

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Rhode Island	
COUNTY: Newport	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
DEC 8	1972

1. NAME

COMMON:
Bellevue Avenue-Casino Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
170-230 Bellevue Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Newport

STATE: Rhode Island, 02840 CODE: 44 COUNTY: Newport CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input 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 (Specify) <u>Social club</u> <u>Sports</u>
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
multiple

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER:
Broadway

CITY OR TOWN: Newport STATE: Rhode Island, 02840 CODE: 44

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Independence Avenue and 1st Street, S. E.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

STATE:

COUNTY:

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ENTRY NUMBER: DEC 8 1972

DATE:

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Presenting their façades along a block-long length of Bellevue Avenue's east side running south from Memorial Boulevard are McKim, Mead and White's Newport Casino of 1880-1881 (already listed independently on the National Register) and three other buildings which flank it (one to the north and two to the south) and are of height comparable to it. One of these pre-dates the Casino and may somewhat have influenced its frontal proportions and design, while the remaining two structures were built about ten and twenty years, respectively, after the Casino. All four were designed with shop-fronts--intended to house a fashionable shopping row, as they still do--on the street level and offices, storerooms etc. above, except the Casino, which there has reception rooms. From north to south, these several buildings are:

The Travers Block,
170-184 Bellevue Avenue.

Designed by Richard Morris Hunt and built in 1870-1871 for William R. Travers, this is a brick building with an applied half-timber pattern made up of heavy chamfered members. The rectangular plan contains ten adjoining shops, each 16 feet wide. The building is two-and-a-half stories high within a mansard roof. The simple rectangular plan is broken by projecting bays at the center and by a diagonally-placed bay at the exposed corner of Bellevue Avenue and Memorial Boulevard. The simple volume of the mansard roof is broken by projecting gables and dormers. The gables have sawn and shaped wood decoration, and the eaves of the mansard have strong chamfered brackets which, with the window-frames of the upper floor, are worked into the vigorous rhythm of the half-timber pattern.

The interiors on the ground floor, which is 10 feet high, have undergone numerous alterations to accommodate the various shops and businesses renting space in the building, and this has also resulted in some quite obvious--but fortunately superficial--alteration to the exterior of the first floor, most noticeably and inappropriately at the northwest corner, for the Roundup Steak House. The second floor, 12 feet high, and the third floor, 9 feet high, were divided into 40 suites of rooms. At its south end the Travers Block abuts the Casino building.

The Newport Casino,
186-202 Bellevue Avenue.

The Casino building has a ground floor divided by smooth brick piers into nine bays which contain an arched central portal and four shop-fronts on either side of it. Across these piers the long, shingled frontage of the second floor is slightly corbelled out; at its center this front contains a recessed porch below a high gable containing a Palladian-window motif. Two other high frontal gables occur near the

(See Continuation Sheet.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)-1

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(Number all entries)

7. Description.

ends of the high, pitched roof which crowns the street frontage, and each has a smaller, asymmetrically placed gable treatment applied against it. Patterned shingles, small and large window panes, slight advances and recessions in the façade's plane combine with the gable accents to produce a lively but consistent and symmetrical rhythm across the nine bays. Behind this front exist complex arrangements for the accommodation of sporting and social activities.

The King Block,
204-214 Bellevue Avenue.

South, and also abutting the Casino, is this rectangular building built for Leroy King of Newport and designed by the Boston architects Perkins and Betton; it was built in 1893-1894. Divided into six bays (about 130 feet in total length) and containing six adjoining shops, the building is made of brown pressed brick with very simple ornament of stepped brick courses. The side and rear walls, also of brick, have limestone window trim. The building is two stories high with gable roofs, a strongly-pointed gable rising over each bay. The two center bays are slightly taller than the two bays to either side, and are stepped forward a few inches; and as further emphasis of this center third, the gables of the two center bays have circular windows.

Each shop-front has a large shop window with an entrance to the side through a wide Dutch door. Brick party walls separate the shops, and the otherwise undivided long shop plans have received different interior treatments according to the needs of the tenants. The upper floor contains storage space for the shops below or apartments.

The Audrain Building,
220-230 Bellevue Avenue.

This last building in the row was built in 1902-1903 from the designs of the New York architect Bruce Price for Adolf L. Audrain and is of masonry construction, two stories high, with a flat roof. The rectangular plan, 110 feet by 73.5 feet, contains six adjoining shops. The 110-foot façade is divided into six bays defined by tall arches, one bay for each shop, with a richly-embellished doorway at the center leading to a stairway to the upper floor. The second floor was designed to contain six offices in the front and five in the rear.

The walls are of buff-colored brick with brightly colored terracotta trim, making use of Florentine Renaissance ornament, employed generously around window openings, doorways and in the cornice area. The broad four-centered arches of the façade bays rise through both

(See Continuation Sheet 2.)

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(Continuation Sheet) -2

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stories, with copper-sheathed spandrels containing raised decoration at the second-floor line. Buff brick walls on the side and rear have limestone trim. A roof balustrade with statuary does not survive, and the interiors have been remodelled for changing commercial uses. The exteriors survive in excellent and unaltered condition.

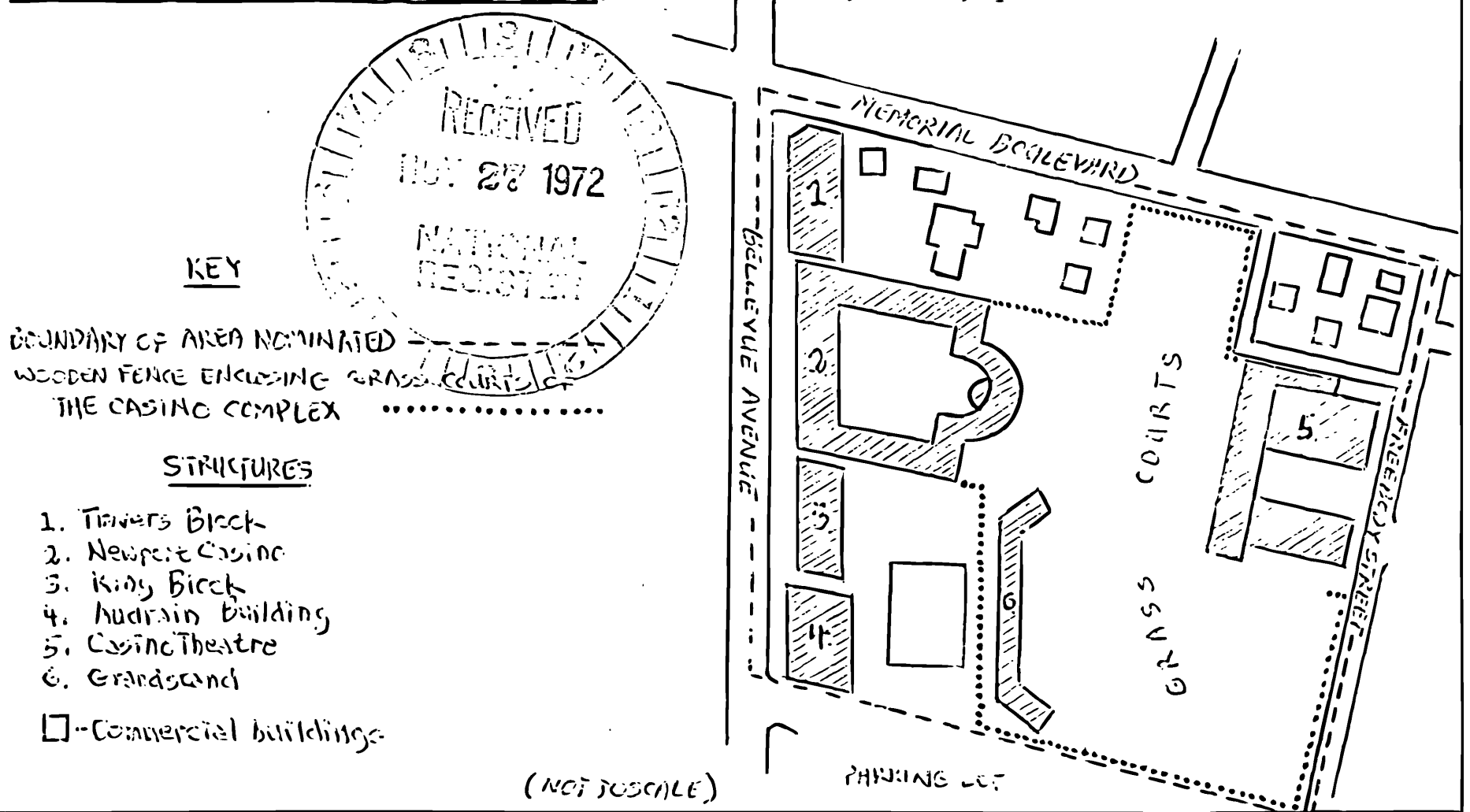
The district here nominated has the following as its boundaries: Memorial Boulevard on the north, a parking-lot abutting on the south, Freebody Street on the east, Bellevue Avenue on the west. It includes all buildings within the area just defined (although some are minor and/or modern commercial buildings not meriting description); it includes also the grass courts between the Casino and the Casino Theatre, both of which structures are already entered on the National Register; these grass courts are a part of the original planning of the Casino and Theatre complex.

It should be noted that on the week-end of November 4-5, 1972, the Travers Block was victim of a fire which seriously, but not irreparably, damaged the roof and the two upper floors. It is not yet known if restoration will be undertaken, but such a step has been immediately and vigorously promoted by a variety of interested individuals and organizations--local, state and national.

Handwritten notes:
- 1/25/72
- 1/25/72
- 1/25/72
- 1/25/72

9. Major Bibliographical References.

The Newport Mercury, December 10, 1892, p. 1; May 10, 1893, p. 1.
Newport Journal and Weekly News, February 28, 1903, p. 5.



3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1870-1903

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

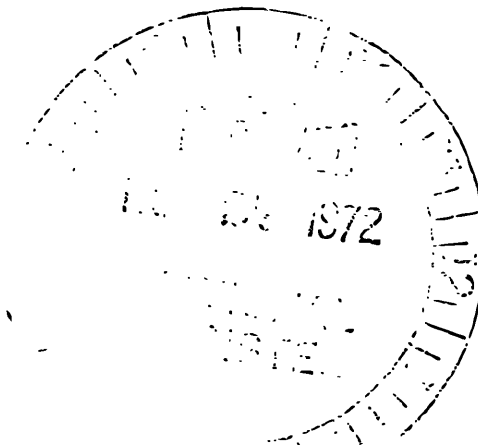
- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | | Sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Each of the buildings described has its own noticeable merits: The Travers Block of the early 1870's was an important beginning to northern Bellevue Avenue's primacy as a summer shopping center and--with its strongly-articulated half-timber façades--is similar to Richard Hunt's domestic work of this same period in Newport. It is an interesting and well-preserved example of his early style. Dating from 1880-1881, the Casino is a well known example of the "Shingle Style" work of the prominent architects McKim, Mead & White, and it is already on the National Register. The King Block, with its quiet façade and varied treatment of gables, is a dignified and restrained solution to commercial building problems in the late 19th century. The Audrain Building is a handsome piece of early 20th-century architecture, combining a thorough understanding of revival ornamental forms with the demand for open, glassy shop-fronts--characteristic of the best commercial architecture of its time.

The special significance of these four buildings, however, lies in their combination to form a particularly distinguished commercial street, the east side of Bellevue Avenue, beginning at Memorial Boulevard and running south. The development of the street began at the north with the building of the Travers Block in 1870-1871. The next building, and next in date, is the Newport Casino; the largest of the four and historically the best known, it was not only a commercial building but also a social center for the summer colony. Next chronologically and geographically comes the King Block, and the Audrain Building is the southern anchor of the group. The four buildings maintain a long street line and are basically related in scale and massing. They are also related in their use of richly-textured surfaces which at the same time allows great variety and liveliness. Without matching, the buildings complement each other in a particularly urbane way, forming an ensemble which should be preserved.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Downing, Antoinette F., and Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1915 (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1952), pp. 138, 149-150.
 Schuyler, Montgomery: The Works of the Late Richard M. Hunt (in "The Architectural Record," Vol. 5. New York, 1895), op. 97-180.
 Newport Mercury, November 12, 1870, p. 2.
 Scully, Vincent J., Jr.: The Shingle Style (New Haven, Connecticut, 1955), pp. 131-132.

(See Continuation Sheet 2)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	41° 29' 0.02N	71° 18' 33.0W			
NE	41° 29' 0.02N	71° 18' 23.0W			
SE	41° 28' 53.0N	71° 18' 23.0W			
SW	41° 28' 53.0N	71° 18' 33.0W			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Eight

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Osmund R. Overby, Supervisor, H. A. B. S. Newport Project
Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission DATE: November 17, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: John Brown House, 52 Power Street

CITY OR TOWN: Providence STATE: Rhode Island, 02906 CODE: 44

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Thomas C. Williams

Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: November 14, 1972

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

Robert H. Utley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 12/8/72

ATTEST:
John A. Pigeon
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 12/7/72

SEE INSTRUCTIONS
 12-10-72
 19/207440/4594/500
 19/207440/4594/500
 19/207440/4594/500



GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
NW	41° 29' 0.02" N	71° 18' 33.0" W
NE	41° 29' 0.02" N	71° 18' 23.0" W
SE	41° 28' 53.0" N	71° 18' 23.0" W
SW	41° 28' 53.0" N	71° 18' 33.0" W