

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received APR 19 1985  
date entered MAY 16 1985

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

**1. Name**

historic Sweeny-Callahan House/T.M. Callahan House

and/or common Callahan House

**2. Location**

street & number 312 Terry Street n/a not for publication

city, town Longmont n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Boulder code 013

**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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Longmont

street & number Civic Center Complex: 3rd and Kimbark

city, town Longmont n/a vicinity of state Colorado 81501

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Boulder County Recorder

street & number 13th and Spruce

city, town Boulder state Colorado

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Ongoing  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society, 1300 Broadway

city, town Denver state Colorado 80203

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Callahan House, constructed in 1892, is a large two and one-half story Queen Anne style residence located about three blocks west of Longmont's Main Street in the section known as "old town." The house is highly animated with steep pitched gabled bays, porches, a porte cochere and a tower porch. It sits at the north end of a large landscaped corner site fenced on two sides by a low wrought iron fence set in a concrete base.

In 1908, additional property was purchased south of the house for a formal "Italian" garden designed by a Chicago firm and installed by a company from Boulder, Colorado. A concrete paved drive enters the property from the south through wrought iron gates flanked by large cast concrete piers. The drive winds through the garden past cast concrete Greek statuary, benches and a large fountain, all recently restored, and ends at the carriage house at the southeast rear of the property. A second drive enters through gates on the west and goes under the porte cochere to the carriage house. There are large mature deciduous trees and evergreens as well as more recent plantings in the garden and around the house.

The house is of frame construction faced with red pressed brick on a foundation of rock faced, red Lyons sandstone. Sandstone has also been used for the belt courses between stories, the front porch and porte cochere walls, window sills, lintels and quoins. The steep roof has a central hipped portion with gabled roof extensions on each elevation. On the south side near the rear, there is a second gabled bay which is part of a 1897, four-room addition. The gable faces are of brick and have a rectangular window in the center and vergeboards typical of the 1890s.

The north porte cochere, added in 1904, has a low hipped roof supported by masonry piers set on a sandstone wall. The large front porch, which replaced a small gabled roof, wood porch in 1904, has a shed roof supported by brick piers. It covers the width of the front, curves around the southwest corner, and ends at the south bay. Above the porch roof on the south side is a semi-circular porch with a conical and finial, a wood beaded frieze and short wood railing with turned spindles.

A curved bay window, in the recess between the two projecting south bays, has an open porch with a wood railing above on the second story. On the south wall over the porch is an unusual oval shaped window with leaded, beveled glass. There is a band of fish scale shingling below the porch railing which is repeated on the panels of the two-story frame porch on the northeast rear of the house. This porch, added ca. 1904, is enclosed with sections of small paned windows on both floors divided by slender turned posts.

The majority of the windows are one-over-one, wood sash. In 1908, when the interior of the house was renovated, intricately designed leaded, beveled glass panels were installed in the top portions of the principal windows including the oriel and oval windows on the south elevation and in the unusual keyhole shaped window on the west, now partially obscured by the front porch. The oak entry doors of the major entrances are distinctive for the large curvilinear plate glass windows and the delicately carved wood ornament at the center of the sides and top and bottom of the windows.

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The interior of the house is notable for the fine craftsmanship and materials used in the 1908 renovation which combined several architectural styles popular at that time. Neo-Classical, Craftsman, Art Nouveau, and Rococo are seen in the cherry, oak, walnut, and mahogany woodwork of the stairway and window and door frames, in the leaded, beveled glass doorway panels, in the decorative ceiling plasterwork, and the wall treatment.

The original stairway, located in the foyer behind an open arcade with slender Ionic columns, was designed in walnut and oak by the first owner of the house J.K. Sweeny. The stair features a landing window of stained glass, turned balusters, and a small open-work screen of wood below the handrail near the bottom. At one side in front of the stairway is an inglenook.

Among the outstanding elements of the 1908 renovation are the wood surrounds and entablatures of the windows and wide doorways between the foyer and parlor and the parlor and sitting room. These are designed in Neo-Classical style incorporating Ionic columns and entablatures and dentil, acanthus leaf and egg and dart moldings. In the upper portion of each doorway is a panel of clear, beveled, leaded glass in a free-flowing design using the classic volute form. The wood molding at the bottom of the panel forms a basket arch.

In the parlor, the ceiling and walls are decorated with Rococo plaster moldings which frame wall panels of various sizes and the beveled edge mirror believed to be where the original fireplace was located. The original brass light fixture features a leaf pattern which held frosted teardrop shades. Only one now remains at the bottom of the fixture.

The notable elements of the sitting room are the original brass ceiling fixture centered in a plaster medallion and the band of plaster ceiling molding with elaborate designs at the corners. There is a plaster cornice around the room with a band of egg and dart molding below the delicately shaped brackets.

The Craftsman period dining room is a sharp contrast to the classical formality of the parlor and sitting room. The wood ceiling beams and heavy wood molding around the top of the walls form boxed ceiling panels which have stenciled designs illuminated by small light bulbs. On the lower walls, panels are created by wide wood strips with a plate rail at the top. Above are panels with a stenciled border. There is a hanging, Tiffany style stained glass shade centered over the dining room table. The oak parquet floor has a fret border inlaid with mahogany and other woods. The floors in the principal first floor rooms are similar, but are covered with carpet.

The first floor office in the 1897 addition has mahogany woodwork in the door and window surrounds, the ceiling beams, the deep molding around the top of the walls and in the pilasters and fluted columns with Composite capitals.

The kitchen, pantry and first floor bath retain their original small blue and white ceramic floor tiles. The pantry still has its oak cabinets, storage bins and marble counter tops, all believed to be original.

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The second floor has been altered with the removal of a partition between two bedrooms to make a large meeting space. The remainder of the second floor is used as an apartment for the house manager.

Dating to the construction of the house is the one and a half story carriage house located at the northeast rear of the property. It is of red brick with a front gable roof, vergeboards and is topped by a sawn wood finial. The carriage entrance on the west facade has been bricked in and now has a single entry door. There is a single rectangular window in the gable with small panes in the upper portion. On the south there are rectangular windows on the first floor and a dormer with an entry door on the second reached by an exterior stair. This building is currently undergoing renovation to become offices for the St. Vrain Historical Society.

## 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 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1892/1904/1908      **Builder/Architect** James Wiggins : Builder(1892)  
 Mitchel & Halback: interior designers (1908)

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Callahan House is significant as one of Longmont's most distinguished houses. This Queen Anne style building, constructed in 1892, contains many outstanding decorative features from the original construction and the 1908 renovation as well as beautifully landscaped grounds. Especially notable is the fine craftsmanship and design of the woodwork, leaded glass panels and decorative plaster moldings found on the first floor interior which represent the popular design trends of the early 1900s. The house is also important for its association with its first owner, Longmont flour mill manager and banker, James Koller Sweeny, who lived there from 1892 until 1897. However, the house is better known for its second owner, Thomas M. Callahan, a prominent Longmont retail merchant and founder of the Golden Rule Stores. Callahan occupied and had an office in the house from 1897 until 1938. Under Callahan's ownership several important and distinctive changes were made to the property including the 1897 and 1904 additions and the 1908 interior renovation and landscape design.

The builder and first occupant of the house, James K. Sweeny, moved to Longmont from Coal Creek, Colorado in 1887 when he became the manager and bookkeeper of the Longmont Farmers' Mill.<sup>1</sup> In 1890, Sweeny accepted the position as cashier with the Farmers National Bank in Longmont. Two years later, he built his imposing house at the corner of Third and Terry, its design taken from plan books by local builder, James Wiggins. Sweeny sold the house in 1897 to Thomas M. Callahan and subsequently left Longmont to live in Pueblo and to return to the milling business.<sup>2</sup>

Callahan came to Longmont in 1887 from Chillicothe, Illinois. By 1889 he had opened a furnishing and drygoods store on Main Street. He founded a chain of general merchandise stores, first known as Johnson and Callahan, soon to become the Golden Rule Stores. With partner, Guy Johnson, Callahan expanded to a seven-state area through franchised partnerships. Callahan's third partner was young James Cash Penney who moved to Longmont from Denver in 1898. He opened a butcher shop, but soon went out of business. Penney, whose real talent was in merchandising, worked temporarily for Callahan. In March of 1899, Penney went to Evanston, Wyoming to work in Guy Johnson's store. In 1900, Penney became a full partner and opened a Golden Rule Store in Kemmerer, Wyoming. He also became a partner in the Rock Springs store in 1903. In 1907, Penney bought out Johnson and Callahan's interest in the Wyoming stores for \$30,000 and established J.C. Penney Company.<sup>3</sup> When Penney retired in 1946, he had 1,612 stores in operation.<sup>4</sup> Much of Penney's success is attributed to his experience with Johnson & Callahan and the practice of training store clerks to become store managers.

Soon after Callahan bought the Sweeny house, he began to make improvements. He added hot water heat and a four-room, two-story addition on the south rear of the house where he located his office on the first floor. In 1904, the large, wrap-around front porch and porte cochere were built. Compatible in design and materials, these additions are barely discernible from the original construction.

In 1908, the interior was redesigned by a Chicago firm, Mitchel and Halback, who installed the elegant woodwork, beveled, leaded glass panels in windows and doorways and applied delicate plasterwork to walls and ceilings.<sup>5</sup> About this same time, the property was in-

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .6

Quadrangle name Longmont

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	3	4	9	1	1	3	5	4	4	4	5	7	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The south thirty feet of Lot 4, and all of Lots 5 and 6, in Block 62, City of Longmont, County of Boulder, State of Colorado, T2N, R69W, S3

### 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

Glenn V. Sherwood  
name/title Barbara Norgren  
Chairman, Landmark Designation Commission  
organization Preservation Consultant date 12/18/84  
Civic Center Complex (303) 776-6050 X201  
street & number 7453 E. Jefferson Drive telephone (303) 740-7860  
Longmont Colorado 80501  
city or town Denver state Colorado 80237

# 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Barbara Norgren  
title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4-15-85

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Melissa Ryan Keeper of the National Register date 5-16-85

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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creased in size by the purchase of additional land to the south of the house. The expanded grounds were landscaped, Greek statuary and a fountain were installed and a winding, paved drive and wrought iron fence were added. The landscaping, intended as a formal Italian garden, was designed by an unknown Chicago firm.

During his years in Longmont, Callahan was very active in local civic affairs and fraternal organizations. He served as an officer and/or director of several local banks and was involved in the formation of the Arbuckle Ditch Company, which remains an important water source for Longmont and the surrounding farm community.<sup>6</sup>

In 1938 Callahan and his wife moved to Reno, Nevada, at which time they donated their house to the city of Longmont for exclusive use by women's groups and clubs for meetings and special events. The Mutual Improvement Club, founded in 1892 as one of Longmont's first social clubs, holds meetings in the house. Men are seldom allowed in the house and alcohol is prohibited according to the stipulations of Callahan's gift. The house is managed by a private board with the grounds maintained by the city.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Flour milling, storage and shipment of grain was one of the chief industries in the Longmont area. in the late 19th century.

<sup>2</sup>Longmont, Colorado Daily Time-Call, 7/16/1975, p.17.

<sup>3</sup>J.C. Penney, Fifty Years With the Golden Rule, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950, pp.41-59.

Norman Beasley, Main Street Merchant, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1948, pp.12-23.

<sup>4</sup>World Book Encyclopedia, Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, Vol. P, p.217.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Virginia Estes, president of the Callahan House Board, 1/16/1985.

<sup>6</sup>Estes Interview.

<sup>7</sup>Estes Interview.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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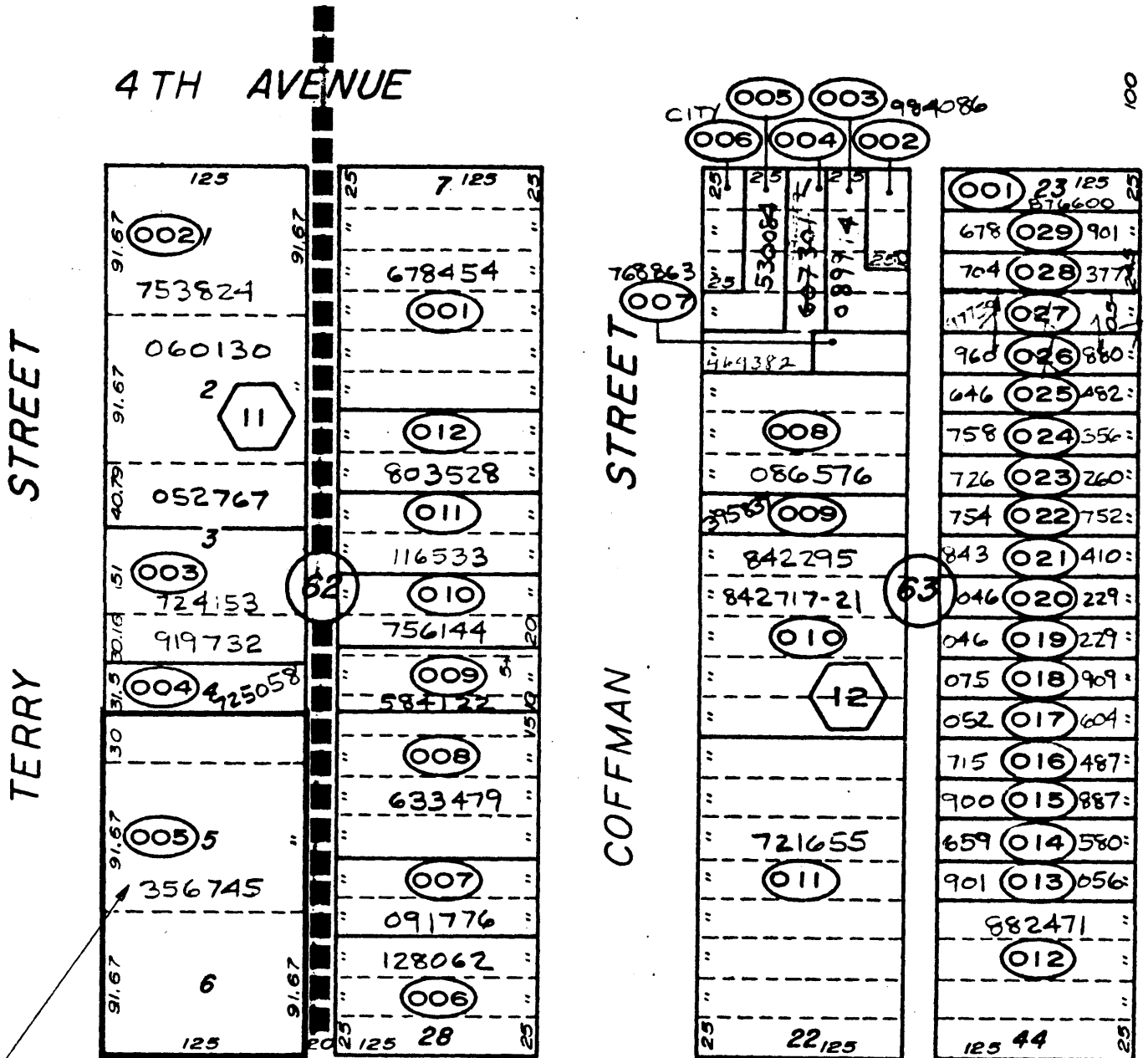
DATE ENTERED

Callahan House, Boulder County, Colorado

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 2



3RD AVENUE

TAX CODE 1015

TAX CODE 0680

T.M. CALLAHAN LOT = 125' x 213.34'