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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

MAR 23 1993

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A)*. Complete each item by marking "x" 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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Muscatine Avenue Moffitt Cottage Historic District

other names/site number Moffitt Cottages

2. Location

street & number 1322 through 1330 Muscatine Avenue  not for publication

city or town Iowa City  vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Johnson code 103 zip code 52245

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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David C. [Signature] 3/15/93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historical Society of Iowa  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick W. Andrews 5/4/93

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
5	0	buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
5	1	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)  
The Small Homes of Howard F. Moffitt in  
Iowa City and Coralville, Iowa

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**  
0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals  
Other: English Cottage Period House  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE, STONE  
walls STONE, Limestone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof ASPHALT, WOOD shingle  
other WOOD  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheets.

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1939-1940

Significant Dates

1939

1940

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Howard Francis Moffitt

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

Name of Property

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property less than one acre**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	6 2 3 5 8 0	4 6 1 2 5 8 5
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 5	6 2 3 6 3 0	4 6 1 2 6 4 0

3	1 5	6 2 3 6 7 0	4 6 1 2 5 2 0
	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**

name/title Jan R. Nash *Kallem*

organization for PHR Associates date December 1, 1992

street & number 906 S. Lucas St. telephone 319/351-5156

city or town Iowa City state Iowa zip code 52240

**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's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name See attached continuation sheets.

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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City and Coralville, Iowa (MPDF)Section number 7 Page 1 Muscatine Avenue Moffitt Cottage Historic  
District7. DESCRIPTION

## a. Muscatine Avenue Moffitt Cottage Historic District:

The group of five buildings in the 1300 block of Muscatine Avenue is composed of single-family, one or one-and-a-half story, stone-veneered buildings with Period House stylistic forms and details in the English cottage variation. Buildings in the group were constructed in 1939 and 1940. No two cottages are alike in basic house shape, roof line, or window placement, but all have a similar scale and are finished in limestone rubble, either laid in irregular courses or completely uncoursed. Additionally, all have massive stone fireplace chimneys, attached or integrated garages, and front windows (generally 6x6 or 8x8 sash) are prominent features of each structure. The cottages are situated close to each other with very little front or back yard and present a picturesque visual appearance. Tied together through their shared stone cladding, the cottages exhibit for the observant passerby a variety of masonry techniques much like the display case of a merchant. What at first glance appears to be a random collection of odd sized stones, is actually quite logically organized. One house is covered with the smallest pieces of limestone; another uses uniformly larger and more angular pieces; in yet another a strong rhythm is set up between narrow, elongated stones and larger, squarish pieces. Taken as a whole, the five buildings as a district have more to say about Howard Moffitt and the architectural heritage of Iowa City than any of them individually.

Garages on four of the five cottages appear to have been converted to interior living space, however only one such garage is visually altered with the addition of windows. Other garage doors have been maintained in their original state. Four of the five buildings are well maintained and in good repair, and three of the those have front yards which have been landscaped to enhance the picturesque cottage appearance. Dormers have been added and the original overhang above one cottage front door has been replaced with a somewhat larger, but equally odd, overhang. These alterations do not detract from the overall integrity of the district because they are consistent with the character of the individual buildings and are not substantial when viewed in relation to the other four buildings.

The neighborhood surrounding the district has changed little since the cottages were built. One of the few small neighborhood grocery stores still operates across the street. Traffic past the cottages' front doors always has been relatively heavy at this site since it has been on the bus line and is at the intersection of two main streets, one of which is a former highway route through town.

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## b. Contributing Buildings:

i. 1330 Muscatine Avenue: This building was constructed in either 1939 (Phil Miller) or 1940 (City Assessor) on the smallest triangular lot nearest the intersection of East Court Street, Muscatine Avenue and Ralston Creek. It has a one-and-one-half story, rectangular, gable-end main mass from which a smaller one-story gable-end wing telescopes to the southeast. The end wall of this wing contains a massive stone fireplace chimney. Another stone chimney appears on the roof at the point of division between the integrated garage, on the northeast end of the structure, and interior space. Walls at the front, side and part of the rear of the house are clad with light brown uncut fieldstone, interspersed with dark brown stone, randomly laid. The front entrance is flanked by stone buttresses. Wide wooden siding covers the garage end of the structure. Wood shingles cover the vertical southeast wall of the gable end above the juncture with the wing. A red asphalt roof covers the entire structure. Windows are 6 over 6 sash. The south east corner of the house contains a corner window consisting of two sash windows separated by a squared wood post or pier (seen also in 1324 and 1328 Muscatine Avenue). Wide header boards appear over the front windows in the stone walls. The garage door is a pair of hinged louvered panels which open outward, although the garage has been converted to interior living space. It has a small shed addition in the rear which is unobtrusive. Additional yard space has been graveled to provide additional parking. City Directories indicate this property was owner-occupied for many years, but is now a rental house again. Despite the need for general maintenance, the building is intact and has retained its integrity.

ii. 1328 Muscatine Avenue: Built in 1939 (Phil Miller; City Assessor), this one-and-one-half story, gable-end building is square in appearance and dominated by a large front gable, containing a fixed window with 42 individual glass panes. The front entrance is found on one side of this gable, an integrated garage to the other side. The eaves of the roof extend out to cover the garage and front entrance openings. The roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles and the ridge ends look as if they once flared upward, a common Moffitt detail. A massive stone chimney is located on the front slope of the house to the southeast of the front gable, apparently at the interior wall between garage and living space. The southwest corner contains a corner window with 6 over 6 sash windows. A tiny one-story rear wing appears original. All sides of this building are clad with beige and darker brown limestone rubble, randomly placed. The individual stones are of a fairly uniform size and are more angular, with more nearly 90 degree corners. The wooden garage door has been filled with windows evidencing conversion to interior living space. These windows are not sympathetic to the design of the house. A window-type which keeps the garage door appearance while allowing light into the interior would be more appropriate. Other than the garage door, this house is intact and moderately well maintained. It has

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just been purchased by owner-occupants after being a rental for the last twenty some years.

iii. 1326 Muscatine Avenue: This gable-front stone cottage, is the first building from the intersection to have a lot wide enough to be positioned gable-front to the street. It was built in 1940 (Phil Miller, City Assessor). Eight over eight front windows flank a central entrance, making a symmetrical facade. Header boards over these windows are wide and have angled ends. Large, flat stones are used as sills. A tall stone fireplace and chimney extend from the southeast side of the house just in front of the garage wing. Limestone rubble covering this cottage's walls is quite small relative to its neighbors, flat, and imbedded in recessed mortar to form open joints with deep shadows. Size and shape of each individual stone were so carefully regulated that once laid an irregular course pattern results. The appearance is not unlike naturally occurring layers of limestone exposed in river bend cliffs and highway cutbanks. The front wall is flared near the ground to give the appearance of solid, stacked stone walls. The roof is covered with green asphalt singles. Alterations to this building include dormers on the roof and a replacement--necessitated by a fire some years ago--of a shingled cone-shaped form overhanging the front entrance. The cone form is odd and larger than the equally odd looking original overhang. The garage has been converted to interior living space without altering its exterior appearance. The yard is surrounded by a picket fence and shrubs. Despite the alterations, which are sympathetic to the overall design and character of the house and district, integrity for this well-maintained house is good. It is owner-occupied.

iv. 1324 Muscatine Avenue: This rectangular one-and-one-half story house was built in 1939 (City Assessor) or 1940 (Phil Miller). It has a steeply pitched, hipped roof which extends to the southeast side to form the garage roof and in front to form an extension where the front door is found. The roof is covered with gray asphalt shingles. A hipped-roof, shingled dormer with a small, asymmetrically placed, three-over-one window is placed in the center of the sloping front roof. At the corner near the front entrance is a corner window (6 over 6 sash) supported by the same large squared post and wide header boards as in 1324 and 1328 Muscatine Avenue. A stone chimney is located in the roof to the north or left of the dormer. The limestone rubble for this structure is light and dark brown and gray mortar was used. Stone is uncoursed and randomly laid. The wooden garage door appears to be operational. The stone path to the front door may be original. No alterations in this building were observed. This intact and well maintained cottage exhibits the best degree of integrity in the district. It is not owner occupied but has been a rental property for most of the last nearly fifty years.

v. 1322 Muscatine Avenue: The predominant feature of this simple one-story rectangular building, which was built in 1940 (Phil Miller, City

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Assessor), is its massive, rounded roof, intended to remind the passerby of thatch. The thatch image is enhanced by a covering of cedar shingles, randomly laid and of varying length and size. Competing for prominence is an enormous stone fireplace chimney, with newer tile chimney pots, centered in the middle of the front wall. This chimney stack is flanked by a double 6-over-6 sash window to the northwest, and the front entrance and another window to the southeast. The roof line extends far down the sides of the structure, beyond the tops of the side windows. The garage occupies a rear corner of the house and has long been converted to interior space, without impacting the visual appearance of the structure. The stonework on this cottage exhibits some interesting variations which distinguish it from its neighbors. While the other four structures are covered with pale beige and darker brown limestone, this cottage is covered with a medium to dark gray limestone in gray mortar. A prior owner, Phil Miller, feels this stone may have come from the Second Ward Elementary School, demolished in 1940. Using long narrow pieces and wide squarish pieces, the rubble is carefully coursed to form a pattern, best seen in the chimney stack. The narrow pieces are at times vertically aligned, then horizontally, and are alternated with the squarish stones so that a rhythm develops. This careful placement deteriorates around the corners and becomes uncoursed rubble towards the rear of the structure. This structure is largely intact although a number of replacements or repairs have occurred due to normal deterioration; small areas of the roof have been re-shingled with similar materials, some of the lower sashes have been replaced with like replacements and small rear windows have been replaced with a larger window. The window replacement does not impact the appearance of the district, however because of its placement at the rear of the structure. A concrete pad immediately adjacent to the front of the house was poured at some time, and the front yard, graveled for parking for years while the house was a rental, has been returned to grass and flowers, with a picket fence. This well maintained, owner-occupied cottage has retained a high degree of integrity of materials, workmanship, and design.

c. **Noncontributing Structure:** A gazebo structure is located in the back yard of 1322 Muscatine Avenue. It was built in 1985 and has no connection to Howard Moffitt.

**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The five stone cottages located in the 1300 block of Muscatine Avenue form a district which is locally significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of the rental houses designed and built by Howard F. Moffitt during 1939 and 1940 in a popular Period House style intended to evoke an image of a vernacular, hand-built, cottage of the English or European countryside. Faced with limestone rubble collected from local outcroppings, these houses were



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built with some salvaged materials and two houses remain rental units, all characteristic of Moffitt's building practices. Their location on a busy street marks them as the archetypical "Moffitt houses," as that phrase is locally used. As a cluster of buildings, these stone cottages exhibit a high degree of integrity of design, workmanship, and materials and an outstanding degree of integrity of association and setting.

The district's location at a busy intersection of two main Iowa City streets makes these cottages perhaps the best known and most visible of all the Moffitt houses. Thousands of Iowa Citizens, permanent residents and transient students and faculty--only in town for four years of college or until a new teaching position is secured--have passed by these Moffitt houses. They are as imbedded in the memories of passersby as their limestone rocks are imbedded in the mortar. All the distinctive Moffitt elements--the construction methods, the scavenged materials, the picturesque house form, the ornamentation--come together in this cluster of five houses. Their setting, on small strips of a triangular piece of land formed by the angled confluence of Ralston Creek and Muscatine Avenue, has remained unchanged since they were built; their neighborhood also has remained largely unchanged. The fact that there exists five in a row typifies Moffitt's practice of building rental houses. These five structures are excellent examples of the type of housing Moffitt built in Iowa City and Coralville, Iowa.

**9. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Iowa City City Directories. State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.  
Iowa City City Assessor's Records.  
Miller, Phil Collection. State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.  
Sanborn maps for Iowa City. State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA****Verbal Boundary Description:**

All of Lots 2, 3, 4, 5 and triangular lots 6 and 7 of W.C. Mott's Subdivision of parts of Blocks 5 and 7 of Clark & Borland's Addition to Iowa City, Iowa; bounded on the southwest by Muscatine Avenue and on the northeast by Ralston Creek.

**Boundary Justification:**

By defining the district boundaries as inclusive of lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, all five Moffitt structures are included and all other residential structures are excluded. These lots are also visually defined by two existing geographic features, Ralston Creek and Muscatine Avenue, which dictated the shape of the platted subdivision.

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Properties included in the *Muscatine Avenue Moffitt Cottage Historic District* submitted as a part of *The Small Homes of Howard F. Moffitt in Iowa City and Coralville, Iowa* Multiple Property Document:

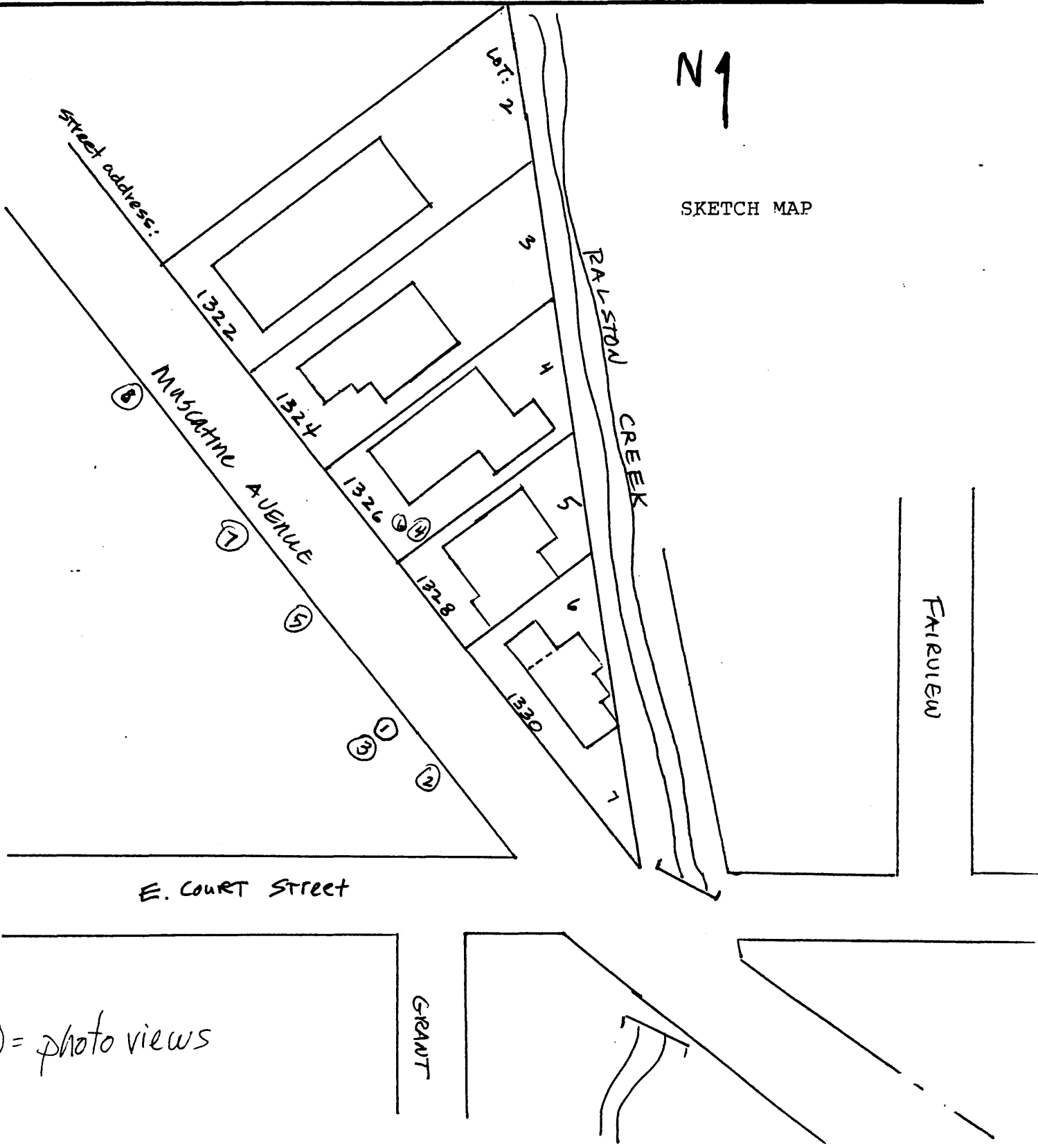
- 1330 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa  
Owner: William Murray, 6 Forest Glen, Iowa City, Iowa 52245
- 1328 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa  
Owner: Michelle L. Bowers, Ann M & John P. Bowers, 1328 Muscatine Ave.,  
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
- 1326 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa  
Owner: Earl W. & Enid Brown, 1303 South D, Fairfield, Iowa 52556
- 1324 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa  
Owner: Thomas J. Blommers, 1915 Muscatine Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240
- 1322 Muscatine Avenue, Iowa City, Johnson County, Iowa  
Owner: John R. & Mindi A. Nechanicky, 1322 Muscatine Ave., Iowa City,  
Iowa 52240

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N

SKETCH MAP

⊗ = photo views