging from two inches to approximately fourteen inches in diameter. The interior walls of the building that face onto the street were lined with a raised display area that would have originally held window displays. These display areas were still somewhat intact but mostly in severe disrepair. There was evidence of interior partition walls and a dropped ceiling. Along the southwest side of the space are staircases leading to the second floor and the basement. The only real surviving element of the original interior construction is a stairway leading to a small office and restroom overlooking the first floor however these features were severely deteriorated.

When climbing the stairs to the second floor and arriving at the landing leading to the corridor and subsequent apartments, one of the most obvious sights was the evidence of transient occupation. Graffiti was seen throughout the building but mostly on the second floor corridors. The floor on the second level had buckled nearly two feet. The apartments appeared to have been last renovated sometime in the late 1960's or 1970's. Much of the gypsum wallboard and ceiling panels had fallen to the floor either by rotting from severe roof leakage or been torn down by vandals. In addition to the obvious damage done by the water leaking from the roof, materials such as wood and carpets were severely molded. It appears as though many of the apartment furnishings were left; including kitchen appliances, mattresses, furniture, and other miscellaneous items. In many of the apartments it was obvious that intruders had built fires resulting in charred finishes and burned walls and floors.

These conditions, which were observed prior to the start of rehabilitation in August, 2001, included the empty basement which was inundated with approximately ten inches of water yet had some walls still standing. The remaining walls were limited to the partition wall surrounding the main staircase that once lead downstairs, these were constructed of wood lath and plaster. Also, the masonry walls that enclosed what was once the coal storage room for the original heating system remained. In addition to the partition walls, construction of the perimeter walls was also deteriorated. The structural capabilities of the exterior walls were intact, although, the walls which were furred out and covered with plaster and wood lath, materials were completely deteriorated from exposure to water and other factors. Pipes were also hanging from the exposed ceiling structure above. The concrete floor was in very poor condition with numerous cracks and subsequent heaving.

When the rehabilitation began in August, 2001, the entire interior was removed down to the structural members. This demolition was part of the first phase of the project which also included some site work and exterior renovation. The exterior renovation consisted of replacing the windows with historically accurate replications using modern, clear glass and wood frames. The brick was cleaned and woodwork was repaired or replaced. No modifications of the exterior shell of the building were made with the exception of a new roof and reopening original window openings that had been closed. The second phase involved installation of modern mechanical and electrical systems. The third and final stage of the construction is currently underway and involves all interior rough and finished construction. The basement will be cleaned but left unused due to flooding and fire egress concerns. Approximately one third of the main level of the building will become home to a local law firm and the remaining two-thirds will be used as a community center. The second floor will be senior apartments accessible by stair and an elevator which is housed in the location of the original freight elevator.

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The K.J. Taralseth Company in the city of Warren, Marshall County, Minnesota, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local significance in the area of commerce. It is associated with the Minnesota state historic context of: Railroads and Agricultural Development 1870 - 1940. The K.J. Taralseth Company served as a department store from 1911, when it was first constructed, through 1959, when the Taralseth family sold the business. Even though the building as it exists today wasn't built until 1911, the K.J. Taralseth Company was a significant part of the commercial and building fabric of this community from 1888 when Knud Taralseth opened his first department store through its decline, which began in 1938.

Prior to the late 1800's, the area that is now known as Marshall County, Minnesota was a vast, fertile land inhabited by the native tribes of the area and later, fur traders who made their way south from Canada. The rich farm land opened the door to new settlers, a process that was expedited in 1878 when the tracks of the St. Paul and Pacific Railway, later known as the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba, entered the area which would become Warren. Just four years earlier, the first Euro-American pioneer had settled in present day Warren (Warren 1980, 4). Marshall County was formed in 1879 and the same year James P. Nelson, Ethan Allen, and four other partners created the Warrant Town Site Company to organize the sale of land to new settlers. In the fall of 1879 the area was platted, lots sold and building commenced immediately. By 1881 approximately 90 buildings had been constructed and Warren was home to 108 residents (Solum 1976, 31-31. 1890 Federal Census).

An increase of settlement created a demand for a commercial center. Nelson, Allen and Company and the McCrea Brothers established the first two general stores in Warren in 1879. Two years later, on March 21, 1881, Warren was selected as the county seat. The village of 108 boasted a variety of businesses including five general stores, three land agencies, three hardware stores, two jewelers, two blacksmiths, three hotels, and two livery stables (Warren 1980, 4).

On May 31, 1882, Knud J. Taralseth opened a general store in a false front frame building on Main Street in Warren. Taralseth, an immigrant from Norway, had spent about ten years in this country before settling in Warren. He worked as a carpenter for the railroad in Minneapolis before trying his hand in business by purchasing a half interest in a small store in Osakis from 1878 to 1882 (Warren Sheaf 23 May 1912; Warren 1980, 29). In 1888, Warren's growing clientele prompted Taralseth to move and purchase property, previously occupied by Mike McCann's blacksmith shop, on the corner of Main Street and Johnson Avenue (Warranty Deed Book G, 128; Tax Rolls). Taralseth proceeded to erect the first two-story building, which measured twenty-five feet by ninety feet, in the city (Warren 1980, 9 & 29; Lottie Taralseth Collection). The new two-story brick-veneered building not only accommodated merchandise, but it also housed the Warren Masonic Lodge and the post office (Warren 1980, 9-12; Sanborn 1899). By 1897, the need for more sales floor space convinced Taralseth to attach twenty-five feet by ninety feet addition and a fifty-foot by fifty-foot annex to the building (Warren 1980, 29; Lottie Taralseth Collection).

By the late 1890s, approximately forty business firms, including the K.J. Taralseth general merchandise store, lined the streets of Warren (Warren 1980, 8). During this time, the Taralseth Store offered items such as dry goods, clothing, hats, shoes and groceries and was organized as a department store. It was noted in a local news article as being the "largest and best general store on the Great Northern road between Crookston and Winnipeg" (Warren Register 17 Oct. 1894). Commerce continued to flourish into the early 1900s and the population of Warren reached 1,276 in 1901 (Warren 1980, 20). By 1904, Taralseth's store was incorporated as the K. J. Taralseth Company and his sons, Ralph and Olaf, served on the board and as managers. One year later, K.J. Taralseth died at the age of fifty-seven (Lottie Taralseth Collection). It was then when Ralph came forward to lead the family business into the future.

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Disaster struck the store on October 24, 1910 when a fire swept through the Taralseth Building. The fire, which began in the basement, destroyed the building and all of the merchandise inside (Lottie Taralseth Collection). The financial loss of the building, valued at \$25,000, and the merchandise totaled \$100,000. It was the biggest loss in the history of Warren. Since the Taralseth's only carried approximately \$40,000 in insurance, they personally experienced a \$60,000 loss (Warren Sheaf 27 October 1910; Warren 1956, 24).

Immediately after the fire, the Taralseth family decided to rebuild the store. During the interim, they sold merchandise in several locations throughout Warren. Based on advertisements located in the Warren Sheaf, after the fire the Taralseth's sold: clothing in the Tornell Restaurant Building; dry goods and groceries in a building located to the east of their former store; and hardware in a building west of the old site. (Warren Sheaf, 23 November 1910).

On October 12, 1911, the new two-story brick Taralseth store opened its doors to patrons. The establishment employed a sales team of approximately fifteen people and offered a variety of adult and children's clothing, groceries, and hardware. In an effort to attract customers and challenge the competition, store managers changed the display windows weekly. Furthermore, the Taralseth's relied heavily on advertising through mailings and in the local newspaper (Lottie Taralseth Collection). According to advertisements in the Warren Sheaf from the 1890s to the 1920s, the Taralseth Store consistently sold the same sort of items, including clothing, dry goods, shoes, hardware and groceries (Warren Sheaf 17 Oct. 1894, 6 Dec. 1899, 23 Dec. 1909, 26 Oct. 1921).

After Taralseth's new store opened, the types of departments and merchandise did not change significantly from the previous store's stock, despite enlarged showroom and storage space. The Taralseth Store continued to carry groceries, hardware, clothing, shoes, and dry goods.

The Taralseth's store was not the only entity this building was known for. As one of the largest, most significant buildings of the town, it was host to several other businesses and offices. Some of these offices that have been noted as primary tenants of the second floor are past judges, dentists and the Masonic Lodge. The store, and thus, the building were home to many social events that still hold a special meaning for many of Warren's older residents. The Masonic Lodge upstairs was home to many dances for the young people of the area. The Holiday season provided special events for the young people of the area, not only were the shelves stocked with the newest, and best toys but store employees were known to dress as Santa Claus and distribute goodies to the youngsters. Perhaps the importance of the Taralseth Company can best be understood in quote from local patron Ella Peterson: "What I remember the most was the thrill I got when we walked into the Taralseth Store basement! Wonders of wonders... I am sure that people today would scarcely believe it if they were told about the toy department and the rest of the wares that could be found down there." (Warren 1980, 166). In addition to the store's importance to the region, so was its owner. Like his father, Ralph was very civic minded in his pursuits. It was his goal to serve the town and so he did as both mayor and fire chief for many years.

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The Taralseth Company continued to be a major hub of commercial activity in the area for many years up to 1938 when it became apparent that other competitors had began to chip away at the dominance of the Taralseth Company as the major commercial vendor. As shown through various advertisements from the period, 1938 is seen as a time when it was truly visible that other stores in the area, the Gamble's store in particular, were gaining much of the Taralseth Company's market share in the area. The Gamble's Store was part of what was a growing conglomerate of businesses owned by the Gamble-Skogmo Corporation. Indeed, it was this type of business that stores such as the Taralseth's were falling victim to all across the country. It started with the advent of the cooperative, where groups of trade people such as farmers or craftsmen started cooperatives in order to buy goods in bulk and save money. These businesses saw huge profits in the volume of business they did and thus expanded to more locations which became the franchises that are known today as True Value and Coast to Coast to name just a couple. Their lower operating costs and thus lower product costs made it very difficult for small operations like the Taralseth Store to survive. Even today, this cycle is repeating itself as Wal-Mart puts franchise stores out of business with even lower prices and lower operating costs.

The K.J. Taralseth Company is a physical reminder of the early commercial development of Warren. Moving from a brick store that was destroyed by fire in 1910, Ralph Taralseth built a new store that reflected the company's success. The new building not only carried a mixed product line for which the company had become known, but provided space for the growing number of professional services and fraternal organizations in the area. Over the next two decades the K.J. Taralseth Company was one of the principal suppliers of goods and services to Warren and to the nearby farming community whose members saw coming to town to shop as a much anticipated event. For its significant contribution to the commercial growth of Warren, the K.J. Taralseth Company is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A under the Area of Significance of Commerce.

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K.J. Taralseth Company Marshall County, Minnesota

Published Material

Solum, Nancy. Self Portrait of Marshall County. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1976.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1890 Federal Census.

Upham, Warren. "The Settlement and Development of the Red River Valley." Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society. Vol. VIII, 1898.

Warren - Plains to Plenty: A Story of Seventy-Five Eventful Years. City of Warren, 1956.

Warren - Plains to Plenty: A Story of One Hundred Eventful Years. City of Warren, 1980.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1992.

Warren Register. Warren, Minnesota. 1894.

Warren Sheaf. Warren, Minnesota. Various, August 1887 to January 1945.

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K.J. Taralseth Company Marshall County, Minnesota

Other Material

- Bauer, Donald G. Correspondence from Mr. Bauer to Minnesota Historical Society, dated 28 October, 1998. Located in the Taralseth Building File, Minnesota Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, St. Paul, Minnesota.
- Joseph Bell DeRemer File. Plans and Manuscripts at the Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Lottie Taralseth Collection. Located at the Marshall County Historical Society. Warren, Marshall County, Minnesota. ca 1940-1960.
- Marshall County, Minnesota Register of Deeds. In Warranty Deed Book G, Page 128, between Michael McCann and Knud Taralseth, All of North one-half of Lot 6, Block 9." 23 April, 1888.
- Marshall County, Minnesota Register of Deeds. "Deed book 128, Page 143, between R. B. and Lottie Taralseth and A. and Sidney W. Diamond, South one-half Lot 5, Block 9 and North one-half Lot 5 and Lot 6, Block 9." 22 October, 1959.
- "Reconnaissance Survey of Warren, Marshall County, Minnesota." A report located at the Minnesota Historical Society, Historic Preservation Division, St. Paul, Minnesota.
- Warren, Minnesota. City of Warren Tax Rolls, 1909 to 1939. Located at the Marshall County Courthouse, Minnesota.
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company. Sandborn Fire Insurance Maps of Warren, Minnesota. New York: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1894, 1899, 1904, 1909, 1915, 1927.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Parcel 1:

South Half (S 1/2) of Lot Five (5) in Block Nine (9) in the Original Townsite of the City of Warren, except that part conveyed to Harry Johnson by Deed recorded in Book 100 of Deeds, page 22;

North twenty-five feet (N. 25 ft.) of Lot Five (5) and all of Lot Six (6) in Block Nine (9) in the Original Townsite of Warren, Marshall County, Minnesota.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the entire city lots that have been associated historically with the property.

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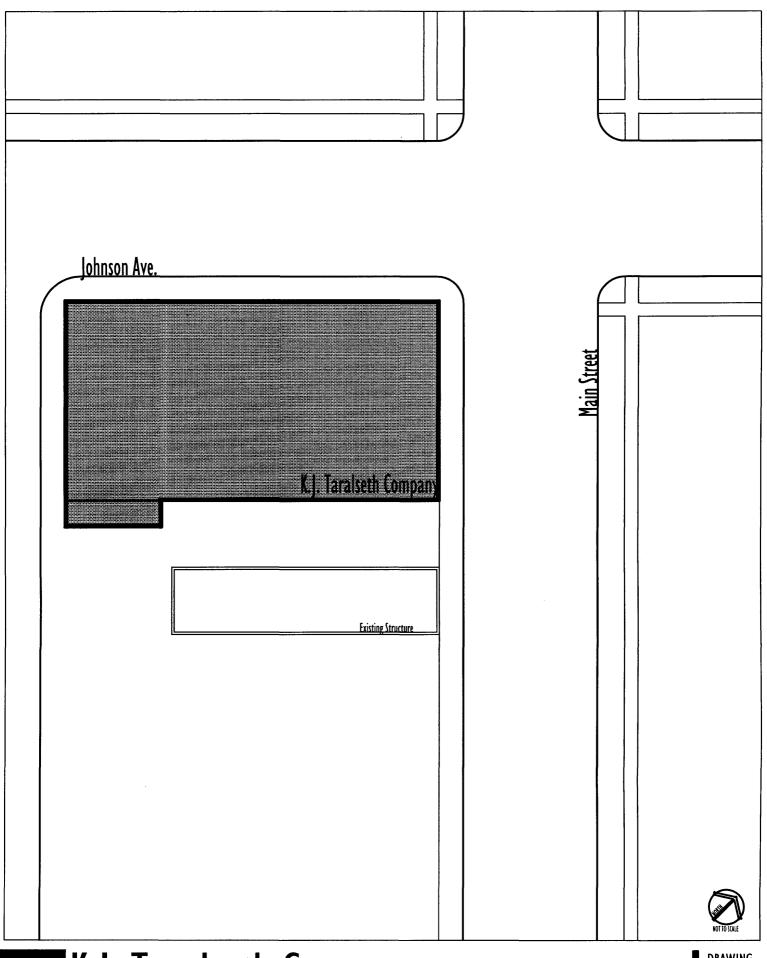
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K.J. Taralseth Company Marshall County, Minnesota

Barbara Kooiman Mississippi Valley Archaeological Center 1725 State Street LaCrosse, WI 54601 608.785.6783 December 1993

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Updated: April 2002





K.J. Taralseth Company
Marshall County, Minnesota
April 2002