

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 1 1987
date entered MAY 6 1987

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

1. Name

historic Parco

and or common Sinclair Historic District

2. Location

street & number varies

n/a not for publication

city, town Sinclair

n/a vicinity of

state Wyoming

code 056

county Carbon

code 007

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

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Sinclair/private residences

street & number varies

city, town Sinclair

n/a vicinity of

state Wyoming 82334

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Carbon County Courthouse

street & number 4th and Spruce

city, town Rawlins

state Wyoming

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Archives, Museums & Historical Dept. has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1967 (revised 1973 and 1987) federal state county local

depository for survey records 2301 Central

city, town Cheyenne

state Wyoming 82002

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Sinclair, Wyoming, first known as Parco, is "truly an oasis in an otherwise drab desert territory," reported the Rocky Mountain News in August of 1925. The town is located on the north side of Interstate 80 about 6.5 miles east of Rawlins, Wyoming. It is situated near the east rim of the Great Divide Basin in a semi-arid, treeless country characterized by high plains covered with sagebrush and interspersed with rocky ridges, buttes and mesas and deeply cut ephemeral drainages. The North Platte River, which flows about ten miles northeast of Sinclair, is the only significant year-round drainage in the vicinity. The town of Sinclair was a company-built town designed by the Denver-based architectural firm of Fisher and Fisher. It was financed by oil magnate Frank Kistler to house workers for a large oil refinery built at this location. Sinclair was constructed in 1924-1925 and consists of numerous public buildings set around three sides of a central east-west plaza, fountain and park. Residences are located along streets and blocks in a grid pattern running north, west and east from the plaza area. Expansion to the south was limited by the Union Pacific Railroad mainline and rail yards associated with the large refinery to the northeast. In order to foster a sense of community spirit commonly absent in company towns, as well as to maintain an architectural cohesiveness, the architects designed residential and public buildings using Spanish Colonial motifs with unpainted stucco, polychrome clay tile roofs, and dominant masonry construction to accurately simulate the appearance and form of many southwestern adobe missions. There are a total of ninety three (93) buildings included within the district boundaries, forty nine (49) of which are considered to be contributing elements of the district. Prominent public buildings include the impressive Parco Inn which dominates the plaza and establishes the overall architectural theme. It spans an entire town block, and rests between two four-story bell towers. The former First National Bank Building (now the town hall) occupies the block flat polychrome tile roof, regular fenestration, and a pair of projecting pavillions with pilasters to mark the two main entrances. The Sinclair Theatre and Recreation Hall is located west of the hotel, and also houses the post office and fire and police departments. The theatre features two small gabled towers, marking the edges of the theatre, and establishing its bilateral symmetry. A long line of vigas pierce the auditorium's eastern exterior, accentuating the early pueblo influence of the Spanish Colonial missions. The Community church conforms to a rural parish church design and also has a polychrome tile gabled roof and a small, gabled bell tower over the east entry vestibule. Even the school, built at a later date (1937), reflects a conscious attempt to harmonize with the Spanish Colonial motif with its decorative brick work, arched entries, and polychrome tile roofs. Unlike dozens of its sister company coal and oil towns

(SEE ADDENDUM)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) energy development

Specific dates 1924-1925 **Builder/Architect** Fisher and Fisher

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Parco, later known as Sinclair, was a company town built in 1924 and 1925 by the Producers and Refiners Oil Company to house workers for a large oil refinery constructed at the same location. Sinclair was not a typical company town of its time period. Although industrialists recognized the necessity of providing housing for workers in isolated areas, most company towns were composed of modest woodframe structures built in a temporary, haphazard fashion and were dreary places to live and work. Sinclair represented a radical departure, a so-called "wonder town" which combined both professionally designed residential, public and commercial buildings and a professionally planned street/land use pattern. In 1923 oil magnate Frank Kistler, founder of the Producers and Refiners Corporation or PARCO hired the prominent Denver architectural firm of Fisher and Fisher to design the town. Fisher and Fisher used the Spanish colonial architectural motif and designed a street and land use pattern around a central plaza and fountain surrounded by public buildings and residential areas and also planned for orderly future expansion. Sinclair thus became a model company town unlike any other ever built in the State of Wyoming and rivaled by only a few others west of the Mississippi River. The chief impetus for the building of this model town was of course the large oil refinery begun in 1922 and completed in 1923. The success of the great Salt Creek Oil Field north of Casper, Wyoming, spurred oil exploration throughout the State of Wyoming. In 1916 commercial quantities of oil were found in what became known as the Lost Soldier-Ferris Oil field (including the Wertz Field in 1920) about 40 miles north of Rawlins near the Green and Ferris Mountains. Via pipeline, Kistler's refinery tapped these rich oil deposits and provided a rail outlet for the product. Although Wyoming had tremendous oil reserves, it suffered from lack of nearby markets and expensive rail transportation. Although Kistler's firm was forced to sell the PARCO holdings in 1934 when crude oil reached an all-time low price of ten cents a barrel, the oil market improved as a result of increased demand during World War II; the refinery and town, renamed Sinclair in 1942, prospered under the management of the Sinclair Refining Company. From its inception, Sinclair remained one of the most important refineries in the State of Wyoming despite the fluctuating oil market. In 1981 it was the largest producer among the 13 active refineries in Wyoming. Because the State of Wyoming consistently ranks among the top six oil operations in the United States. Through its remaining public buildings, plaza, and residences, Sinclair retains a high degree of feeling and association with its colorful past as a highly unique "model" company town and as an important commercial oil refining operation both in the State of Wyoming and in the western United States.

SEE ADDENDUM

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Addendum

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Approx. 31 acres

Quadrangle name Sinclair, Wyo.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	3	2	4	2	4	0	4	6	2	7	2	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

1	3	3	2	4	3	0	0	4	6	2	7	2	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

1	3	3	2	4	3	0	0	4	6	2	7	2	7	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

1	3	3	2	4	2	2	0	4	6	2	7	2	7	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

1	3	3	2	4	2	2	0	4	6	2	7	3	2	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

1	3	3	2	4	1	2	0	4	6	2	7	3	2	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

1	3	3	2	4	1	2	0	4	6	2	7	4	3	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

1	3	3	2	4	0	0	0	4	6	2	7	4	3	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

Continued...

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Addendum

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

state n/a code n/a county n/a code n/a

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gregory D. Kendrick, Architectural Historian/Robert Rosenberg/Sheila Bricher-Wade

organization State Historic Preservation Office

date January 15, 1987

street & number 2301 Central, Barrett Building

telephone 307-777-6179

city or town Cheyenne

state Wyoming

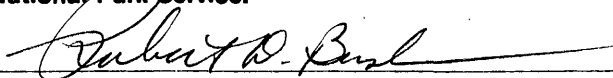
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 23, 1987

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

 William B. Bushong
Keeper of the National Register

date 5/6/87

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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spread throughout Wyoming, the benevolent paternalism and financial resources of its founder, Frank Kistler, created in Parco not only an architectural showpiece with aesthetic appeal but a community which successfully integrated residential, commercial and industrial functions. Today the town retains a high degree of physical integrity of design, materials and workmanship and integrity of setting despite over 60 years of continuous occupation. The essential Spanish Colonial architectural motif remains intact on most public buildings and a large percentage of the residences. The buildings within the Parco District are described below; sequential numbers correspond with locations on the sketch map (See Addendum).

1) PARCO SCHOOL, Contributing.

The school was constructed in 1937 and is a brick masonry building resting on a concrete foundation. The gymnasium/cafeteria is a two story gabled roof structure surrounded by one-story gabled roof wings which house the classrooms. Bays consist of banks of six-over-six light windows. Although constructed at a later date, the decorative brick work, arched entries, and polychrome tile roofs reflect a conscious attempt to harmonize with the town's earlier construction.

2) ORIGINAL PARCO SCHOOL/LIBRARY, Contributing.

This buildings was constructed in 1924. It is a U-shaped woodframe 1-1/2 story building with gabled roofs covered with asphalt shingles. Exterior walls are covered with stucco. The front or south facade has a vestibule with gabled roof, and a wood front door with fan-shaped transom and small wooden barred sidelight. The remainder of the window bays consist of banks grouped in threes, typical of 1920s standardized schools. The windows have been modified to modern one-light sealed windows with metal frames. This building is now used as the town library.

3) CHURCH (Sinclair Baptist Mission) Contributing.

Constructed in 1924, this stucco structure conforms to a rural parish church design. A semi-circular blind-arched entry leads to the nave and connecting altar. The rectilinear building supports a polychrome tile gabled roof while the eastern entry vestibule is topped by a small, gabled bell tower.

4) APARTMENT BUILDING, Contributing.

Constructed in 1924, the structure is an elongated, rectilinear frame box. The one-story building has a low hipped roof with overhanging heavily bracketed eaves. Fenestration is regular as the ribbon of double-hung 4-over-2 light windows are broken only by a front door with transom and sidelights.

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5) SINCLAIR THEATER AND RECREATION BUILDING, POST OFFICE AND FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENT, Contributing.

Constructed in 1924-25, this building is located west of the hotel and exhibits the most complex floor plan and form of the public buildings. The structure can best be visualized as three distinct units: theatre, recreation hall, and fire and police department/post office. Two small gabled towers, marking the edges of the theater, establish the structure's bilateral symmetry. An arched colonnade which originally spanned the entrance between the towers was removed, leaving a recessed entry draped in shadows. The towers also terminate the second story wrought iron balcony. Both the gabled towers and shed roof are covered with clay tiles. The auditorium's function is clearly reflected in its massive bare stucco walls which rise to a simple stepped gable. A long line of vigas or roof rafters pierce the auditorium's eastern exterior, accentuating the early pueblo influence of the Spanish Colonial missions. Extending from the rear of the auditorium, the post office and fire and police department are housed within a colonnaded enclosure. The arched colonnade is divided by two gabled garages which support tiled roofs.

The Recreation Hall establishes the overall horizontal emphasis of the building by stretching laterally from the theatre. Three long display windows separated by two single door entrances fill the hall's main facade. The hall's roof is composed of red clay tiles.

6) PARCO INN, Contributing.

The impressive Parco Inn (1924) dominates the plaza and establishes the overall architectural theme. Spanning an entire town block, the hotel proper rests between two four-story bell towers. Single story wings extend from both sides of the hotel proper and house the town's sundry shops, cafes, and offices.

Several decorative elements enliven the hotel's main facade and further reflect the architect's desire to imitate colonial missions. These details include decorative impost moldings, dentiled string courses and neo-baroque spiraled columns.

Regular fenestration characterizes the inn, yet each floor is differentiated by skillful detailing. The first floor's display windows are set within broad parabolic blind arches. Wrought iron balconies surround the second story windows and contrast the simple paired double-hung windows of the third floor.

Rectangular double-hung windows are continued within the bell towers where they are set within attenuated compound arches. The spandrels of these compound arches rise to form the base of the tower's broad semi-circular arched opening. Both the hotel proper's shed roof as well as that of the two pyramidal bell towers possess polychrome clay tile roofs.

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The inn's interior also reflects many decorative elements commonly associated with Spanish colonial architecture. After passing through the long arched entry vestibule, guests enter the main lobby. The main lobby opens dramatically to a second story ceiling revealing hand-painted, exposed cedar beams which are supported by simple corbels. Wrought iron balconies as well as arched colonades demarcate the second floor. Twin stairways lead to the second and third floors from the entrance lobby with intersecting colonaded hallways providing the connecting links to the hotel rooms.

7) PLAZA/FOUNTAIN, Contributing.

All public facilities are grouped around a central plaza oriented on an east-west axis. The plaza is intersected by a number of streets leading to the residential sections. Lincoln Avenue, Sinclair's principal street, bisects the plaza and leads east and west to residential areas. A fountain (1927) is centrally located within the plaza. It is composed of light brown Dentero stone. The fountain's basin is 18 feet in diameter with the center of the octagonal basin rising to a 12.5 foot column. Eight carved figures representing animals (half-bear and half-cat) encircle the column. The sculptures symbolize Kistler's Bear Cat logo for his corporation.

8) PARCO MERCANTILE/FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING, Contributing.

This rectilinear building was constructed in 1924 and occupies the block immediately east of the Parco Inn. The structure originally contained the Parco Mercantile but today houses the Federal Credit Union and the Sinclair Town Hall. Like the hotel, the bank exhibits regular fenestration. A pair of projecting pavillions with pilasters mark the two main entries. Single doors are set within blind semi-circular arches which in turn are capped by tiled gables. Unfortunately, the original display windows have been stuccoed over. The symmetrical fenestration of the first floor is interrupted as two semi-circular multi-paned windows set within blind arches extend beyond the western pavillion. A long ribbon of semi-circular blind arches containing rectangular double-hung windows continue the length of the second floor. The bank's flat polychrome tile roof mirrors that of the nearby inn.

9) EMPLOYEE RESIDENCES, Contributing.

Fisher and Fisher divided the detached, single-family residences into "workingman's housing" and "officer's housing," according to the pattern of the day to maintain a rigid social hierarchy. Officer's housing was intended for the supervisory personnel at the refinery. Not only were these the best built and spacious dwellings in Parco, but they were strategically clustered northwest of the commercial portion of town and totally surrounded by the more modest workingman's housing. This screened the dwellings from the refinery and the bustle of the commercial section. Residences at Parco can be divided roughly into four categories; bungalows, four-room homes, bunkhouses, and apartments; however, Fisher and Fisher also used a total of fourteen floor plan variations and altered the exteriors among the four main types.

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a. Bungalows (1924-1925): These well-built one and one-half-story brick masonry and stucco structures were the "officer's housing" and originally were used by the refinery's supervisory personnel. They are the finest residences in Parco. They are grouped within a relatively small area of Sinclair between Madison and Monroe Avenues and North 7th and 9th Streets. North Eighth Street between Cleveland and Monroe Avenues is totally composed of brick bungalows. The bungalows have concrete foundations and basements. They exhibit brick exteriors to the top of the first floor windows, and stucco above and covering exposed dormer walls. The dwellings have hipped roofs or gently pitched broad gabled or clipped gabled roofs with shed or gabled dormers and exposed rafters. Most of the bungalows have gabled or hipped roof front porches supported by battered tapered brick or wooden piers and posts. Asphalt shingles or wooden shingles cover all roof areas. Double-hung 4-over 4 or 6-over-6 light windows characterize the bungalows. However, several of the bungalows have decorative wood sash in the upper portions of the double-hung windows dividing the lights into various patterns. Variations to this general pattern include eyelid dormers on one building; a flat-roofed front porch with open rafters; decorative brickwork at the building corners, around the first floor windows and in the tapered porch piers; corbeled brick chimneys; scalloped exposed rafters; and diamond-shaped decorative windows in the gables. Such a variety of architectural detailing in the same basic style is unusual, so that each house appears to be unique. These residences are usually accompanied by a brick masonry and stucco one-car garage.

b. Four-room residences (1924-1925): These square, frame structures are covered with stucco (occasionally narrow, clapboard siding) and have hipped or occasionally gabled roofs covered with asphalt shingles. Most do not have basements. Absence of ornamentation and the presence of small, gabled entry vestibules characterize these utilitarian homes. Several of the buildings have more elaborate hipped-roof front porches, basements and larger overall building dimensions. Windows generally consist of 4-over-4 or 6-over-6 light double-hung wood sash and frames and wooden shutters. Many of these homes have subsequently been covered with horizontal aluminum siding and aluminum storm windows. These buildings are interspersed throughout the residential area.

c. Bunkhouses (1923-1925): Apparently these long, rectangular wood frame structures without basements originally provided temporary shelter for refinery personnel in 1923. They are the most modest structures in Sinclair and tend to be located along the fringes of the residential district and immediately bordering the refinery area or railroad tracks. The gabled roofs are covered with asphalt shingles and reveal exposed rafters. The walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding, sometimes with wood shingles in the gables. Most have gabled vestibules in the front facade but lean to and hipped vestibules are also common. A few have gabled porches instead of vestibules. Many of these homes have been covered with horizontal aluminum siding and storm windows and doors.

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d. Apartment (1924): Very few of this type were either built or remain in Sinclair. The best example is located at 500 Lincoln Avenue east of the church. It is an elongated, rectilinear frame box. The one story building has a low hipped roof with overhanging heavily bracketed eaves. Fenestration is regular as the ribbon of double-hung 4-over-2 light windows are broken only by a front door with transom and sidelights.

Individual architectural descriptions follow of the representative types of residences in each block within the Sinclair District:

Block I

1) 408 N. 6th Street: typical 4-room residence; one-story woodframe hipped roof structure covered with stucco. The building has a hipped roof front porch with stucco-covered supports and lower walls. Fenestration consists of 6-over-6 light double-hung windows with 4-light wooden storm windows. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles, the single chimney is stuccoed, and there is no basement.

Block II

1) 109 N. 6th Street: significant 4-room residence; this is a one-story woodframe stucco-covered structure with a hipped roof covered with red asphalt shingles. It has a lean to roof over an open porch supported by decorative wrought iron piers with railings. It has a single chimney covered with stucco. Fenestration consists of 6-over-6 light double-hung windows with 4-light woodframe storm windows and wooden shutters on the front facade. This building is in original condition, good repair and has received few modifications.

Block III

1) 103 N. 7th Street: typical 4-room residence; this is a one-story woodframe stucco-covered structure without basement. It has a hipped roof covered with red asphalt shingles. It has a gable roofed vestibule with a blind semi-circular arched entry. Fenestration consists of 6-over-6 light double-hung windows with wood shutters on the front facade. Modern aluminum awnings have been added over windows and doors.

2) 106 N. 8th Street: typical bunkhouse; this is a one-story wood frame gable roofed structure without basement. Exterior walls are covered with a wood shingled apron with narrow clapboard siding above. There is a gable roofed vestibule which has been covered with large, rectangular asbestos shingles with narrow clapboard siding in the gable. Roofs are covered with asphalt shingles. Fenestration consists of 2-light fixed wooden windows in the vestibule and 6-over-6 light double-hung windows in the main structure.

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Block IV

1) 103 N. 8th Street: typical bunkhouse; this is a one-story wood frame gable roofed structure with exposed rafters and without basement. Exterior walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding. There is a gable-roofed vestibule which has been covered with wide, clapboard siding and wood shingles in the gable. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and there is a single brick chimney. Fenestration consists of 6-over-6 light double-hung windows in the main building with fixed 4-light windows in the vestibule.

Block V

1) 207 N. 9th Street: typical bungalow; this is a 1-1/2 story brick bungalow with basement. It has a clipped gabled roof covered with wood shingles. There is a small front porch covered by a flat roof composed of open beams and supported by round wood columns. Gables are covered with narrow clapboard siding and have small twin 8-light fixed windows. Ground floor windows are composed of interesting 10-over-1 light double-hung windows with wood sash and frames.

Block VI

1) 211 N. 8th Street: significant bungalow; this is a 1-1/2 story gabled roof brick bungalow with basement. It features eyelid dormers and a gabled roof front porch with stepped brick pillars. There is decorative brickwork at the building corners, windows, and front porch pillars. This building also features a corbeled brick chimney. It is in original condition, good repair, and has received few if any modifications.

Block VII

1) 208 N. 8th Street: typical bungalow; this is a 1-1/2 story gabled roof brick bungalow with basement. It has a gabled roof front porch supported by tapered wooden columns and tapered battered brick piers. The gables are covered with stucco. Fenestration is typical of the bungalows decorative sash in the upper portion of the double-hung windows. Eaves are covered except for two exposed rafters under the gable ends.

2) 207 N. 7th Street: significant bungalow; this is a 1-1/2 story brick bungalow with basement with a gently sloping gable roof. It features a number of architectural details not generally found on many of the brick bungalows. It has scalloped exposed roof beams, a porch covered by an extended roof supported by tapered battered brick piers with decorative brickwork. This decorative brickwork extends to building corners and around the windows. There is also a gabled roof dormer with exposed decorative rafters and multi-light decorative windows. The building also features a corbeled brick chimney. Fenestration consists of a bank of three double-hung wooden windows in the eaves whose upper portions are divided by the sash into a symmetrical design. This concept is carried on in the double-hung ground floor windows.

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Block VIII

1) 206 N. 7th Street: significant bunkhouse; this is a one-story woodframe gable structure without basement. Exterior walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has exposed rafters. There is an open gable roofed porch with square wooden pillars and a wooden railing. The eave of the porch gable is covered with wooden shingles. Fenestration consists of 6-over-6 light double-hung windows with wood sash and frames. This building appears to be in original condition without alterations and is well maintained.

Block IX

1) 207 N. 5th Street: typical bunkhouse; one-story woodframe front gable with a lean to vestibule. The exterior walls are covered with wide clapboard siding. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has exposed rafters. There is a gable roof addition on the north facade. Fenestration consists of 2-over-2 light double-hung windows covered with aluminum storm windows.

Block X

1) 301 N. 7th Street: significant 4-room residence; this is a one-story woodframe structure with hipped roof and hipped roof front and has a basement. Exterior walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding. Roofs are covered with asphalt shingles and rafters are exposed. The front porch roof is supported by square tapered wooden piers. Windows appear to be 1-over-1 light with wood sash and frames covered by 4-light wooden storm windows. This house is in original condition and has been well maintained without significant modifications.

2) 300 N. 8th Street: typical bungalow; this 1-1/2 story clipped gabled roof brick bungalow with basement has an enclosed porch with clipped gabled roof and square wooden support pillars. There is a lean to roofed side dormer. Upper exterior walls are covered with narrow clapboard siding. This building has the unique feature of diamond-shaped decorative windows in the eaves. This building is original except for the addition of aluminum storm windows and an aluminum awning.

Block XI

1) 301 N. 8th Street: typical bungalow; this 1-1/2 story brick bungalow with basement has a gently sloping gabled roof with exposed beams and a gabled roof dormer with fixed, decorative windows. The dormer and eaves are covered with stucco. The structure has a fully enclosed front porch with a row of 1-over-1 light double-hung windows with wood sash and frames. The porch is covered by the extended roof and is supported by tapered, battered brick piers with decorative work.

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Sinclair derives its historical significance from its status as the most architecturally distinctive company town in Wyoming. The town's impressive Spanish Colonial architecture and progressive employee residences created favorable statewide publicity, public exposure needed in a time of vociferous anti-oil sentiment generated in the wake of the Teapot Dome scandal.

The origin of the "wonder town" is intimately linked to the career of a prominent Denver industrial entrepreneur. Frank Kistler was born on a North Carolina plantation in 1882. Eleven years later the entire family migrated to a farm in Van Buren, Arkansas. In this rural atmosphere, Kistler worked in a local mercantile store. After the death of his father in 1895, the family moved to Claremore, Oklahoma where Kistler became life-long friends with Will Rogers.

His business acumen sharpened, Kistler left family and friends in 1901 to accept a challenging position with the Texas Company in St. Louis, Missouri. Kistler soon was promoted to leasing and operating manager, and in 1915 resigned to form his own organization. Producers and Refiners Corporation (Parco) was incorporated shortly thereafter with capital stock of \$20,000,000.00. As President, Kistler soon leased 1,000 acres in Wyoming and began drilling one of the state's deepest gas wells. By 1925 Parco was valued at more than \$50,000,000.00 and Kistler's own personal fortune stood at a modest \$12,000,000.00.

A large oil-gas refinery located within Wyoming was integral to Kistler's overall development strategy. Proximity to proven oil reserves and a dependable transportation route dictated location. Oil from the nearby Ferris, Salt Creek and Lost Soldier oil fields would be piped to the intersection of the Lincoln Highway and the Union Pacific Railroad located about 6 miles east of Rawlins, Wyoming.

The inspiration and design of the townsite of Sinclair can be traced to the prominent Denver based architectural firm of Fisher and Fisher. The two brothers, W.E. Fisher and Arthur Fisher had already established a solid local reputation in both commercial and residential design when first retained by Kistler in early 1922. According to a well-publicized interview with E.E. Fisher, Kistler originally approached the prominent architectural firm to design a "garden lawn tool house" for his private house. The architects were heartened when Kistler upon departing quipped, "And oh yes, W.E., I want you to build a town up in Wyoming and lay out plans for it too." He then added, "you might figure on a million budget."

Kistler was not disappointed when he reviewed the architect's preliminary drawings several weeks later. Indeed, Kistler's benevolent budgetary constraints combined with a skilled design to produce a town of substantial

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inventiveness and merit. Unlike the typical company town where overworked laborers returned home to cramped, inhospitable tenements, Sinclair included the most modern of household conveniences, comfortable living spaces and open recreational areas.

Fisher and Fisher's inspiration for the town was probably derived from Bertram Goodhue's plan of Tyrone, New Mexico, for Phelps' Dodge Corporation's copper mining operation. Like Goodhue's scheme of 1917, Fisher incorporated many traditional features of Spanish American communities. Fisher's plan grouped hotel, garage, shops, theatre, depot, post office and executive offices around a town plaza. However, unlike Goodhue's design, Fisher and Fisher would successfully integrate residential with public buildings.

Parco's first ground was broken on April 7, 1922. Frenzied construction soon followed. By March of the following year the refinery had begun operations, producing 10,000 barrels of crude oil per day. The construction company of C.S. Landie then began the task of replacing the temporary tent town with permanent housing and public facilities. By early August, 1925, their job was almost complete. 120 frame homes, each with its own carefully manicured lawn, lined the checkerboard streets. In addition numerous public buildings, including social club, hotel, bank, depot and garage enclosed the main plaza.

To celebrate the official opening of the town, Kistler hosted a 3-day extravaganza. On August 6,7,8, 1925, 10,000 people flocked to the so-called "Oasis" of the Great American Desert. Bernadi's Exposition Show and numerous colorful parades provided the entertainment. Wyoming Governor Nellie Tayloe Ross's unannounced visit coincided with a dramatic air race. By the following week, however, the Parco settled into the familiar pattern of the company town.

From the beginning, Parco exhibited a functional blend of benevolent paternalism and local government. Employees rented their homes for \$40-\$50 per month and merchants leased space within the public buildings. However, as early as May 1925 local elections were held to select the city mayor and other town officers. Although nonprofessional and largely part-time, these officials represented an uncommon attempt to allow limited self-government.

Despite tremendous oil reserves, Wyoming suffered from a lack of nearby markets, and rail transportation to large population centers both east and west was expensive. Therefore, Wyoming oil was not competitive, especially when crude oil prices fell to ten cents a barrel in the 1930s. These factors caused Kistler to sell the refinery and company town in 1934 to Consolidated Oil (later Sinclair) for \$7,777,223.00. In 1942, the name of the town was changed to Sinclair. With the increased demand for oil brought on by World War II, Wyoming production took a dramatic upswing which continued until 1961,

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when production stabilized until 1968. New discoveries and development in the Powder River Basin gave Wyoming its highest yearly production in 1970. Once again production leveled off due to rapid depletion of old oil fields by 1980. Wyoming ranked sixth among the 50 states in production of crude oil and natural gas in 1980. In 1981, the Sinclair Oil corporation Refinery was the largest of 13 refineries listed in the State of Wyoming. In 1967, the Sinclair Refining Company sold the townsite to local residents. The refinery and associated pipelines and wells changed ownership several times with a merger of the Atlantic Refining Company with the Sinclair Refining Company in 1968. In 1972, Pasco, Inc. purchased the refinery. Finally in 1976, Amoco obtained the oil fields, and a reorganized Sinclair Oil Company purchased the refinery. The proposed revitalization of the Lost Soldier and Wertz Oil Fields by means of injecting CO₂ gas into the domes should increase production and hopefully assure the future of Sinclair and its refinery.

Throughout its history as a company town, Sinclair has exhibited a functional blend of benevolent paternalism and limited local autonomy. Frank Kistler and those refinery owners who followed him appear to have taken a personal interest in the management of the town. Although Fisher and Fisher designed the town's distinctive recreational facilities and later community church (funds were donated by Kistler and wife), Kistler and subsequent owners ensured that these properties are well maintained. Moreover, the company charged reasonable rents, landscaped the lawns and maintained parks, streets, sidewalks.

Yet, Kistler allowed the growth of limited forms of private enterprise and self-government. As early as April 1, 1925 the town incorporated as a distinct entity from the refinery. Moreover, a town council was elected in 1925 which shortly thereafter appointed a town marshal. A sense of community spirit still persists in Sinclair, and is reflected in many refinery personnel who have chosen to retire in the town.

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I	1 3	3 2 3 7 2 0	4 6 2 7 5 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
J	1 3	3 2 3 2 7 0	4 6 2 7 4 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
K	1 3	3 2 3 7 7 0	4 6 2 7 4 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
L	1 3	3 2 3 7 7 0	4 6 2 7 4 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
M	1 3	3 2 3 8 5 0	4 6 2 7 3 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
N	1 3	3 2 3 8 5 0	4 6 2 7 2 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
O	1 3	3 2 4 1 2 0	4 6 2 7 2 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
P	1 3	3 2 4 1 2 0	4 6 2 7 1 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
Q	1 3	3 2 4 2 4 0	4 6 2 7 1 2 5
	Zone	Easting	Northing

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The Sinclair Historic District boundary begins at Point A (see site sketch) located at the southwest corner of the block northeast of the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and 4th Street and proceeds due east (Azimuth 90) along the north curb line of Lincoln Avenue to Point B, an imaginary intersecting north-south line along the east building line of the Town Hall and Credit Union (old Parco Mercantile and 1st National Bank). From Point B, proceed northward about 150 feet to Point C (Az. 0 or 360) along this building line at the midpoint of the block. From Point C proceed due west (Az. 270) to the east curb line of North 4th Street, Point D. Continue north (Az. 0 or 360) along the east curb line of North 4th Street to the northwest corner of the block formed by North 4th Street and Madison Avenue, Point E. Proceed westward (Az. 270) across North 4th Street to the northeast block corner and continue along the south curb line of Madison Avenue and across North 5th Street to Point F, the northeast corner of the block southwest of the intersection of North 5th Street and Madison Avenue. From Point F, proceed due north (Az. 0 or 360) across Madison Avenue and along the west curb line of North 5th Street to Point G, the intersection of North 5th Street with an unnamed diagonal street running in a northwest-southeast direction along the western boundary of the oil refinery. Proceed northwest (Az. 315) along the west side of the unnamed diagonal street to Point H, the intersecting point of this extended line and the south curb line of Monroe Avenue. From Point H, continue due west (Az. 270) along the south curb line of Monroe Avenue, cross both North 8th Street and North 9th Street and continue to Point I, the intersecting point of this extended line and the east curb line of North 10th Street. From Point I, proceed due south (Az. 180) along the east curb line of North 10th Street to Point J, the southwest corner of the block northeast of the intersection of North 10th Street and Cleveland Avenue. Proceed due east (Az. 90) along the north curb line of Cleveland Avenue for approximately 150 feet to Point K, the midpoint of the block. From Point K, proceed due south (Az. 180) across Cleveland Avenue and continue along this extended line to a point where this line intersects the north curb line of Madison Avenue or Point L. Proceed due east (Az. 90) along the north curb line of Madison Avenue and across North 9th Street a distance of approximately 375 feet to Point M, the midpoint of the block formed by North 9th and North 8th Streets. From Point M, proceed due south (Az. 180) along this extended midpoint line across Madison Avenue to the point formed by the intersection of this line with the north curb line of Lincoln Avenue, or Point N. Proceed due east (Az. 90) along the north curb line of Lincoln Avenue across North 8th, North 7th, and North 6th Streets, to a point formed by the intersection of this line with the west curb line of North 5th Street, or Point O. From Point O, proceed due south (Az. 180) across Lincoln Avenue and continue along the west curb line of 5th Street to its intersection with the north curb line of Union Avenue, or Point P. From Point P, proceed due east (Az. 90) along the north curb line of Union Avenue across 4th Street to its intersection with the east curb line of 4th Street, point Q. From Point Q, proceed due north (Az. 0 or 360) along the east curb

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line of 4th Street and across Lincoln Avenue back to Point A. This boundary encompasses all remaining significant historic public buildings in the downtown area which retain physical integrity, the plaza, fountain and associated park area, the church, library/school, the 1937 school, and contributing blocks within the residential area. This boundary includes all of the remaining brick bungalows, and blocks or portions of blocks where the majority of 4-room residences, bunkhouses and apartments are considered contributing. The above described boundary follows street curb lines, building lines and extended mid-block lot lines to form the Sinclair District. This boundary defines a contiguous district with a minimum of intrusions.

This boundary encompasses the original areas included in the town's first building phase which retain concentrations of buildings retaining integrity. Though concentrations of contributing properties in some blocks may seem negligible the modifications of surrounding properties have not been sufficient to render them intrusive or to damage the overall feeling and association of the district. Residential areas retain common scale, setback, vegetation and in many cases design elements are still visible, though new materials may have been added. Site integrity in the areas of feeling and association remains quite high despite the inevitable housing changes that come with private ownership.

SINCLAIR, WYOMING

SCALE: 1" = 300' 2-27-80

Revised 9/86



LEGEND

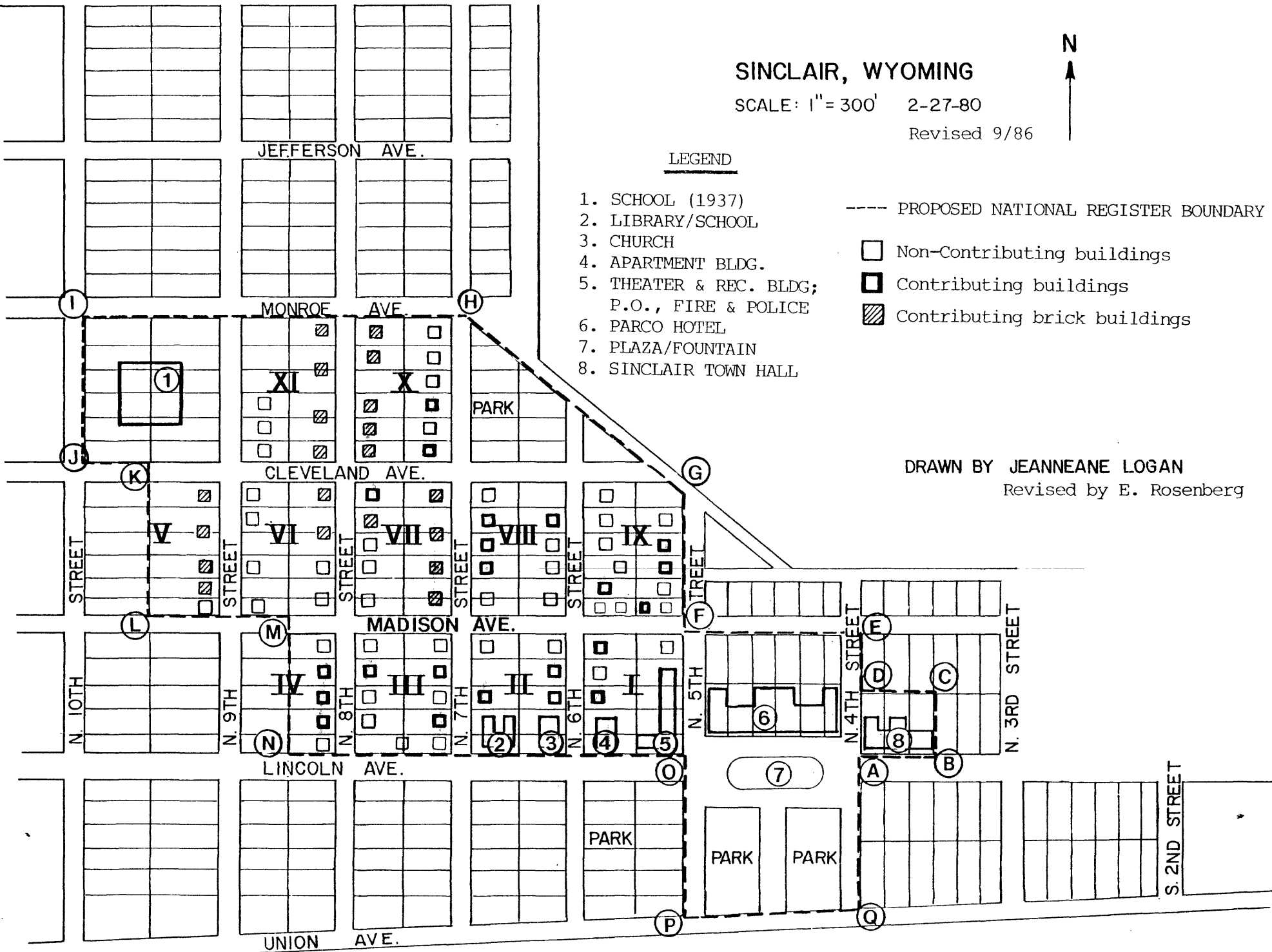
1. SCHOOL (1937)
2. LIBRARY/SCHOOL
3. CHURCH
4. APARTMENT BLDG.
5. THEATER & REC. BLDG;
P.O., FIRE & POLICE
6. PARCO HOTEL
7. PLAZA/FOUNTAIN
8. SINCLAIR TOWN HALL

----- PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER BOUNDARY

- Non-Contributing buildings
- Contributing buildings
- Contributing brick buildings

DRAWN BY JEANNEANE LOGAN

Revised by E. Rosenberg



SINCLAIR, WYOMING

SCALE: 1" = 300' 2-27-80

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LEGEND

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