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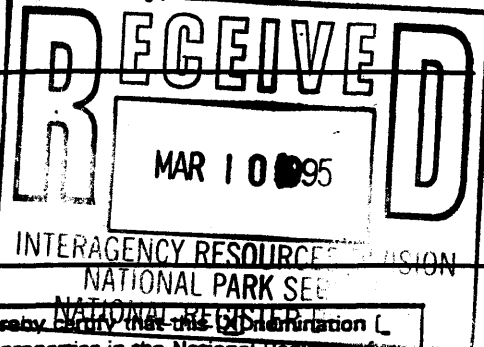
386

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Continuation Sheet

West Branch Commercial Historic
District (Boundary Increase)
Cedar County, Iowa

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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).

[Signature]

3/1/95

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency and bureau

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=====
4. National Park Service Certification
=====

I hereby certify that the property is:

Entered in the National Register

Edson H. Bell

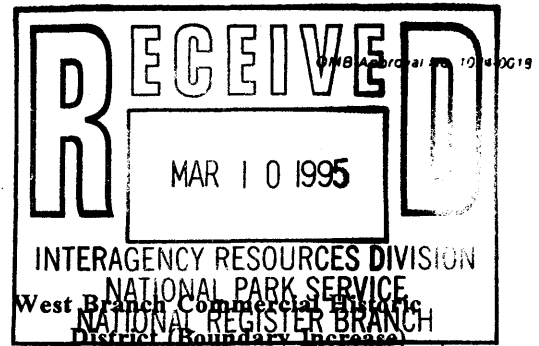
Signature of Keeper
for

4.7.95

Date of
Action

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CFN-259-1116

NO SECTION NUMBER. EXPLANATION OF THE AMENDMENT

This amendment to a previously listed National Register Registration Form is being filed under "Section VI. Amending National Register Forms," of *National Register Bulletin 16A*, using alternative #1 listed on page 71. Alternative #1 requires submission of "continuation sheets with the new information and an explanation of the amendment."

The West Branch Commercial Historic District, consisting of 14 contributing and two noncontributing buildings, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987. Subsequent to that listing, a vacant and deteriorated building adjacent to the District's east boundary was restored. As a result, in 1990 the boundaries for the West Branch Commercial Historic District were amended to include this building as an additional contributing building. The number of contributing buildings then stood at 15. Now, a second amendment to expand the District's boundaries is being requested. The present amendment would bring in a building--the 1904 Enlow Public Library--adjacent to District's west boundary (Figure 1). Though it could have been considered a contributing building in the initial 1987 nomination, the library was not included because it was owned by the City of West Branch which did not want it included. At the time, a new public library was being discussed and the City was uncertain what it might do with the existing building. There was some local feeling, albeit misinformed, that inclusion of the building on the National Register might prove an encumbrance that would limit the City's options in using or disposing of the building. Now, however, the library building has been sold to private individuals who have adapted it for use as a commercial retail shop. It is these new owners who are requesting the boundary increase.

The boundary increase extends the District across Poplar Street and results in the inclusion of a vacant lot now used for parking. This parking lot is considered a noncontributing site, but does not disturb the visual association of the library with the downtown area. The lot is small and the essential distinguishing feature of the Enlow Public Library is that it is *non-residential* architecture. Visually the library is more related to the other commercial buildings of the downtown than to the residential buildings beyond it to the west.

As amended to include the Enlow Public Library, the District would consist of 16 contributing buildings, two noncontributing buildings and one noncontributing site. There are no other historic non-residential buildings contiguous to the District or capable of contributing to the District. Therefore, no other amendments to the District boundaries are foreseeable.

New information specific to the additional contributing building, the Enlow Public Library, follows:

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

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2. LOCATION

Street and Number

124 West Main Street

5. CLASSIFICATION

Number of Resources within Property

One (1) contributing building and one (1) noncontributing site are added. No other contributing or noncontributing structures or objects are added.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Fifteen (15) buildings have been previously listed.

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic Functions

EDUCATION: library

Current Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification

Classical Revival
Prairie School

Materials

foundation	STONE
walls	BRICK
roof	ASPHALT

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7. DESCRIPTION

The 1904 Enlow Public Library sits on a corner lot. In front, Main Street slopes down a gentle hill toward the center of downtown West Branch--the intersection of Main and Downey streets one block away. The library's location at the southwest corner of Poplar and Main marks the west end of this small town's historic commercial area; beyond it the street becomes residential.

The library's raised quarry-face stone foundation is regularly coursed and capped by a smooth-cut stone watertable. Above the watertable, the library's walls are of brick laid in a stretcher-only bonding pattern. The complex hipped roof, which once sported ridge line roof crests (nonextant), ends in extended eaves. Fenestration consists of one-over-one sash windows which are grouped together in threes. Windows in each group are separated by brick piers, but are tied together by a common quarry-face stone lintel and sill. The boxy, offset front entrance references a classical portico with dentils and decorative columns.

Alterations to the building include the construction of eaves beyond the plane of the vertical brick walls (date unknown but before 1930); the construction of an addition executed in similar materials (except its foundation is brick not stone) to the rear of the library in 1930; and the replacement of the original open front portico with the brick entrance block in 1963. Split stairs inside the entrance block descend down to the lower floor and up to the raised first floor. Despite these alterations, historic integrity of the building is maintained because its essential visible features are still intact. Integrity of location, setting, workmanship, feeling and association are present, though the historic design and materials of the front entrance have been altered. The boxy shape, hipped roof, repetitive fenestration, and attractive brick and stone building materials which define this building's character remain visible and intact to the passerby.

The Enlow Public Library joins five other buildings in the District constructed during the final phase of the development of West Branch's Main Street commercial area, from 1904 to 1916. The brick and masonry construction and fine workmanship of the Enlow Public Library typify these later buildings, especially the 1907 Post Office, the 1908 Citizen's Savings Bank and the 1916 West Branch State Bank. Other buildings in this architectural grouping include the 1911 Bert Leech auto garage and, next to it, the 1912 Leech brothers rental building.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

The West Branch Commercial Historic District is a historic and very tangible remainder of the greatest period of prosperity in American agricultural history. The 1904 Enlow Public Library is an extant example of how the wave of agricultural prosperity that swept the Midwest between the Civil War and World War I changed the face of rural communities like West Branch. The construction of this building, at the edge of the downtown, for use as a public library was the direct philanthropic result of good times on the farm. The land and building were donated in 1903 by Mrs. Huldah Enlow, the

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widow of Samuel Enlow, a Quaker farmer who was among West Branch's founders.

Samuel and Huldah Enlow

Huldah Hollingsworth Enlow, born in Ohio in 1832, came to West Branch by covered wagon in 1856 with her husband Samuel Enlow. Both birthright Quakers, the Enlows were central to local implementation of a Quaker custom of the day, whereby an established group of Quakers would loan money to members of a new settlement of Quakers, who in turn would do the same for others as they prospered. Samuel Enlow performed this function for early Quaker settlers in West Branch, loaning money he had borrowed from Ohio Quakers.

An 1870 history of Cedar County shows that Samuel Enlow owned 320 acres of farmland, north and east of West Branch, directly east of the Honey Grove Cemetery. By the standards of the day, it was a large farm and, in 1878, was valued at \$15,000. Their prosperity on the farm allowed the Enlows to purchase a house in town, where they lived during the winter, always returning to the farm in the spring.

Samuel Enlow was among the founders and original stockholders of West Branch Bank, established in 1875 as Cedar County's first bank and located in a Main Street storefront. Upon his death in November of 1884—a year after he retired from farming—Huldah Enlow inherited the bank stock. Ledgers discovered by a granddaughter long after his death showed that Samuel Enlow conducted a private banking business between 1864 and 1884, a business that was continued by his widow for a brief time after his death.

Huldah Enlow's philanthropy was legendary in West Branch. A lengthy biographical eulogy published in the *West Branch Times* (12-27-17) after her death on December 24, 1917, notes that the Quaker Meetinghouse in which her funeral was conducted—as well as the pews in which those gathered were seated—were made possible through her generosity. Her wealth was a product of the Enlow's successful farming and banking efforts. Her eulogy mentions "large gifts to her home(town) and foreign missions" as well as to Penn College in Oskaloosa, Iowa. "It would not be her desire that mention should be made of her gifts, but we can say that in the prosperity that came to her she never was unmindful of her obligation to God and heeded his calls before other things in life."

Her gift of the land and building for a new public library was made with the stipulation that the town assess the necessary taxes to support the library's operation. Basking in a booming local economy, it did so, and the informal reading room above Hathaway's general store was replaced in the summer of 1904. "The public library is now moved into the new building and the management desires to announce that it is absolutely free," the *West Branch Times* reported on July 7, 1904. A public dedication ceremony was held on September 30, 1904, at which local citizens expressed their appreciation of Huldah Enlow's generous gift (*West Branch Times* 12-27-17).

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The Enlow Public Library served West Branch as a library for most of the twentieth century. By 1929, the community was boasting that the library had the largest per capita circulation of any library in the state. It proved so popular that, in 1930, with the help of an anonymous gift of \$2,000, an addition was constructed to the south. In later years, the original front entrance would be enclosed (1963) and the basement would be converted into a children's library (1974).

As a result of the construction of a new public library, the Enlow Public Library was subsequently sold by the City of West Branch at public auction in 1993 to its current owners, who have since undertaken its restoration.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

West Branch Times, 7 July 1904; 27 December 1917;

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.

UTM Reference

1	1,5	63,74,4,0	4,61,43,6,0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

Verbal Boundary Description

The western boundary of the West Branch Commercial Historic District is increased to include the land represented by continuing west from the original boundary along the center line of Main Street to a point parallel to the western edge of lot 8 of Block 44 of Jos. Steers Addition to the Town of West Branch, then south along the edge of lot 8 to the center line of Wetherell Street, then east to again join the original boundary line.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the property are the original lot lines associated with the Enlow Public Library since its construction, plus the land (a small parking lot and Poplar Street) between the Enlow Public Library and the previous boundary.

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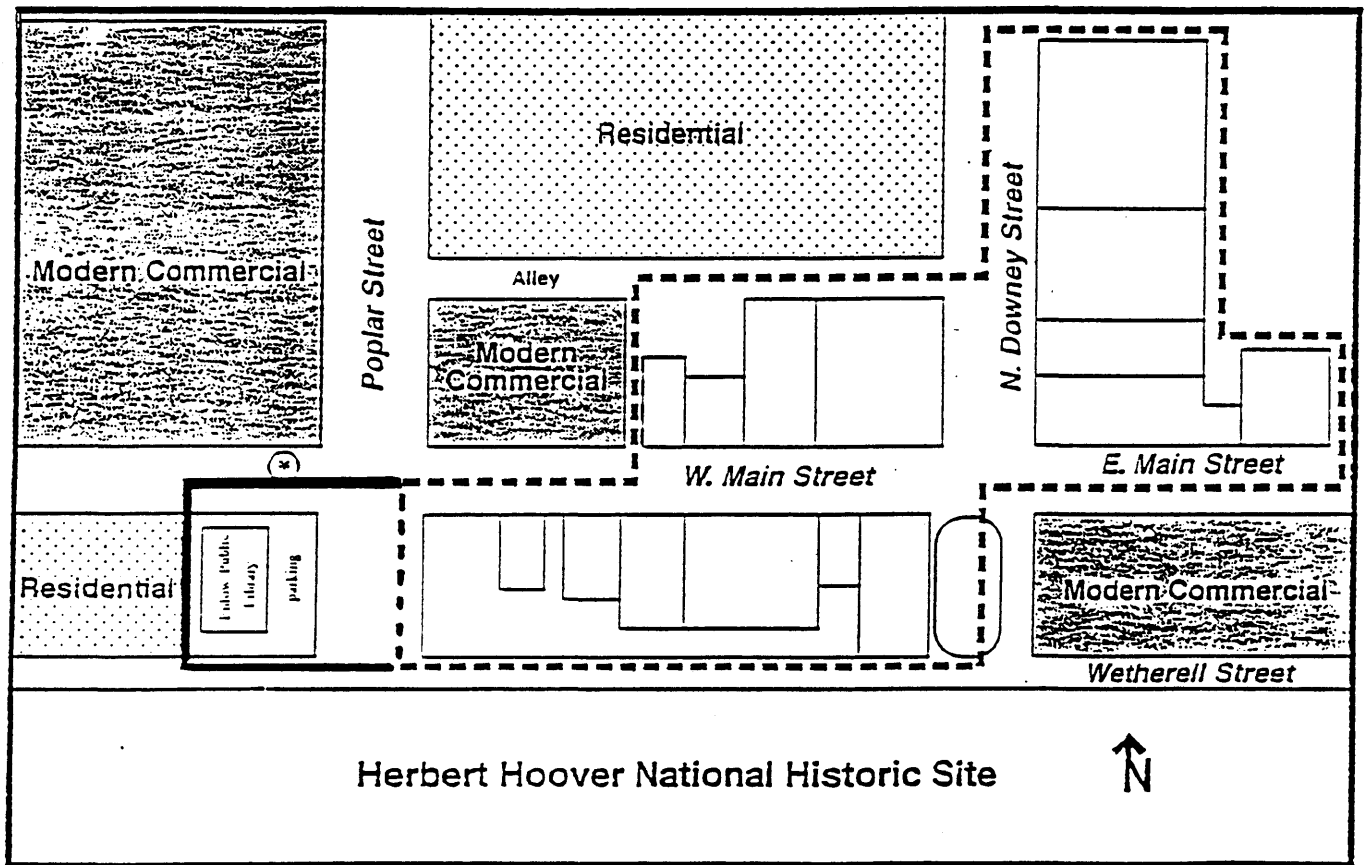
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Figure 1. West Branch Commercial Historic District showing increased boundaries and location of Enlow Public Library.



KEY:

- District Boundary
- Boundary Increase

⊙ Location of camera in current photograph (see Figure 4).

New contributing building: Enlow Public Library

New noncontributing site: parking

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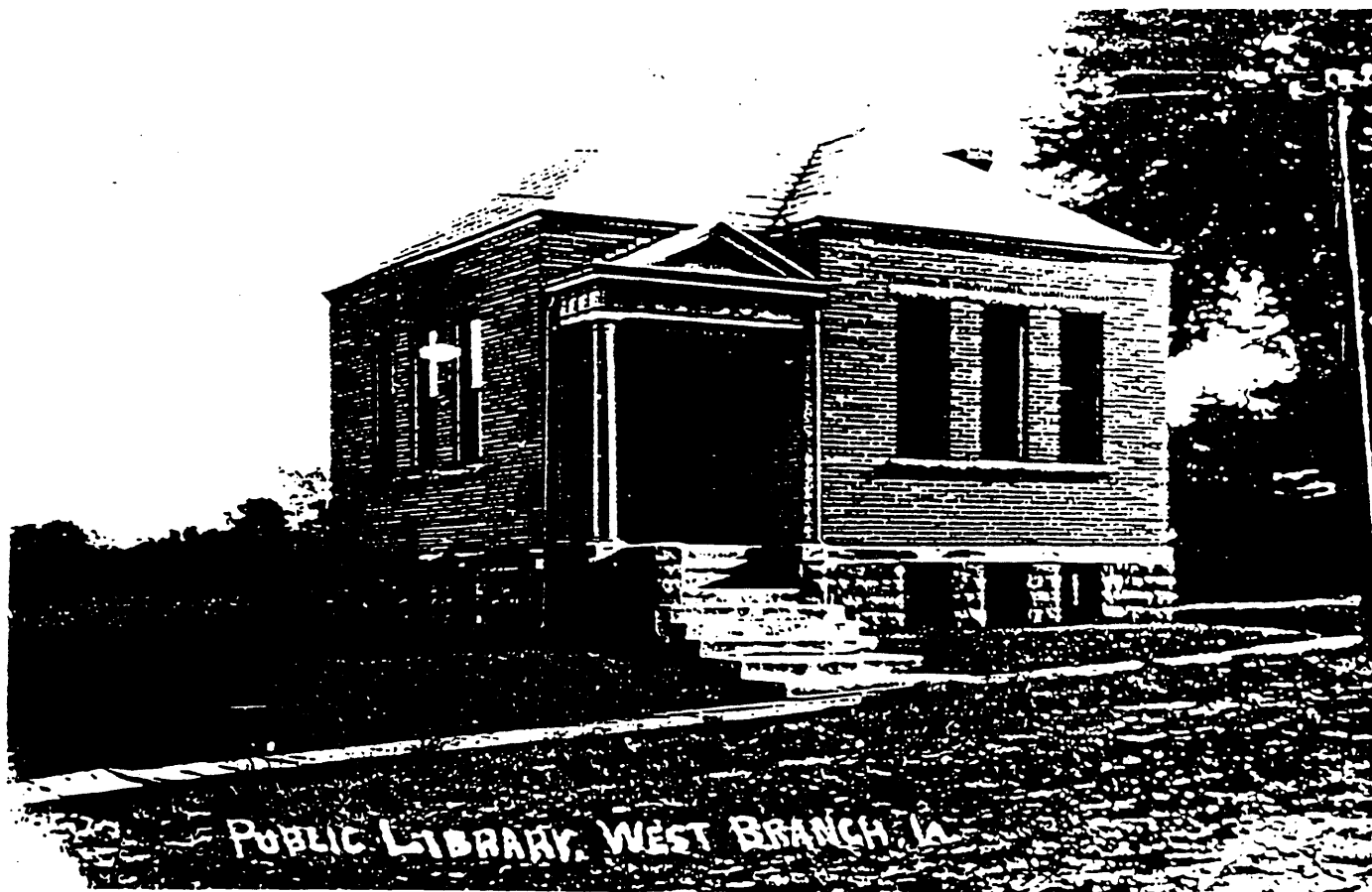
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Figure 2. Enlow Public Library. Historic image taken ca. 1905 shortly after its construction. Photographer unknown. *Collection of John and Audrey Kofoed.*



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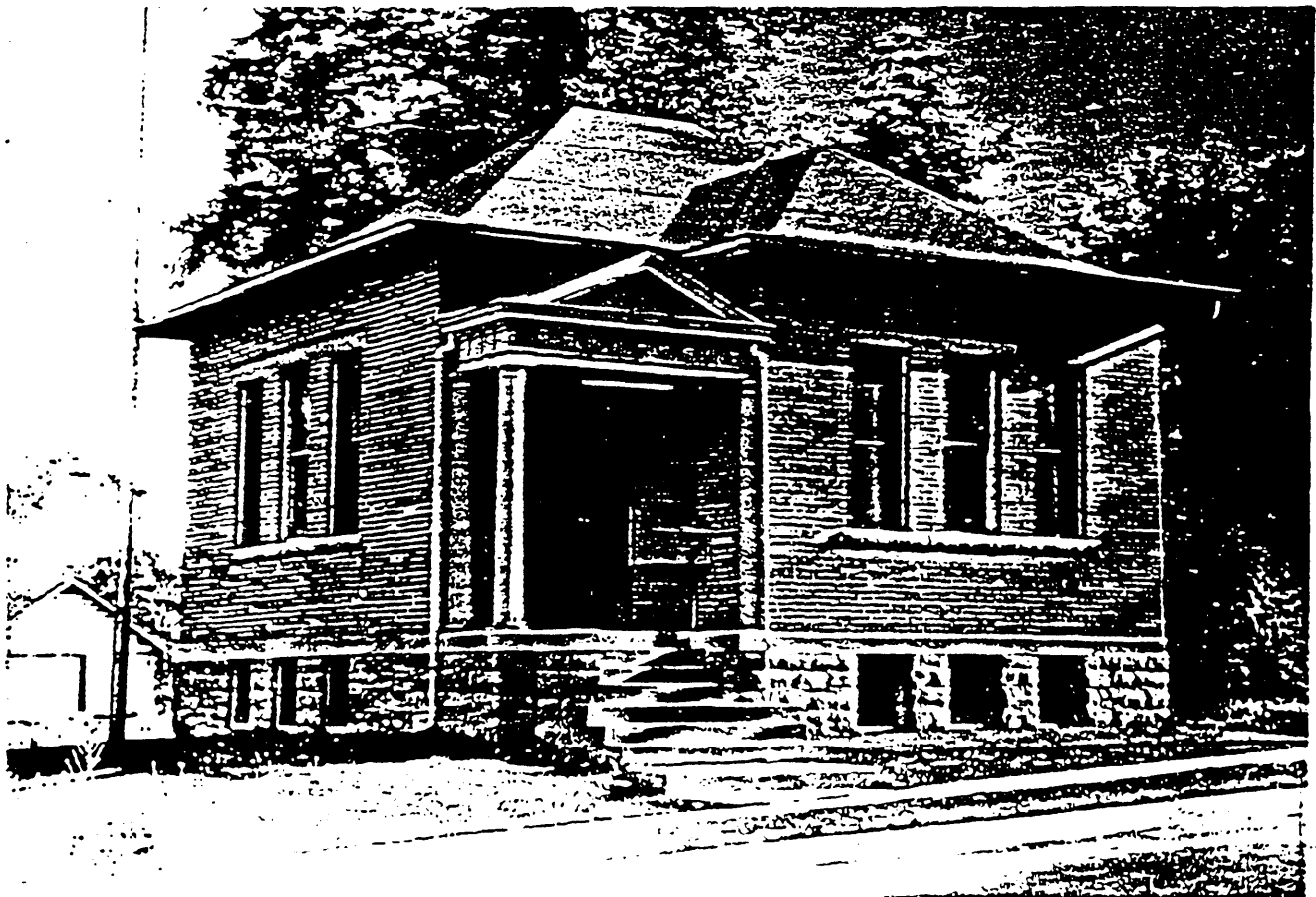
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Figure 3. Enlow Public Library. Historic image taken before the 1930 addition was constructed to the rear of the building. Photographer unknown. *Collection of John and Audrey Kofoed.*



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Figure 4. Enlow Public Library. Current photograph taken by David Conklin. *Negative in the collection of John and Audrey Koford.*



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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/title	Jan R. Nash	Date	November 19, 1994
Organization	Tallgrass Historians L.C.	Telephone	319/354-6722
Street/No.	931 Maiden Lane	City	Iowa City
State	Iowa	Zip	52240

PROPERTY OWNER

Name	John Kofoed & Audrey Kofoed	(contributing site [Enlow Public Library] owners)	
Street & number	136 Wetherell Street	Telephone	319/643-2329
City or Town	West Branch	State	Iowa
		Zip Code	52358

Name	Town of West Branch	(noncontributing site owner)	
Street & number	City Offices 304 E. Main Street	Telephone	319/643-5888
City or Town	West Branch	State	Iowa
		Zip Code	52358