

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED FEB 9 1975  
DATE ENTERED JAN 1 1975

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 Americus Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

*irreg. pattern centered along Lee St, with splinters of a building on the N side, Oak*

CITY, TOWN

Americus

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT *Wesley, Oak*  
*3rd - Jack Brinkley & Massener St.*

STATE

Georgia

CODE

13

COUNTY

Sumter

CODE

261

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Multiple

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Sumter County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Americus

STATE

Georgia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

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 original town square of Americus was the southwest corner of land lot #156 in the 27th District, and is now the block bounded by Lamar, Lee, Forsyth, and Jackson streets. Business expanded in all directions, but particularly toward the north and west, perhaps as a result of the location of the railroad to the northwest. The Starksville Road, now Lee Street, was an important highway before Americus was founded. Probably homes were first built along this street and then to the east and west, as evidenced by the ages of the houses on and near Lee Street.

### Railroad Yard - Warehouse Area

Typical of its period, the Victorian freight depot (1) is a single-story, broad-eaved structure with brackets decorated by unusual ball ornaments in the form of acorns. A number of warehouses were built to the southeast on Wheeler, Hampton and Jefferson Streets. The most outstanding of these is the Harrold Warehouse (2), still used for storage. Cotton merchants and retailers, the Harrolds were in business for 95 years. Built in 1889, the two-story structure with central access way, has an eclectic style, turreted facade most strongly reminiscent of Richardsonian Romanesque. Large side windows, now bricked up, once let in northern light for the grading of cotton. Upstairs are rooms, each with a separate fireplace, to accommodate visiting cotton brokers. Besides the warehouses and depot, there are two or three small businesses and a cement block passenger station in the area.

### Business District

Forsyth and Lamar Streets, crossed by Lee, Jackson, Cotton, Hampton, and Dudley Streets, form the commercial area. The majority of buildings are two-story Victorian commercial stepped facades, characterized by bracketing, round windows with wrought-iron grille-work, and decorative use of brick. The major intrusions include a movie theater (corner of Forsyth and Cotton Streets), two small banks on the south side of Forsyth, one large classical bank building at Lamar and Hampton Streets, and the covering of some of the original structures with more modern fake facades.

West on Forsyth Street, on the north side of the first block is Glover's Opera House (3). Three storied, with commercial space (still in use) on the ground floor, this brick structure houses two levels of seating, a six-tier balcony and a main floor, once accessible only by a curved, double-wing wrought-iron staircase which no longer exists. The Opera House was designed by Parkins and Bruce of Atlanta and was built in 1881.

Across the street is a large Renaissance Revival office building. Next, at the corner of Forsyth and Jackson Streets, is the round-cornered, Thornton-Wheatley Building (4), of 1892. An eclectic building with Renaissance characteristics, it also has several Art Nouveau stained glass windows and terra-cotta medallions.

South on the east side of Lee Street in what was once a complex of several city buildings stands the remaining part of the City Hall. According to an engraving made soon after its construction in 1891, the original building has a tall tower beside it.

(continued)

## 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 type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Much of America's greatness lies in the efforts of dedicated, enterprising citizens, such as those of Americus, Georgia, and in the towns they built.

Only a few years after its founding in 1831, Americus became a distribution center for farmers and cotton growers of the fertile southwest Georgia area. Americus' position as a center of trade was reinforced in 1854, when several of its citizens bought a majority of the Southwest Railroad's stock thereby guaranteeing the railroad would pass through their town. As an economic center, Americus developed a large community of merchants and businessmen among which the names of Harrold, Wheatley, Eldridge, and Windsor are remembered.

Many of these men, and others like them, were dedicated to the improvement of their town and contributed both time and effort to religious, educational and civic activities.

After the Civil War, and the demise of "King Cotton", Americus experienced a period of depression. By the 1890's, however, Americus had, like the rest of the country, recovered and entered a tremendous building boom, both commercial and residential. Buildings like the Windsor Hotel represent the renewed prosperity and optimism of the last decade of the nineteenth century that occurred throughout the United States.

Americus has a significant variety of architectural styles dating, in some cases, from before the Civil War, but for the most part Victorian in nature. The Victorian architecture represents a wide cross-section of types including large, rambling Eastlake Style mansions, Shingle Style homes and even Gothic cottages. Interspersed with these are a number of Classical Revival structures, and two ante-bellum cottages.

Americus' architecture represents an energetic yet gracious style of life. And though that life will never be seen again, it is through the preservation of such towns as Americus that its citizens can, as Shakespeare says, "call back yesterday".

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Americus Times-Recorder, 1889-1900.
- Gurr, Steve. The Windsor of Victorian Americus. Americus: Sumter Historic Preservation Society, 1973.
- Harrold, Thomas, Memorandum. Macon, 1954.
- Scarboro; Llona, personal inspection and interviews.
- Sumter County Deeds, 1831-1917.
- Williford, William Bailey. Americus Through the Years. Atlanta, published privately, 1960.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 250 approximately (SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starts corner Forsyth and Lee Streets, north on Lee Street, turns west and continues behind front lots to Cotton Avenue, turns north to Wheeler Street, then west to Hampton Street, north on Hampton Street and approximately one block beyond, then west approximately one block, then south one block, east onto Wheeler Street to Hampton Street; continues south on Hampton to Lamar Street and then west to Dudley Street, turns south down Dudley to Church Street and turns west to include the street lots on the west side

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE (Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian, Consultant)

Llona Scarboro, Intern, Historic Sites Survey DATE  
 ORGANIZATION  
Historic Preservation Section June 11, 1975  
 STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE  
270 Washington Street, S.W., Room 703-C 404-656-2840  
 CITY OR TOWN STATE  
Atlanta Georgia

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER DATE June 10, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 DATE 11/1/96  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST: Conrad M. Greenberg DATE 12/31/75  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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DATE ENTERED	JAN 11 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET    Description    ITEM NUMBER 7    PAGE 2

Simple Romanesque, with arched windows between three-story continuous pilaster strips, and pedimented gable, the structure is now used as a fire station.

The Windsor Hotel (6), filling the block between Jackson Street and Winsor Avenue, and facing Lamar, epitomizes Victorian Americus. Built in 1892, it combines many different stylistic elements, including round-arched windows, dormers, turrets, terra cotta frieze-work, a square tower (not extant) and lancet windows. However, its general squat proportions give it a Romanesque feeling. The four-story lobby, now with an enclosure from the ground-floor cafeteria extending into it, is distinguished by heavy balusters of contrasting dark wood on the first and second floor balconies. The arrangement of the Windsor's 150 rooms, ball room, dining room, and shop spaces is very irregular. Except for the shops on the ground floor, the hotel is closed.

The Americus Manufacturing and Improvement Company, of which John Windsor was a prominent member, chose Atlanta architect G. L. Norrmann to design the Windsor. It was hoped that the new, large, hotel would attract tourists on their way to Florida and make Americus a resort. The Windsor instead developed a regular clientele and became a focal point of "Gay Nineties" society in Americus. Several companies and individuals have owned the Windsor, the most recent owner being the Dayton family of Jacksonville, Florida.

The three Rylander buildings on the south side of Lamar between Dudley and Hampton Streets differ from many of the other facades along Lamar Street with their large, sectioned Romanesque arches and heavy composite pilaster strips.

South on the east side of Jackson Street, between Lamar and Church Streets are the Carnegie Library (8), and Americus Presbyterian Church (9). Although considered an intrusion, the classical Southern Bell building at the corner of Church and Jackson Streets is very unobtrusive.

In 1908 the Americus Library Association, with Mr. Thornton Wheatley as president, obtained \$20,000.00 from the Carnegie Foundation for expanding their facilities, and a new library, still in use was built. The stone structure is Neo-Classical with a large central projecting wing, composite columns, and prominent architrave.

The Americus Presbyterian Church, built in 1884, has many Stick Style characteristics including slender steeple, steep roof, diagonal "stickwork," and heavy bracketing. The plan of the building is very asymmetrical.

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JAN 1
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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Church Street

The residential portion of the district begins at, and includes both sides of Church Street and all the area south. Between Dudley and Jackson Streets are found several two-story residences with relatively simple ornamentation on porches and gables. There are also three or four smaller cottages. The most outstanding of these, found at 404 Church Street (10) (c. 1860) has a latticed porch, and unusual scalloped dentil-work just under the eaves.

The houses, after passing Jackson Street, become larger, spaced further apart, and more ornate, several having turrets. At 130 Jackson (11), is a home having a full-length, double veranda with gingerbread trim.

Jackson Street

South of Church Street, the houses on Jackson Street are two-story Victorian, however the unique arrangement of architectural elements in each house gives them an interesting variety. The one jarring note is a grocery store on the west side of the street.

Lee Street

Most of the houses on Lee Street, though varied in style, are larger, and occupy spacious lawns. The houses include two Neo-Classical mansions, several rambling Victorian houses, and two ante-bellum cottages. Some smaller, more modern brick homes have been built along the street.

The Eldridge-Ferguson residence (14) at 301 Lee Street, was built c. 1867 by Dr. E. J. Eldridge, a Crimean War veteran and Baltimore physician, who settled in Americus at the beginning of the Civil War. Two-story, with a mansard roof, gingerbread dormers, and ornately bracketed and balustraded porch, the front of the house is centrally arranged around a wide central hall. The back rooms are less symmetrical in arrangement and some alterations have been made, the most drastic of which is the closing in of the back porch. Other features of interest include a massive, double front door carved with a dogwood motif, and in the two front rooms, large bays paneled decoratively with a dark wood. The present owners are descendants of Dr. Eldridge.

On the next block, on the west side of Lee Street between Brannon Avenue and College Street, is the Calvary Episcopal Church (15), built in 1919. This structure was designed gratis, by the New York firm of Cram & Ferguson. The Biographical Dictionary of American Architects describes Ralph Cram, architect for St. John the Divine in New York, as "America's leading exponent of the Gothic revival." Calvary Episcopal is a small red brick English Gothic style structure with central aisle and

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

two side chapels. The ceiling, collar braced, is wood.

The turreted, ornately shingled Victorian home at the northwest corner of Lee and College Streets was once the home of Uriah B. Harrold. Uriah Harrold founded, and later with his father, ran the Harrold and Johnson Company for many years, building the Harrold Warehouse in 1889. Across the street on the northeast corner of the intersection, a small brick apartment complex has replaced what was, according to townspeople, one of Americus' most magnificent homes.

At 501 Lee Street is the Bell-Dean-LeSueur residence (18), a Neo-Classical Revival structure, Built in 1905 by Edwin M. Bell, it remained in this family until 1969. Its two-story portico is superimposed over a smaller one-story, rounded portico, which is a continuation of the one-story porch. Of the two stained glass windows in the house, one is an unusual combination of Art Nouveau stained glass design set into bevelled glass. One of the several original mantelpieces is exceptionally tall, as is the four foot paneled wainscoting. Centrally planned, the house has few alterations.

Next door is the Cobb House (19), one of the two ante-bellum cottages on Lee Street. According to Hays' History of Macon County, one hundred houses were moved to Americus after a terrible epidemic in neighboring Oglethorpe in 1862. The central portion of the house was purchased and brought to Americus by Colonel Charles J. Malone. Captain John A. Cobb, a Georgia General Assembly Representative, bought the house in 1883, and it has remained in his family. The one-story house is very simply styled, with a very low-pitched roof and continuous portico.

The other ante-bellum cottage, at 605 Lee Street (20), dates stylistically from the 1840's. With a large pediment over the doorway, the house is planned around a wide hallway which has been partially enclosed. Besides having several original doors, the interior is noteworthy for its classical molding and medallion in the front living room, and irregularly-sized floor boards. The supporting beams underneath the house are over two inches thick and several inches wide and the main front support, according to several carpenters, is one continuous piece.

Next to 605 Lee Street is another Neo-Classical residence. Victorian houses of varying description constitute the rest of the older structures on Lee Street with the exception of one Shingle Style house (21) between Hill and Dodson Streets. On the corner of East Glessner Street and Lee Street is a small house in the style often referred to as "Steamboat Gothic" (22).

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CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

College Street

Much like Lee Street in its sampling of styles, College Street is a wide, shady avenue lined with many large, stately, homes, both Victorian and Classical, and a few smaller cottages.

The Gothic cottage, the Eldridge Residence(17)(1862), on the southwest corner of College Street and Hancock Drive, with its unusually early construction date, is a one and one-half story structure with projecting, steep, ornamented gable rising over the bracketed front porch. Most of the doors, as well as the dog-ear mouldings and ornamented archway in the entrance hall, are original. Alterations to the house include opening the attic as an upstairs (although the present owner feels it has always been open by reason of the well-integrated dog-leg staircase at the back of the hall), closing the back porch, and adding small dormers to the front.

Taylor and Brown Streets

Taylor and Brown Streets are also predominantly Victorian with two or three Classical structures and a few small brick and wood homes built later. On the east side of Brown Street is a group of three almost identically designed houses (12).

At 139 Taylor Street (13) is the former home of Robert Crisp. U.S. Congressman eleven times, Mr. Crisp is perhaps Americus' most well-known citizen.

Rees Park

Formed by a circular grass park surrounded by Victorian homes, Rees Park now has approximately seven large homes extending from the south side, east, to the north end. The Rees Park Grammar School (1914), with a classical facade, and several smaller houses line the west side of the Park.

At the south corner of the Park is John Windsor's former home (24), with its unusual facing gable decorated by an ornate bargeboard affixed just below a jerkin-head. Next, at 606 Rees Park (25) is the Hodges-Buchanan-Smith House, built in 1905. The front porch of this home, becomes polygonal-shaped at one corner and rises into a polygonal turret. The home just north is extremely large, with porches on first and second floors, becoming a double portico at the entrances.

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CONTINUATION SHEET    Description    ITEM NUMBER 7    PAGE 2

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Barlow and Furlow Streets

Composed of less ornate, smaller homes and cottages, Barlow and Furlow Streets are less pretentious than some of the other areas. Most of the homes are one story with decorated porches and bargeboards. One exception is a large two-story structure with a novel combination of gingerbread and Eastlake trim on its porch.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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AMENDMENT

Americus Historic District

Sumter County

Description:

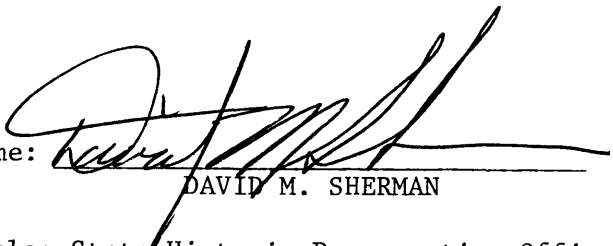
Of an approximate 400 buildings in the Americus Historic District, about thirty-five of them are intrusions. Seventeen are marked on the city map as the most noticeable. These are structures of obvious later origin, such as gas stations, although all but four or five of them are brick or wood houses which blend harmoniously with the older styles. The others are generally decorative additions to old buildings, for instance large signs covering Victorian store fronts, and do not permanently change the basic structural potential of the buildings to represent the turn of the century atmosphere of the area.

Americus' older residential section consists of broad, tree-shaded streets lined with large wooden Victorian houses or Victorian cottages set far apart. Approximately eleven antebellum and neo-classical structures exist in the district, as well as houses in which the elements of Victorian and classical styles are combined. However, the predominant character of the district is Victorian.

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries were carefully considered to include only those areas with historic and architectural integrity. A much higher concentration of intrusions surrounds the older, more historical central streets such as Lee Street and Old Starksville Road. Other sections like the depot, are adjacent to vacant land spaces.

Llona Scarborough, Intern  
Elizabeth Z. Macgregor, Architectural Historian  
Historic Preservation Section  
Department of Natural Resources  
270 Washington Street, S.W.  
Room 703C  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Name:   
DAVID M. SHERMAN  
Title: State Historic Preservation Office

Date: 11-24-75

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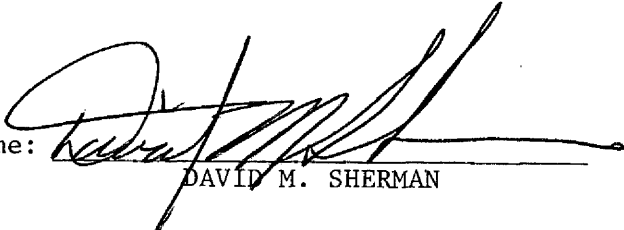
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Name:   
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CONTINUATION SHEET Verbal Boundary ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 4

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of Jackson to Finn St., and includes only the east side to College Ave. The boundary encompasses the facing lots on both sides of: College east to Lee St., Lee St. south and including one lot past Glessner St., east again to Barlow St., south on Barlow to Hill St., and east again on College to Rees Park. It then follows the rear boundaries of houses facing Rees Park, then includes lots on the north side of Taylor northwest to Brown St., including both sides of Brown north to Church and both sides of Church west from Horne St. to Lee St. The boundary runs up the back of property facing Lee St. on the West, north to Forsyth St. and west to the intersection of Forsyth and Lee Streets.

CONTINUATION SHEET Geographical Data ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 4

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LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW 32° 04' 37"	NW 84° 14' 25"
NE 32° 04' 37"	NE 84° 13' 45"
SE 32° 03' 27"	SE 84° 13' 45"
SW 32° 03' 27"	SW 84° 14' 25"