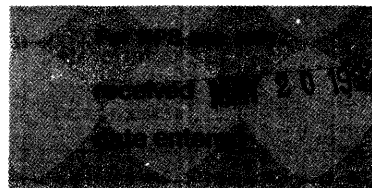


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Cornelia Community House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number U.S. 123 at LaVista Lane

N/A not for publication

city, town Cornelia

N/A vicinity of

~~Congressional district~~

9th-Edgar Jenkins

state Georgia

code 013

county Habersham

code 137

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

Community Center

4. Owner of Property

name City of Cornelia

street & number Cornelia Municipal Building

city, town Cornelia

N/A vicinity of

state Georgia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Habersham County Courthouse

city, town Clarkesville

state Georgia 30527

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records None

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Cornelia Community House, built in 1937, is a two-story, rustic styled brick and stone community building located in one end of a thirty-three acre park owned and operated by the City of Cornelia in Habersham County, Georgia. The nominated property is an approximately five acre tract that includes the landscaped area associated with the community house, a bath house and swimming pool constructed shortly after the house, and a non-historic frame Boy Scout hut.

The gable roofed community house is sited on a steep slope, and the rear elevation features an above-ground basement. The main level of the structure is constructed of brick set in running bond, with rustic wood trim laid over the brick in the gable ends. The basement level is of rough cut stone laid with beaded joints. Two massive stone chimneys that rise through the structure feature the same beaded mortar treatment. A stone arcade extends across much of the rear at basement level forming a protected area below and a balcony above. The front facade features two gabled porticos with decorative wood slabwork infill in the gable ends and rough tree trunk support posts. The larger of the two porticos, at the main entrance, forms a porte-cochere over the semi-circular drive that leads to the building; the other provides a protected area over a section of the concrete walkway-balcony that follows the front facade, curving around the east end. A series of original glass double doors open onto the walkways and balconies from both sides of the main hall. Original basement level and gable end casement windows have all been replaced with aluminum framed sash; however, the original rustic wood shutters remain. Iron balcony railings are replacements.

The building has a truss roof that rests on load bearing masonry walls. At the basement level, roughly hewn timber columns that rest on masonry pedestals support the main floor. The basement, with concrete floor, contains a shower room, meeting room with fireplace and a caretaker's quarters. The main level, with wood floors, consists of a foyer, large meeting room, and support rooms including a bathroom, kitchen, concession room and storage areas. A partial second floor containing several small rooms and a balcony that overlooks the large meeting room below is accessible from a staircase in the foyer.

The main room has a high ceiling with exposed truss work of rustic debarked tree trunks. The walls are finished with debarked wood slabs, laid vertically along the lower walls and diagonally in the interior gable ends. The original lighting fixtures, consisting of lantern-like lamps hanging in groups of five from wagon wheels, are still suspended from the truss work. A massive stone fireplace with the same beaded seams as the foundation and exterior chimney work, is located at the east end of the room. Its firebox is of brick laid in a herringbone pattern. Plaques set into the fireplace at the time of construction document the Kiwanis Club and WPA participation in the building project. This fireplace, and those in

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered

Continuation sheet Description Item number 7 Page 2

the foyer and basement, were used to heat the building, along with an old steam heating system which still runs throughout the building. Gas space heaters and a sprinkler system have been added.

The Cornelia Community House is located at the intersection of U.S. Highway 123 and LaVista Lane, in one end of a thirty-three acre park owned and operated by the City of Cornelia. The predominantly hilly, wooded park has a picnic area, ballfield and two tennis courts, all of recent construction. The area surrounding the park is predominantly post-World War II residential. The nominated property consists of the approximately five acres associated with the Community House, pool, bathhouse and landscaped grounds built by the WPA. Stone gate posts flank both ends of a semi-circular drive that leads to the front entrance of the Community House. A stone fountain is located on the flat grassy island in front of the house formed by the drive. Foundation plantings encircle the building, and an albelia hedge acts as a highway buffer. A second drive encircles the back of the house, providing a drop off point for the pool and access to a parking lot located to the building's west. To the rear of the building, stone steps lead down a terraced bank to the swimming pool located at the low point of the site. This bank forms a natural amphitheater. The pool, built by the WPA shortly after the Community House, is of concrete, rimmed in tile, painted white and surrounded by a metal fence. Adjacent to the pool to the west is a WPA, gable roofed bathhouse which has been added to and sheathed in concrete block by the city. A non-historic sundeck and children's pool to the north of the main pool complete the complex. A non-historic frame hut of recent construction built by the Kiwanis Club for the Boy Scouts is located to the northwest of the house.

BOUNDARY

In keeping with the significance of the property, the boundary of the nominated property is based upon environmental and aesthetic factors as well as historical associations. To the north and east, the boundary is marked by the bottom of a meandering vale. To the south, the boundary is marked by U.S. Highway 123/S.R. 13. To the west, the boundary is marked by a wooded area traversed by a chainlink fence. This boundary circumscribes the Community House and its outbuildings in their naturally landscaped setting.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs taken in March, 1981 still represent the character and appearance of the property. No significant changes have been made since that date.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) local history
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates Built 1936-1937 **Builder/Architect** David S. Cuttino, Jr., architect
Works Project Administration, builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Cornelia Community House and the adjoining acreage are significant in the areas of architecture, landscape architecture, conservation, politics/government, and local history. In architecture, the structure is an outstanding example of WPA-era design through labor intensive construction techniques and the use of local materials. It was designed by David S. Cuttino, an architect with local connections. The siting of the building and pool and the decorative landscape elements in stone, slate and mortar give significance in the area of landscape architecture. The use of a government-sponsored program in the development and construction of the building adds significance in the area of politics and government. This building program was administered through the Works Progress Administration, an agency based on conservation ethics. The utilization of an idle local labor force and the use of local materials in the construction of the Community House complex gives significance in the area of conservation. In local history this structure is significant as a meeting place for the Cornelia community for over 43 years, since its dedication on May 13, 1937.

The Cornelia Community House has achieved significance within the last fifty years. However, its social purpose, sensitive design and fine craftsmanship justify its inclusion in the National Register under criteria A and C. It is a building of exceptional importance to Cornelia and to the entire state of Georgia.

ARCHITECTURE

The Cornelia Community House is a fine, virtually unaltered example of the rustic style buildings which became popular during the early twentieth century for park and recreation structures. The entire building, but particularly the main hall with its massive fireplace, high, exposed-truss ceiling and rustic log columns and wood siding, is reminiscent of the great National Park hotel buildings at the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Mt. Rainier and Mt. Hood that set the style for park architecture for years to come. The sensitive design and fine craftsmanship of the Cornelia Community House are evident in the building's siting and layout, the successful manner in which the natural wood, brick and stone construction materials relate to one another, and the fine rustic interior and exterior finish details.

The Community House was built by the local Kiwanis Club during 1936-1937 with assistance from the WPA. Its rustic appearance can thus also be attributed to the WPA emphasis on labor intensive construction techniques and the use of local materials. Local workers were paid by the WPA to debark the tree trunks and slabs that were used in construction. Stones for the masonry work were collected throughout the county.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Church, Mary. Hills of Habersham. Clarkesville, Georgia: M.L. Church, 1962.

Jaeger, Dale. "Cornelia Community House: Draft National Register Nominations Form, December, 1980." On file with Historic Preservation Section, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 5 acres.
 Quadrangle name Clarkesville, GA Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>7</u>	<u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>7</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>1</u> <u>7</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u>	B					
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		
C				D					
E				F					
G				H					

Verbal boundary description and justification See section 7 for verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title A) Dale Jaeger
B) Carolyn Brooks, National Register Researcher
 organization A) Georgia Mountains, APDC
B) Historic Preservation Section, GA DNR date March 15, 1982
 street & number A) P.O. Box 1720 telephone A) 404 536-3431
B) 270 Washington Street, SW B) 404 656-2840
 city or town _____ state _____

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:
 ___ national X state ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon
 title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4/30/82

For NPS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
William H. Brannan date 6-21-82
 Keeper of the National Register
 Attest: _____ date _____
 Chief of Registration

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The architect for the Cornelia Community House was David S. Cuttino, Jr. (1905-1973), an Atlanta architect with Cornelia connections, who, during the Depression, served as an engineer for the CWA, FERA and WPA in the Habersham County area. Cuttino had a degree in architecture from Clemson University in South Carolina and attended an architecture school in Paris for a summer. He designed many buildings in Georgia, particularly in areas centered around Newnan, his home town, Cornelia and Habersham County, and Atlanta. He specialized in residences, hospitals and schools, but his extant buildings also include, among other, the Briarcliff Apartments and Coastal States Insurance Company in Atlanta, and the Habersham County Courthouse in Clarkesville.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The property is significant in the area of landscape architecture as an excellent example of the use of rustic landscaping elements and a rustic style building to enhance a natural setting. The Community House and the pool are very successfully sited on the sloping property, the house settling into the side of the hill and the pool nestling at the low point of the site where grassy banks form a natural amphitheatre around it. The stone fountain, slate paths, stone gate posts, retaining walls and steps, all built by WPA workers in a rustic, craftsman style, also respect at the same time they enhance the natural setting.

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) and its predecessors, the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), had been present in Habersham County Georgia from 1933. The early twentieth century economy of this area had been based on a flourishing apple and peach industry which began to crumble in the 1920's due to competition from more successful South Carolina peach growers and a discriminatory Interstate Commerce Commission transportation ruling which made West Coast apples less expensive than Georgia apples, even along the East Coast. The area was particularly badly hit by the Depression, and by the 1930's unemployment was rampant. The various government relief programs in the area provided money for labor-intensive projects such as school improvements and general landscaping. At the Cornelia Community House dedication ceremony a WPA spokeswoman praised this project as an excellent use of WPA funds for a permanent structure rather than for more typical maintenance tasks.

CONSERVATION

The WPA programs were closely tied to conservation ethics, which are strongly reflected in the Cornelia Community House. Local sawmills donated wood slabs (the portions of log trimmed off when it is squared up to be cut into boards) which otherwise would have been discarded. The stones used in the masonry work were

(continued)

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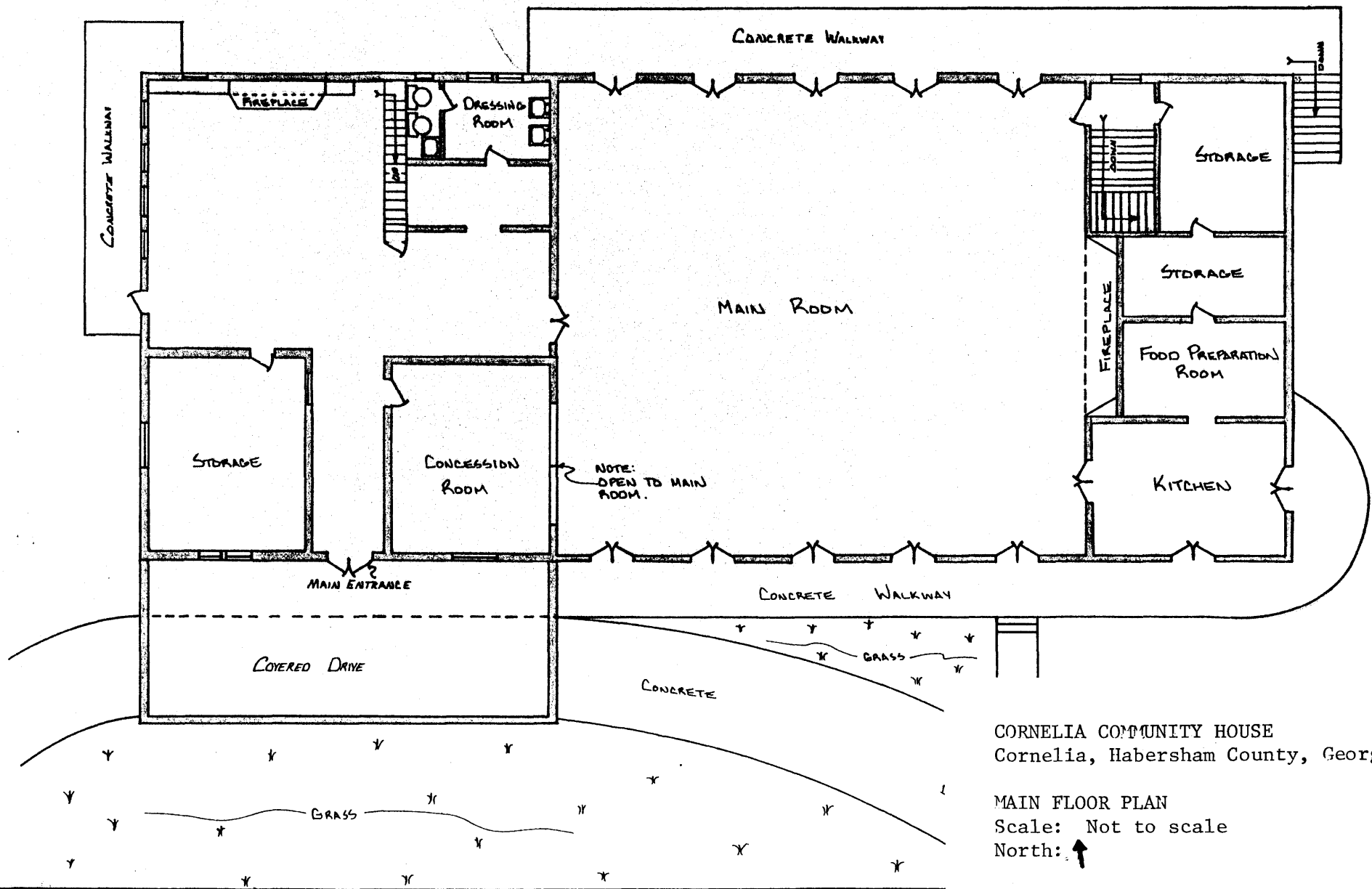
Page 3

collected from the surrounding countryside. An idle labor force was utilized to complete the project. This local conservation effort was part of a larger interest in conservation which developed on a national scale during the early 20th century.

LOCAL HISTORY

The Cornelia Community House is a community landmark which throughout its history has served as an important meeting place for local groups and families. It is an outstanding example of the results that can be achieved by a local group, in this case the Cornelia Kiwanis Club, for the benefit of the entire community. The local Kiwanis Club had been involved in a variety of community projects since its establishment in 1925. In 1936, with a need for a permanent meeting center and a \$2,000 building fund, they managed to link up with the WPA to sponsor the building of the center. It has been owned at various times since by the City of Cornelia and the Kiwanis Club, the Club always insuring its preservation by taking ownership when the building was in need of repair, borrowing money to cover the costs and then returning ownership to the city when the debt was retired. It is significant that the structure continues to serve its original function.

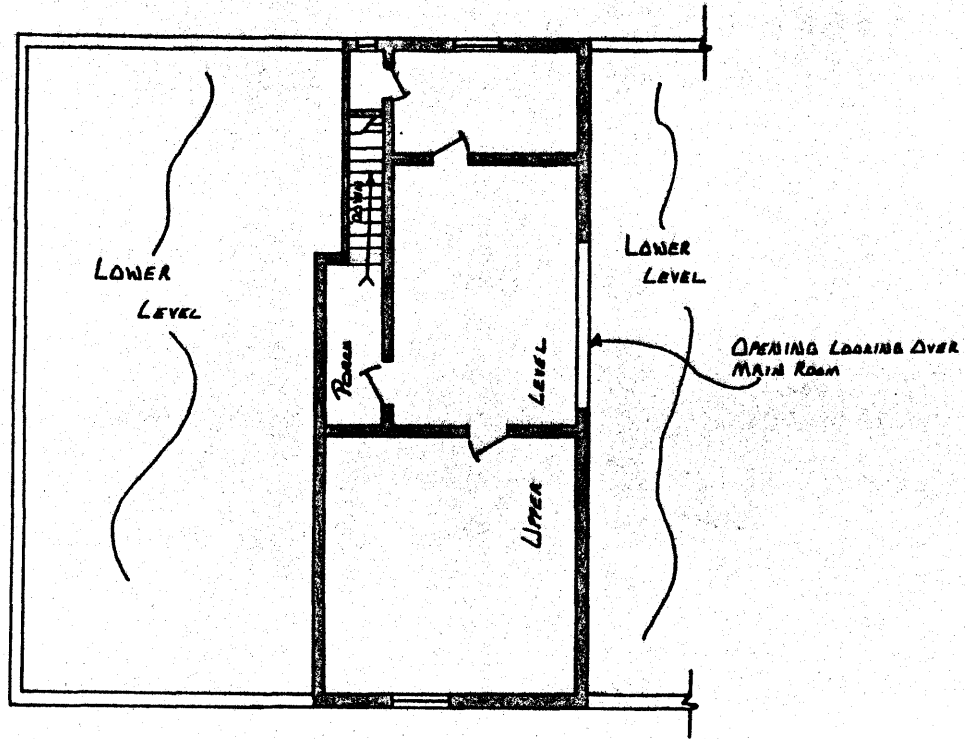
III (b)



CORNELIA COMMUNITY HOUSE
Cornelia, Habersham County, Georgia

MAIN FLOOR PLAN
Scale: Not to scale
North: ↑

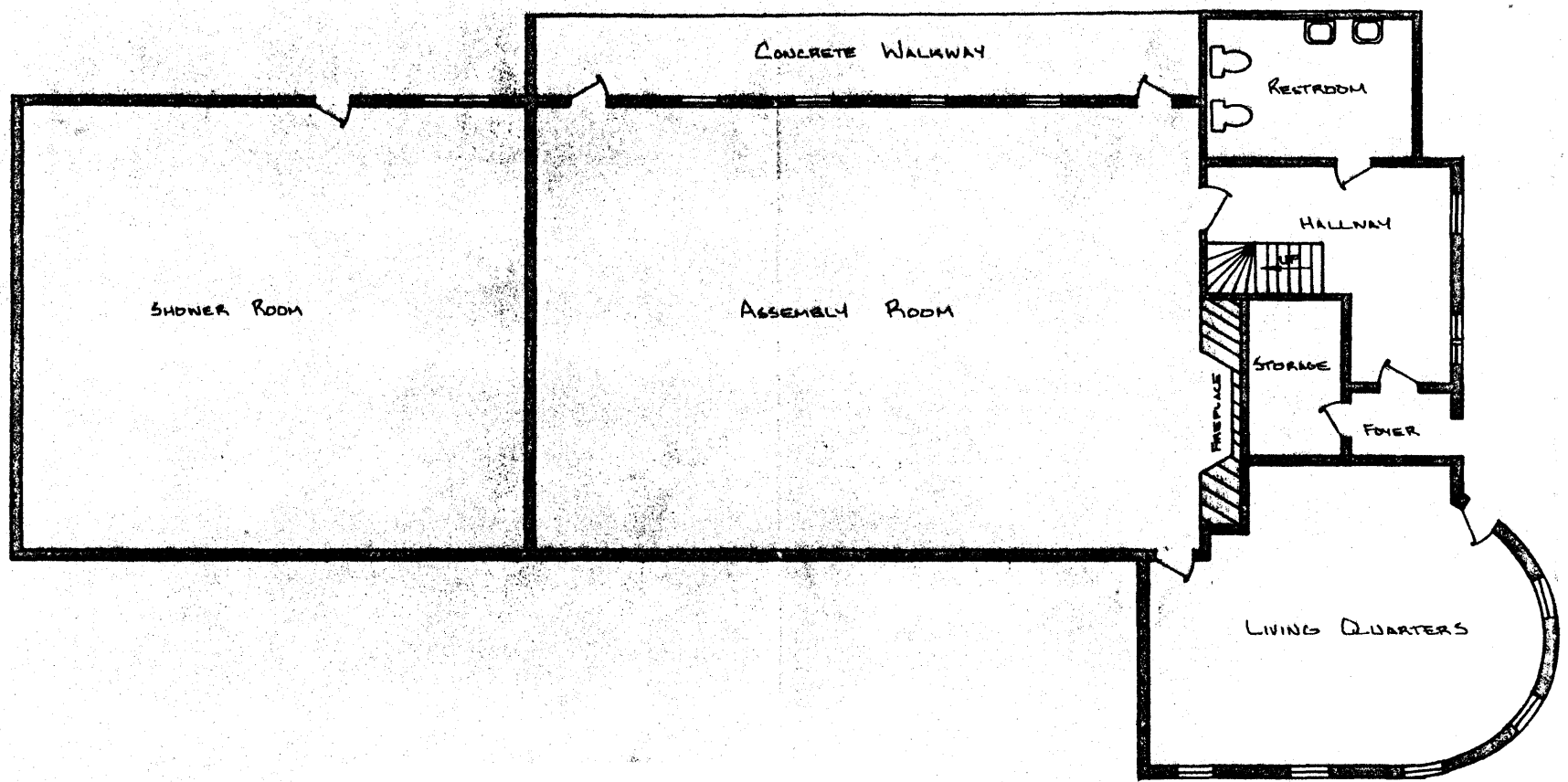
VII (a)



CORNELIA COMMUNITY HOUSE
Cornelia, Habersham County, Georgia

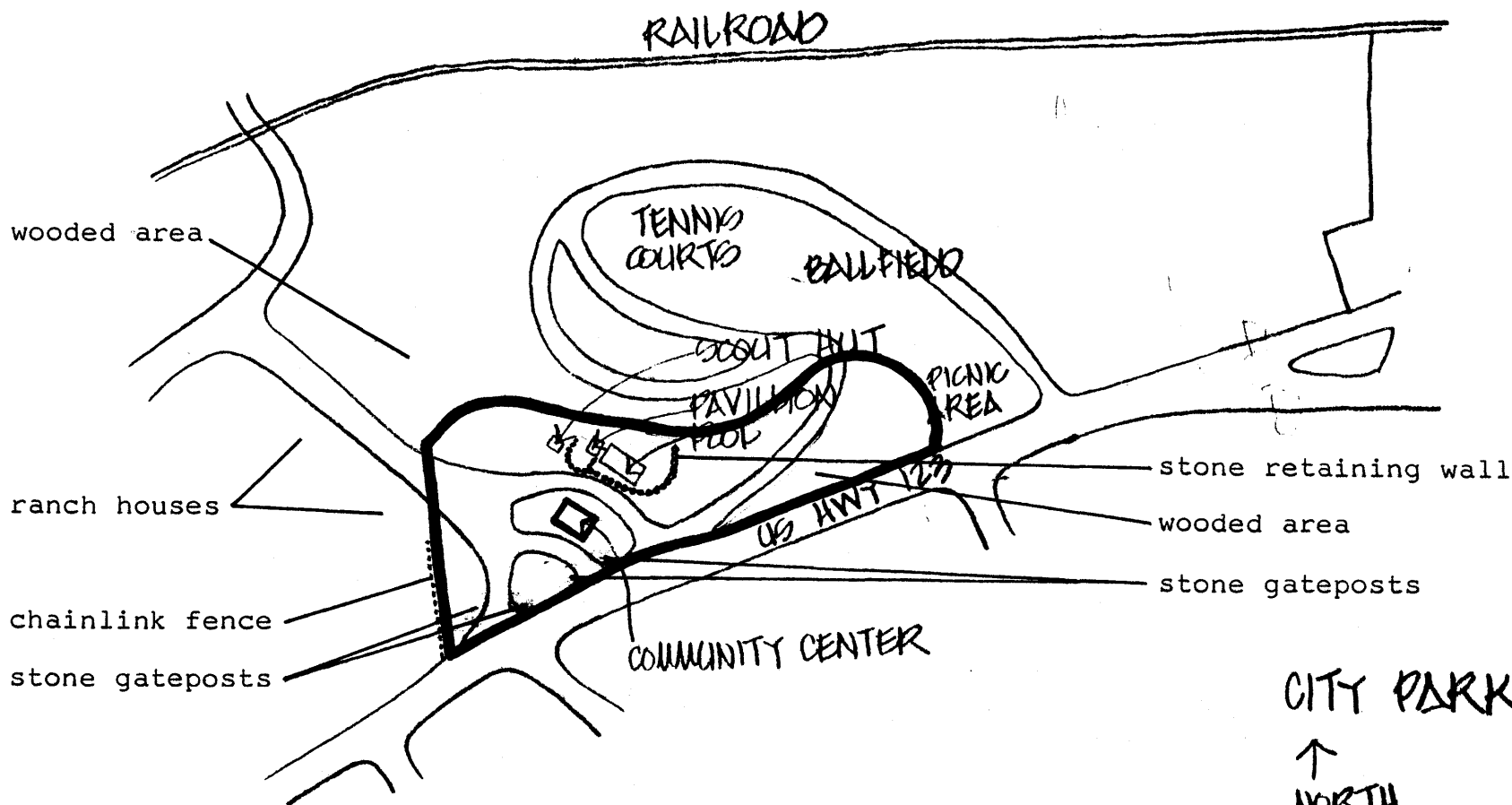
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
Scale: Not to scale
North: ↑

VII (c)



CORNELIA COMMUNITY HOUSE
Cornelia, Habersham County, Georgia

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
Scale: Not to scale
North: ↑



Cornelia Community Center
 Cornelia, Habersham Co., Ga.

PROPERTY/SKETCH MAP

Scale: 1" = 300' (approximate)

North: ↑

Boundary of nominated property: **—————**

CITY PARK

↑
 NORTH

SCALE 1"=300'