

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1050

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Other names/site number: Sonshine Building

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)



### 2. Location

Street & number: 101 North Main Street

City or town: Middletown State: OH County: Butler

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<u>Barbara Pove</u>	<u>DSHPO Inventory &amp; Registration</u>	<u>Oct. 16, 2014</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<u>State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection</u>		
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>		

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

*Patrick Andrews*

*12/11/2014*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing <u>1</u>	Noncontributing _____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

---

**6. Function or Use**  
**Historic Functions**

COMMERCE/Specialty Store  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

VACANT (Storage)  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

NO STYLE/Vernacular  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

BRICK and METAL/Aluminum

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

## Narrative Description

---

### Summary Paragraph

The Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of North Main Street and Manchester Avenue in Middletown, Butler County, Ohio. The vernacular, two-story building features a two-part commercial block configuration and the three-bay primary façade fronts North Main Street. Constructed in 1921, the building is an excellent example of a first generation automobile dealership. Early automobile dealerships typically operated out of a downtown storefront building before the adoption of the Art Deco and Modernistic-style auto malls generally located on the outskirts of town (Genat 2004:40–41). The building is constructed of reinforced concrete with a red-brick exterior laid in a stretcher bond pattern. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation and occupies a rectangular footprint measuring approximately 80 ft. by 140 ft. The building is located near the commercial center of Middletown and directly west of the former Hotel Manchester. To the north of the building is a parking lot historically associated with the building, while to the east of the building is a service road historically used by both the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership and the Hotel Manchester.

The building retains its integrity of location and design because it remains in its original location with its original brick façade, the majority of window openings, parapet roof, and floor plan, including its open display room, service area and freight elevator designed for vehicles. The setting of the building along two main roads in Middletown with a parking area to the north of the building remains intact. The integrity of materials and workmanship has suffered some loss with the covering of display windows and first-story windows with plywood and the brick in-fill of two opening on the south elevation, but the building still retains its original brick façade, industrial sash windows, interior floor plan with square concrete pillars, and vehicle elevator. Although the building is now used as storage by the City of Middletown, the building retains the feeling of a 1920s–1930s automobile dealership.

---

### Narrative Description

The former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building is located at 101 North Main Street in Middletown, Ohio (Figure 1). The City of Middletown is located in northeastern Butler County, with a small portion of the city extending into northwestern Warren County. The city occupies approximately 26 square miles and is located approximately half way between Cincinnati and Dayton. As of 2010, the population of the city was 48,694 (US Census Bureau 2013). Middletown is located along the eastern bank of the Great Miami River. The two primary streets in the city are Central Avenue (east-west) and Main Street (north-south), which intersect approximately a half-mile east of the Great Miami River. The former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership is located one block north of this intersection. Formerly, Main Street was part of the Dixie Highway system as it ran through Middletown and the building's location fronting this thoroughfare would have been highly visible to automobile travelers (potential customers) and provided easy access to the Snider Ford Dealership.

The building is sited on the northeast corner of the intersection of North Main Street and Manchester Avenue (formerly Second Street) (Figures 2 and 3). The brick-clad building has a

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

two-part commercial block configuration. The primary façade is the west elevation and fronts North Main Street. The building occupies a rectangular footprint and rests on a poured concrete foundation and is constructed of reinforced concrete with a red-brick façade laid in a stretcher bond configuration. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (multiple dates [m.d.]) recorded the building as “fire-proof,” and Snider advertised that he had fire-proof storage available to interested customers. The façade is symmetrical and three bays in width. The main entrance, through a pair of aluminum-frame doors with plain transoms, is inset in the center bay on the west elevation. The first-story bays flanking the main entrance feature display windows that have been protected by plywood because the building is now vacant. The windows and transoms appear to remain intact behind the plywood. Wood-paneled bulkheads embellish the areas under the display areas. A portion of the brick façade in the center bay above the main entrance has suffered some loss through deterioration. Original large industrial sash windows with concrete sills and a parapet roofline highlight the second story of the west elevation (Photos 1–3).

The south elevation, along Manchester Avenue, has experienced some alterations along the first story. The display window on the southwest corner of the south elevation appears to retain its transoms and two of its three display windows and is now covered by plywood. The third display window panel was removed to allow the installation of a window air conditioner unit. Two sets of industrial sash windows, located on the first story of the south elevation, have been in-filled with wood panels on the exterior. The interior of these windows have been covered by drywall and pegboard paneling, so it is not known if these industrial sash windows remain or have been removed. In addition, two former openings, including a side entrance and a former garage door, have been in-filled by brick. On the southeast corner of the south elevation are an entrance to the stairway and a garage door opening into a freight elevator designed for automobiles and tractors. The elevator’s shaft extends above the roofline of the building. The elevator could have been utilized to transport vehicles and heavy automobile and tractor parts, such as engine blocks and transmissions, to the second story of the building. The original industrial sash windows with concrete sills remain on the second story (Photos 2 and 5).

The east and north elevations are relatively plain. The east elevation features a centered garage door flanked by two plain metal doors that open onto a paved service road leading to the parking lot north of the building. Two original industrial sash windows on the second story above the garage door are the only other openings on this elevation. The northeast corner of the east elevation is sided in vertical standing-seam metal siding (Photos 4 and 5). The north elevation is primarily sided in the same vertical standing-seam metal siding. A fire escape with a small metal balcony and metal ladder provide emergency egress from the second story on the north elevation. The northwest corner of the north elevation retains its brick façade, but three windows on the first story have been in-filled with plywood while two industrial sash windows with concrete sills remain intact on the second story (Photos 3 and 4).

The interior of the building features the historic large, open show room with eight square concrete support pillars (Figure 4; Photos 6–8). A pair of service windows built into a curtain wall separating the open show room from the rear service area provided customer access to sales and/or maintenance people in the maintenance area without allowing customers into the service area (Photo 9). North of the service windows is a storage area with built-in cabinets and shelves

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

that appear to be original to the building (Photo 8). At the north side of the storage area is a small bathroom with facilities that appear to date from ca. 2003, likely installed during the Sonshine Products occupation of the building. A maintenance area is located at the rear of the building (Photo 10). The majority of early automobile dealerships would have a service area where the vehicles could be repaired (Genat 2004:40–41). The maintenance area for the Snider Dealership is accessed by the garage door and two plain metal doors on the east elevation of the building. On the south side of this maintenance area is a large freight elevator designed to lift vehicles to the second story of the building (Photos 11 and 12). The freight elevator does not appear to have been a common feature in most early automobile dealerships (Genat 2004:41).

The Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building is an excellent example of a first generation automobile dealership. Early automobile dealerships typically operated out of a downtown storefront building before the adoption of the Art Deco and Modernistic-style auto malls generally located on the outskirts of town. A photograph, taken ca. 1925, of the interior of the Snider Ford building illustrates this show room and features both an automobile and a tractor (Figure 6). In the historic photograph, the floor and ceiling of the show room appear to be simple concrete, and the concrete support pillars are topped by large inverted pyramid caps. Now the floor is clad in black and white checkered linoleum, likely installed ca. 1960 when the building was converted to the Cussins and Fearn Hardware Store. A drop ceiling was likely installed ca. 2003 when Sonshine Products began operating out of the building. The original utilitarian concrete ceiling and the inverted pyramid column caps remain above the drop ceiling. The inverted pyramid column caps demonstrate that the second story of the building was constructed to support the weight of vehicles and heavy spare parts that were transported up by the freight elevator.

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

**Areas of Significance**

COMMERCE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1921-1959  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1921  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building is historically significant because of its association with the commercial development of downtown Middletown near the peak of its post-World War I economic boom (**Criterion A**). The Snider Ford Dealership Building represents the first generation of car dealerships that were located in traditional downtown commercial buildings, prior to adoption of the Art Deco and then Modernistic-style auto malls, which were generally sited on the outskirts of towns (Genat 2004:40-41). The internal combustion engine fundamentally changed American society by radically altering the ease and expense of personal long-distance transportation, and the Snider Ford Dealership Building represents the commercialization of the technology into a desirable consumer product marketed to the residents of Middletown. The Snider Ford Dealership was the only Ford dealership in Middletown during the 1920s and 1930s and it served as the link between the industrial manufacturers and the citizen consumers. In addition to Ford automobiles, Snider also sold Fordson tractors through his dealership. The automobiles and tractors sold to the public by Snider from his sales building fundamentally changed the way people traveled and farmed.

Snider constructed the nominated property for his dealership on the northeast corner of Main Street and Second Street (now Manchester Avenue) in 1921. Snider continued to operate his dealership as a sole proprietor until 1939. Then in 1940, Snider entered a partnership to create Snider-Ross Motors Inc. which operated in the building until ca. 1946. In 1947, Chapple Buick Inc. converted the building to a Buick dealership. Finally in 1960, the Cussins and Fearn Hardware store opened in the building, ending the building's usage as an automobile dealership. Therefore, the period of significance for the building extends from 1921 through 1959, reflecting the property's association with the automotive industry in Middletown. The former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building served as a focal point for automobile sales for 38 years and the building retains sufficient historic integrity to illustrate its important place in history.

---

### Narrative Statement of Significance

The city of Middletown was laid out in 1802 by Stephen Vail, a pioneer who had traveled to what would become the Middletown area from New Jersey. The original plat of the town contained 52 lots located east of the river, southwest of the Snider Dealership Building (Simms 1906:6). Middletown owes its growth and development to increasing industrialization and evolving transportation networks. In 1825, the ground breaking ceremony was held for the Miami-Erie Canal in Middletown, and by 1827, the canal was opened from Cincinnati to as far north as Middletown. In 1833, Middletown was incorporated as a town (Crout 1965:70).

By the 1850s, construction of the railroad network began to make the canal obsolete as a cost-effective option for shipping and receiving goods. In 1851, the Cincinnati, Hamilton, & Dayton (CH&D) Railroad was constructed west of Middletown, across the Miami River. Then in 1871, the Cincinnati & Springfield Railroad was constructed along the eastern side of downtown Middletown. The improved transportation technology of the railroad resulted in the closure and abandonment of the canal following the Great Flood of 1913 (Clendenin and Miller 2011:105-107).

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

At the start of the twentieth century, Middletown was experiencing an industrial boom. On January 1, 1901, the *Middletown News-Signal* published a scholarly edition summarizing Middletown's accomplishments of the nineteenth century (Crout 1960:108). While the historical summary was educational, arguably the most important article in this paper concerned the future of Middletown. The American Rolling Mill Company (ARMCO) was poised to open a giant new industrial complex in Middletown to produce steel. ARMCO began operations in the middle of January, 1901, employing approximately 500 workers (Crout 1960:108–109).

Coinciding with Middletown's industrial expansion, the transportation system of the country as a whole was being revolutionized by the invention of the "horseless carriage," also known as the automobile, powered by internal combustion engines. While early automobiles tended to be unreliable and were seen as luxury goods only for the amusement of the rich, American industrialists saw the potential of such a transportation vehicle. One such industrialist, Henry Ford, spent years experimenting with automobiles to provide a more reliable and efficient transportation option for American consumers. Once Ford developed a vehicle he felt was viable, he focused his attention on the assembly process to make building his Model T automobiles as quick and as efficient as possible to lower the price of each finished automobile. This allowed the Model T to be one of the first commercially mass produced automobile within the price range of average Americans. With his automobiles gaining popularity, Ford, as well as his customers, began to demand an improved road network to allow for easier automobile transportation (Merz 1929:11-13; 313).

Middletown would benefit from both the introduction of the automobile and the improving transportation network. Middletown experienced significant population growth during the early twentieth century. By 1900, Middletown had a population of 9,215 (Crout 1960:109). The population of the city grew to 13,152 in 1910, then jumped to 23,584 in 1920, and reached 29,992 by 1930 (US Census Bureau 2013). As the automobile took on the prominent role for American transportation, Main Street through Middletown was incorporated into the Dixie Highway system. The Dixie Highway consisted of numerous improved roadways linked together to allow motorists to travel from northern Michigan all the way to southern Florida. The increased traffic would greatly benefit the commercial concerns operating along Main Street, including the Snider Ford Dealership (Crout 2000).

Businessmen in Middletown benefitted from the growing population and improving road network early in the twentieth century. One of these businessmen was Dan E. Snider. In 1911, Snider became an authorized agent for the Ford Motor Company to begin selling their automobiles to the residents of Middletown (Crout 2000). Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company quickly realized that they needed a nationwide system of sales agents to efficiently sell their automobiles. By having a system of authorized sales agents, the Ford Motor Company could control the locations of their agents to allow for maximum territorial coverage while minimizing competition between their individual agents. To insure that agents met Ford's high standards, they were held accountable to a set of nine rules (Ford 1922a:194).

The first rule for Ford agents was to be "a progressive, up-to-date man keenly alive to the possibilities of business" (Ford 1922a:195). In Middletown, Dan E. Snider fit the bill for the

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

Ford Motor Company. Snider became a central member in the development of Middletown's automobile culture. On March 13, 1919, Snider was one of the three organizers for Middletown's first auto show. The author of the article noted that "while many cars were on display, as usual, Ford was taking the limelight, which made Dan Snider very happy" (Crout 1965:167). Ford automobiles were particularly popular for the citizens of Middletown because ARMCO produced much of the sheet metal used on Ford automobiles, including the front and rear fenders and the rear seats for Ford sedans. The business savvy of Snider was also noted because he was able to carry his own financing notes, which enabled him to provide his customers with "pay as you ride" payment plans (Crout 1965:167-169).

Ford's second rule for agents was to have a clean and dignified place for business. Snider had at least two other sales buildings prior to his building on the northeast corner of Main Street and Second Street (now Manchester Avenue). He opened his first automobile dealership in West Middletown around the same time he received his authorized Ford agency. During the Great Flood of 1913, this building was destroyed, and Snider moved his operations to Wall Street, near its intersection with Second Street (now Manchester Avenue) in downtown Middletown. In 1920, a fire destroyed this building, and Snider was once again forced to relocate (Crout 2000). He chose a lot on the northeast corner of Main Street and Second Street (now Manchester Avenue), just west of his previous building. On March 3, 1920, he received a building permit to construct a two-story brick garage valued at \$45,000 on the lot (Middletown Building Permit 1920). This would provide Snider with the Snider Ford Dealership; a new, clean and dignified place of business.

Ford's third rule was for agents to keep a stock of parts sufficient to keep in active service every Ford car in his territory, and the fourth rule was to maintain an adequately equipped repair shop with the machinery necessary for any required repairs (Ford 1922a:195). The Snider Ford Dealership would serve to meet both of those rules by including a second story for storage, a repair area at the rear of the building, and a large freight elevator to allow for vehicles and parts to be lifted to the second story of the building. Snider's new building replaced a two-story building with an irregular footprint formerly used by an undertaker (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map 1912). Snider had his new building constructed of reinforced concrete and brick to be fire-proof. In addition to Ford vehicles, Snider's advertisements proclaimed the availability of fire-proof storage offered to his prospective customers. The building had an approximate capacity of 40 vehicles with additional parking at the north of the building (Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps m.d.).

The fifth rule for Ford agents required the agent to employ mechanics who were thoroughly familiar with the workings of all parts of Ford's vehicles. Rule six called for a comprehensive bookkeeping system, while rule seven required absolute cleanliness throughout every department of the authorized agent's business. Twenty-five people worked at the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership in 1929, although it is not clear exactly how many of these employees were mechanics, bookkeepers, or janitors (Miller 1968:49). The eighth rule required the building used by a Ford dealer to prominently exhibit a suitable Ford display sign. This sign is visible in a ca. 1922 photograph of the building, but it has since been removed (Figure 5). Ford's ninth and final rule for authorized agents required them to have policies in place to "ensure absolute square dealings" (Ford 1922a:195). Because Snider was able to remain an authorized Ford dealer for

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

almost 30 years, it is safe to assume that his building physically represented Henry Ford's business philosophy for dealership requirements, and the majority of Snider's dealings would have been honest and resulted in satisfied, repeat customers.

At first, the Ford Motor Company focused solely on the manufacturing of automobiles, but after Henry Ford felt that the assembly process for the Model T had been perfected, he turned his attention to the manufacturing of tractors utilizing internal combustion engines similar to the automobile. According to Ford, "Farming is the first industry, without it there could be no other industry," and farming at the turn of the twentieth century was almost totally reliant on the power of horses (Ford 1922b:124). Ford wanted to revolutionize farming in the same way he revolutionized transportation. To accomplish this, he developed the Fordson tractor, which even in its earliest stages of development, provided farmers six times the plowing efficiency compared to horse-drawn plows (Ford 1922a:201).

Fordson tractors were in high demand by the local farmers who recognized the efficiency offered by the mechanical tractor over the typical horse powered farm equipment of the time. In 1925, 89.0 percent of the land area of Butler County was used as farmland, and by 1940, Butler County was 90.0 percent farmland, an approximate increase of 20,000 acres of additional farmland. Crop production in Butler County also increased with corn production rising from 1,558,483 bushels in 1924 to 2,361,284 bushels in 1939. Wheat production grew from 647,877 bushels to 688,203 bushels during the same time period (US Census of Agriculture-Ohio 1925 and 1940). These increases are likely due in no small part to the efficiencies added by the use of mechanical farm equipment. Because Snider was already an authorized Ford dealer, he was able to capitalize on the demand for mechanical tractors by selling Fordson tractors to customers in the rural farming areas outside of Middletown (Figure 6).

The success of the Fordson tractor and Henry Ford's admiration of farmers resulted in an experiment where Ford would construct manufacturing factories in rural areas. Ford's goal was to stop the children of farmers from leaving the rural farms to move to urban areas for manufacturing jobs. He hoped that by bringing factories to rural areas, farmers could continue to farm, but would provide additional opportunities for farmers to earn money during the agricultural slow periods. Ford's rural factories would allow flexible work schedules to allow farmers time to plant and harvest, but with the efficiency offered by the Fordson tractors, those times were continually being reduced. In 1919, the Ford Motor Company purchased a piece of land on the Miami River on the outskirts of Hamilton in Butler County, approximately 15 miles southwest of Middletown, and in 1920, the Ford Motor Company, under the leadership of Henry Ford's son, Edsel Ford, opened a new Ford factory in Hamilton, the seat of Butler County (*Hamilton Daily Republican News* 1919:1; Nevins and Hill 1962:227-228).

The location for this new Ford plant was chosen in part because of its close proximity to the ARMCO steel manufacturing company in Middletown. ARMCO manufactured many of the steel components used in Ford's automobiles and tractors, including metal body components, fenders, and seats (Crout 1965:168). The Ford factory near Hamilton focused on the production of Fordson tractors. The increasing mechanization of agriculture adopted by the local farmers allowed for more efficient farming techniques to increase the overall production of agricultural

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Name of Property

Butler Co., OH

County and State

resources (*Hamilton Daily Republican News* 1919:1). The Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership served as the final step for the manufacturing process started by Ford and ARMCO by providing a location and a respected businessman to facilitate the sale of the finished vehicles to the consumers, many of which earned their paychecks producing parts for those vehicles.

The Dan E Snider Ford Dealership flourished during the 1920s. Once Main Street, through Middletown, was encompassed into the Dixie Highway system, automobile traffic through the city increased. The improving road system allowed a large number of travelers utilizing the automobile for transportation to drive past Snider's business. In addition to brand new automobiles, Snider offered repair services and automobile accessories to these travelers. The success of his dealership can be seen in the advertisements he sponsored in the Middletown Business Directories (Williams Directory Company m.d.). In 1923, he purchased a small advertisement above the automobile section of the directory, but by 1926, his advertisement encompassed half a page at the front of the directory directly preceding the title page (Figure 7 and 8). The volatility of the automobile market in Middletown can be observed by reviewing the Middletown business directories. Between 1920 and 1940, an average of about 10 automobile dealerships operated in Middletown, with the number of dealers ranging from a high of 17 in 1926 and 1928, to just six companies in 1933, likely an effect of the Great Depression (Smith m.d.; Williams Directory Company m.d.).

According to the Middletown Business Directory, in 1940, the dealership became the Snider-Ross Motor Inc. Unfortunately, details of this merger with Ross could not be located. The Snider-Ross Motor Inc. operated out of the building until about 1946, and by 1947, the Chapple Buick dealership was operating out of the building. The building remained the Chapple Buick dealership until 1959.

Between 1960 and 1965, the Cussin and Fearn Hardware store operated out of the building. After Cussin and Fearn left the building, it remained vacant until 1970. In 1971, the Disabled American Veterans Social Association was located in the building, but by 1975, the building was converted to a storage building for ARMCO. After ARMCO left the building in 1978, the building remained vacant until 1990 when the Bellefonte Underwriters Insurance Company began using the building for storage. After Bellefonte Underwriters left the building in the mid-1990s, the Manchester Inn used the building as storage until 2002. In 2003, Sonshine Products, a spa dealership, began selling spas and related accessories from the building until 2011 (Smith m.d.; Williams Directory Company m.d.). In 2011, the building was purchased by the city of Middletown who remains the owner at this time. The building is currently being used to store vehicles for the city.

The former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of COMMERCE for its association with the commercial development of Middletown. The building served as the link between the industrial manufacturing process and the final consumer of manufactured products. The primary industrial manufacturer responsible for Middletown's economic growth during this period was ARMCO, and much of its success during this period resulted from supplying the growing automobile industry with sheet metal produced by ARMCO's continuous steel rolling manufacturing process. While the employees of

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

ARMCO manufactured parts for automobiles, they were earning good paychecks that provided them the money and the security to obtain financing to purchase the new automobiles sold by the Dan E. Snider Dealership.

In addition to the industrial economy, Snider served the members of the local agricultural economy by providing the many farmers in Butler County with Fordson tractors. Henry Ford was a firm believer in the importance of the American farmer, and as a result of this, after his success with his automobiles, he focused on producing the best tractors possible. The Ford automobiles and Fordson tractors reshaped American society in fundamental ways, and many residents of Middletown purchased their Ford vehicles from Dan E. Snider.

The period of significance for the building encompasses the period in which the building was used as an automobile dealership, extending from 1921, when Snider had the building constructed, until 1959, after which the building was converted into a hardware store.

The former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building is an excellent example of a first generation automobile dealership, and it retains its integrity to convey that association primarily through its retention of the original brick façade, the retention of the spacious display window openings, second-story window openings with original industrial sash windows, parapet roof, and floor plan including its open display room, service area, and freight elevator designed for vehicles (Genat 2004:40-41). The building retains the feeling of a 1920s–1950s automobile dealership for which it is significant.

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Clendenin, David C. and Roger L. Miller

2011 *Postcard History Series: Middletown*. Arcadia Publishing. Charleston, South Carolina.

Crout, George C.

1960 *Middletown U.S.A. All-American City*. Perry Printing Company, Middletown, Ohio.

1965 *Middletown Diary, Vol. I*. Published by the author. Middletown, Ohio.

2000 George C. Crout Historical Photograph Collection. Accessed March 2014.

Available online at:

<http://middletownlibrary.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/Crout>

Ford, Henry

1922a *My Life and Work*. Doubleday, Page, and Company, Garden City, New York.

1922b *Ford Ideals*. From selections of "Mr. Ford's Page" in the *Dearborn Independent*. The Dearborn Publishing Company, Dearborn, Michigan.

Genat, Robert

2004 *American Car Dealership*. MBI Publishing Co., St. Paul, Minnesota.

*Hamilton Daily Republican News*

1919 "Ford Plant Going Up at Rapid Rate." *Hamilton Daily Republican News*. Pg. 1. Hamilton, Ohio.

Merz, Charles

1929 *And Then Came Ford*. Doubleday, Doran, and Company, Inc. Garden City, New York.

Middletown Building Permit

1920 Building Permit for Dan E. Snider. Issued March 3, 1920. On file at the City of Middletown Building.

Miller, Roger

1968 "The Motor Vehicles in Middletown, Ohio." *Antique Automobile*. Vol. 32, No. 2., March-April 1968. Pg. 46-51.

Nevins, Allan and Frank Ernest Hill

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Butler Co., OH

Name of Property

County and State

1962 *Ford: Expansion and Challenge 1915-1932*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, New York.

Sanborn Map Company

m.d. *Insurance Maps of Middletown, Ohio*. Accessed March 2014. Available at:  
<http://drc.ohiolink.edu.proxy.oplin.org/handle/2374.OX/62437>

Simms, Harry

1906 *Middletown in Black and White*. The Journal Printing Company, Middletown, Ohio.

Smith, Edgar

m.d. *Smith's Directory of Middletown, Ohio*. Published by Edgar Smith, Dorchester, Massachusetts.

United States Census Bureau

2013 *Middletown (city), Ohio, Quickfacts*. Available online at:  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/39/3949840.html>

United States Census of Agriculture-Ohio

1925 *Census of Agriculture-Ohio*. Accessed April 2014. Available online at:  
<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/AgCensusImages/1925/01/10/1925-01-10-intro.pdf>

1940 *Census of Agriculture-Ohio*. Accessed April 2014. Available online at:  
<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/AgCensusImages/1940/01/10/1940-01-10-intro.pdf>

Williams Directory Company

m.d. *Williams' Middletown Directory*. The Williams Directory Company, Cincinnati, Ohio



Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

---

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 0.825 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |              |                 |                   |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16N | Easting: 723219 | Northing: 4377311 |
| 2. Zone:     | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:     | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:     | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Parcels Q6511011000030, Q6511011000031, and Q6511011000032 (See Map 3 in continuation section)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for this property encompasses the parcels on which the former Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building and its associated parking lot are located.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Benjamin M. Riggle  
organization: Hardlines Design Company  
street & number: 4608 Indianola Avenue  
city or town: Columbus state: OH zip code: 43214  
e-mail briggle@hardlinesdesign.com  
telephone: (614)-784-8733  
date: May 1, 2014

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

### **Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### **Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

City or Vicinity: Middletown

County: Butler

State: OH

Photographer: Benjamin M. Riggle

Date Photographed: February 25, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 12 \_\_\_ West elevation of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking southeast

2 of 12 \_\_\_ Southwest corner of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northeast

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

3 of 12\_\_Northwest corner of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking southeast

4 of 12\_\_Northeast corner of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking southwest

5 of 12\_\_Southeast corner of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northwest

6 of 12\_\_Interior of show room in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking southwest

7 of 12\_\_Interior of show room in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northwest

8 of 12\_\_Interior of show room and storage area in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northeast

9 of 12\_\_Service windows in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking southeast

10 of 12\_\_Interior of service area in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northeast

11 of 12\_\_Vehicle elevator in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking south

12 of 12\_\_Interior of vehicle elevator in Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking south

### **List of Figures**

Figure 1. Location of the Dan E. Ford Dealership Building in Middletown, Ohio

Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the Dan E. Ford Dealership Building in Middletown, Ohio

Figure 3. Proposed NRHP property boundary map of the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building in Middletown, Ohio with photo locations

Figure 4. Floor Plan for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building with photo locations (not to scale)

Figure 5. Ca. 1922 photograph of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northeast

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property

Butler Co., OH  
County and State

Figure 6. Ca. 1925 photograph of the interior of the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building,  
view looking southeast

Figure 7. 1923 advertisement for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Figure 8. 1926 advertisement for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building

Figure 9. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing former building located on northeast  
corner of Main Street and Second Street

Figure 10. 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing newly constructed Dan E. Snider Ford  
Dealership Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Second Street

Figure 11. 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership  
Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Manchester Avenue

Figure 12. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership  
Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Manchester Avenue

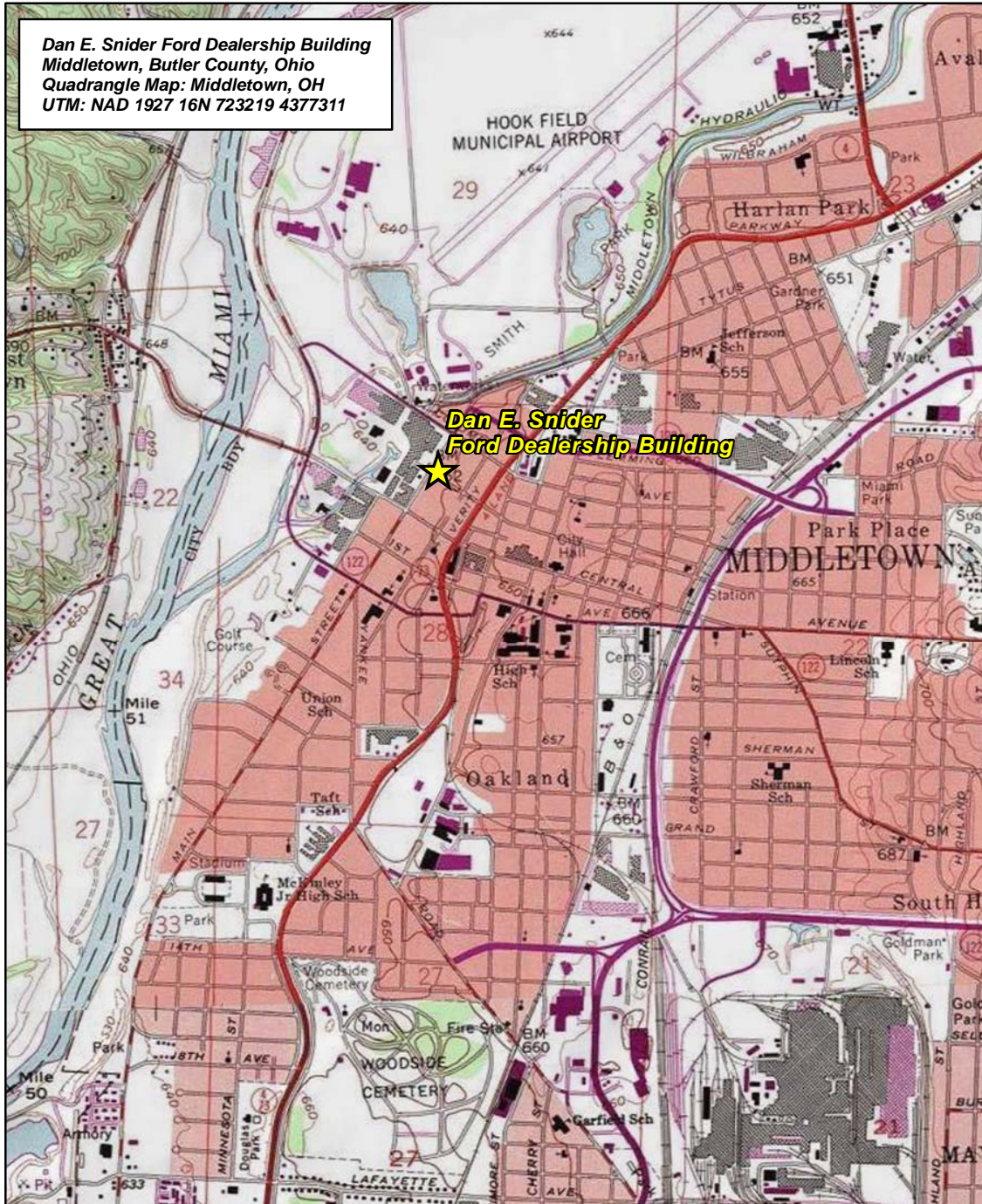
Figure 13. 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership  
Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Manchester Avenue

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 1



HDC 2014  
Source: USGS, ESRI  
Scale 1:24,000

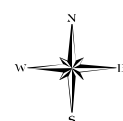
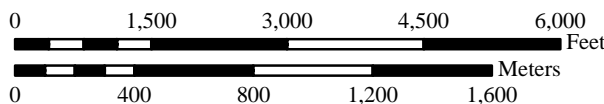


Figure 1. Location of the Dan E. Ford Dealership Building in Middletown, Ohio

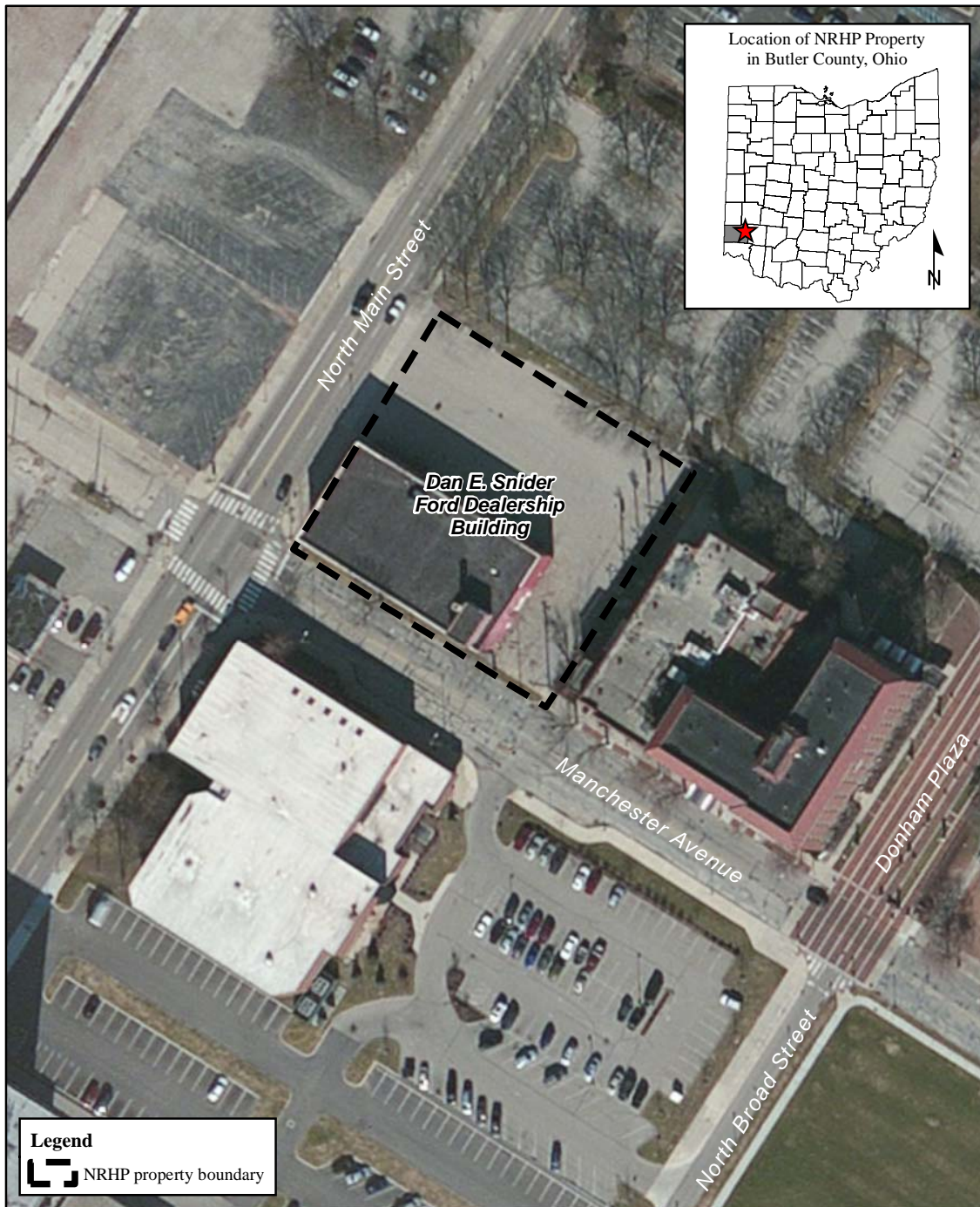
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 2



HDC 2014  
Source: ESRI

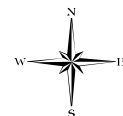
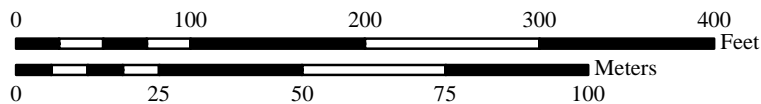


Figure 2. Aerial photograph showing the Dan E. Ford Dealership Building in Middletown, Ohio

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 3

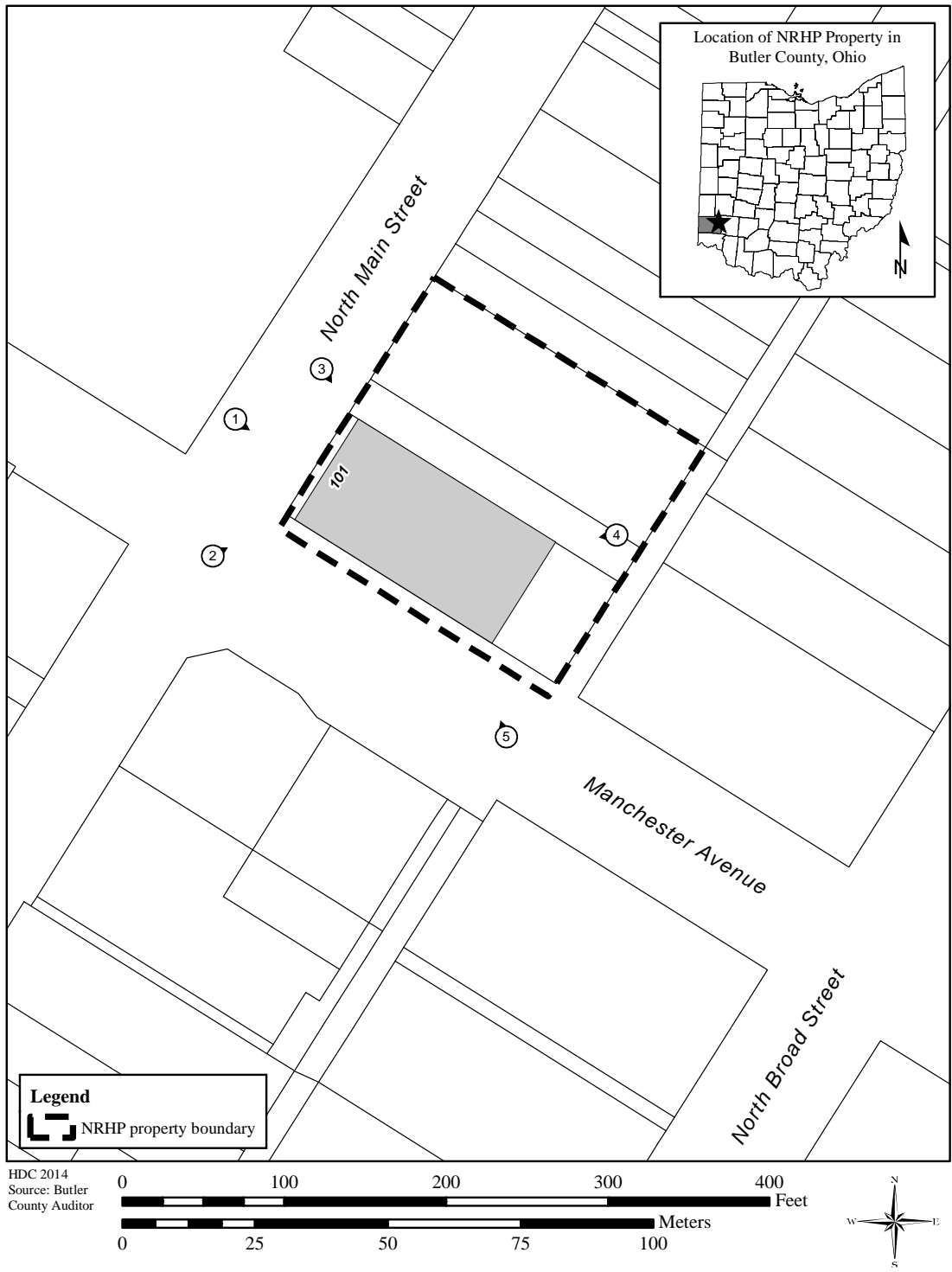


Figure 3. Proposed NRHP property boundary map of the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building in Middletown, Ohio with photo locations



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 4

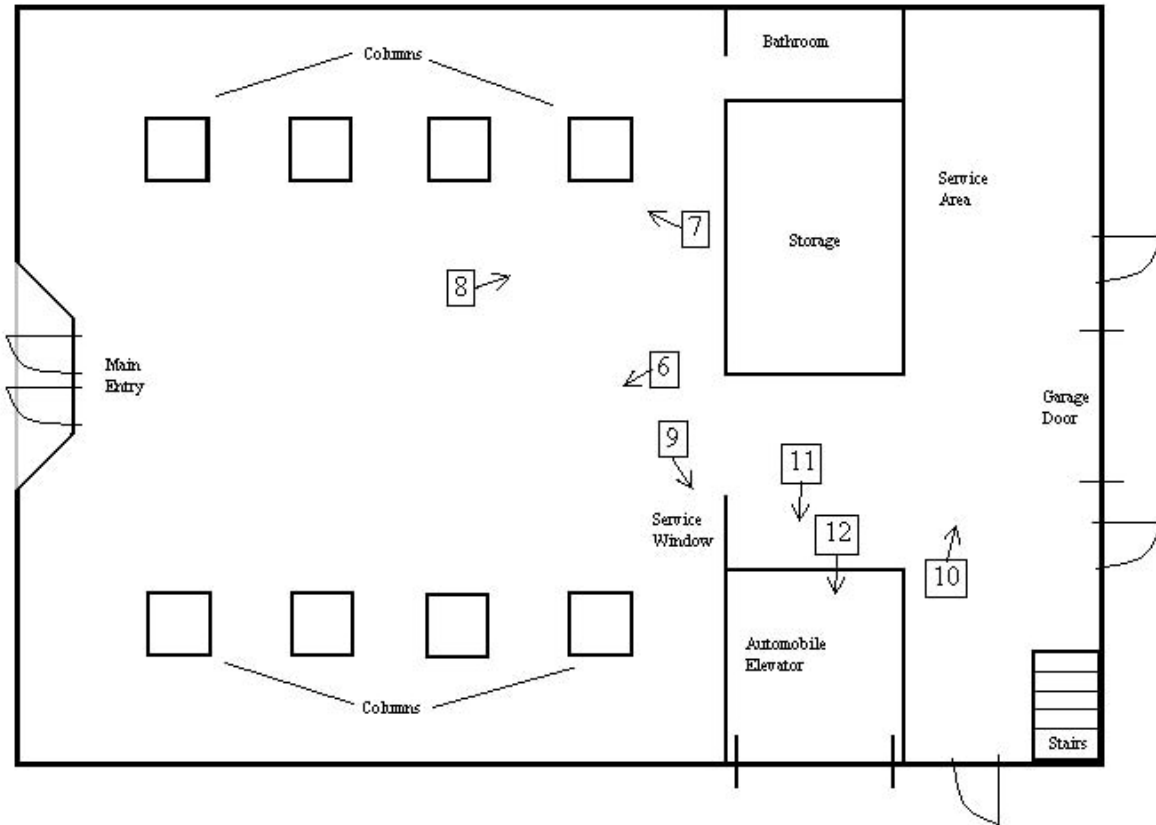


Figure 4. Floor Plan for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building with photo locations (not to scale)  
Source: Drawn from a site visit conducted by Benjamin M. Riggle, Hardlines Design Company, February 25, 2014.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 5



Figure 5. Ca. 1922 photograph of Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking northeast  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio



Figure 6. Ca. 1925 photograph of the interior of the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building, view looking southeast  
Source: George C. Crout Collection, MidPointe Library System, Middletown, Ohio

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 6

**D. E. SNIDER**  
 Distributer  
**FORD and LINCOLN AUTOMOBILES**  
**FORDSON TRACTORS**  
 N. E. C. SECOND AND MAIN STREETS

Figure 7. 1923 advertisement for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Source: *Williams' Middletown Directory* 1923, pg. 441.

**D. E. SNIDER**  
 DISTRIBUTER  
**Ford and Lincoln**  
**Automobiles**  
 FORDSON TRACTORS  
**FIREPROOF STORAGE**  
 Open Day and Night  
 N. E. C. MAIN AND MANCHESTER AV.  
 PHONE 391

Figure 8. 1926 advertisement for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Source: *Williams' Middletown Directory* 1926, pg. opposite title page.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 7

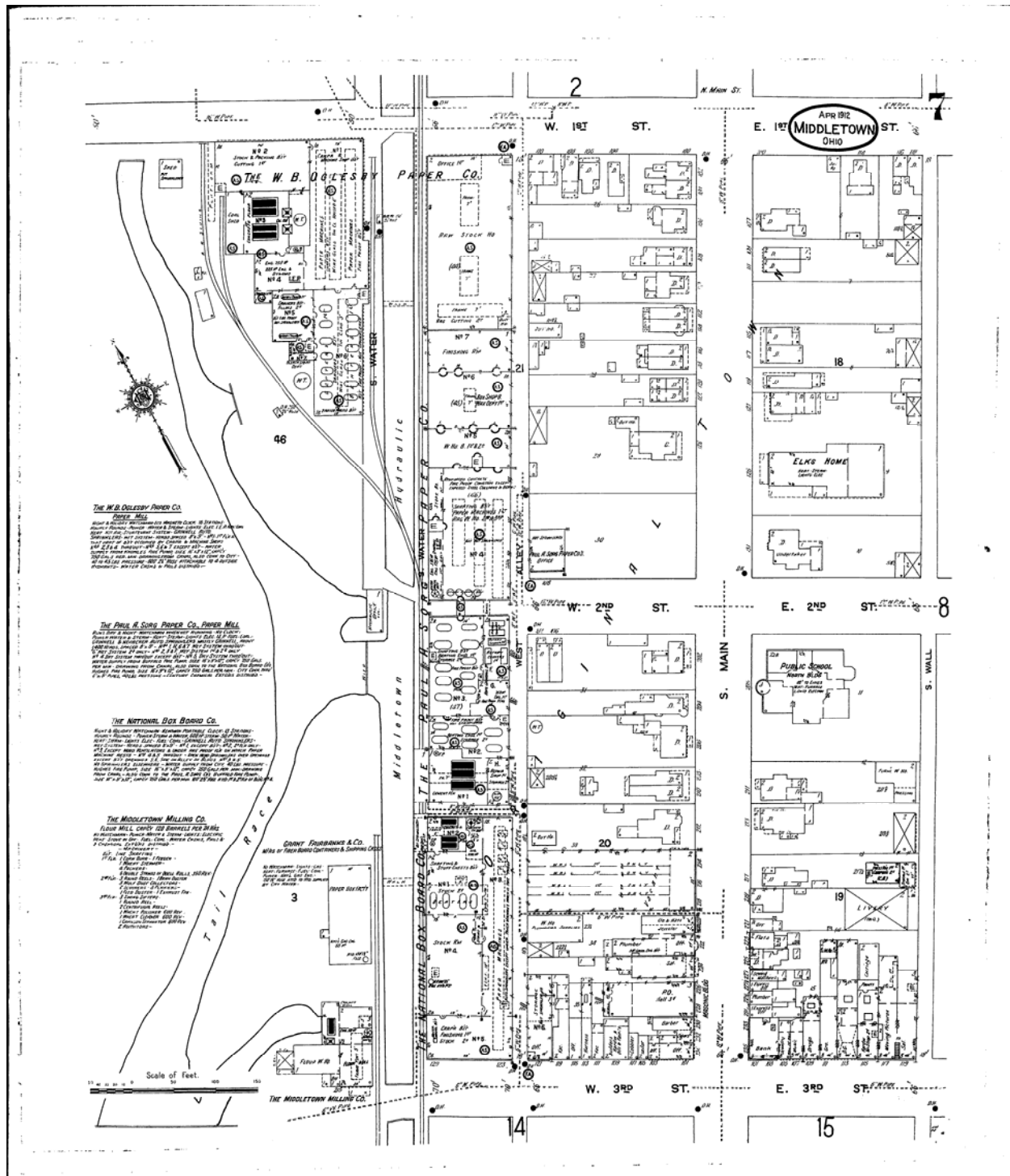


Figure 9. 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing former building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Second Street  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 8

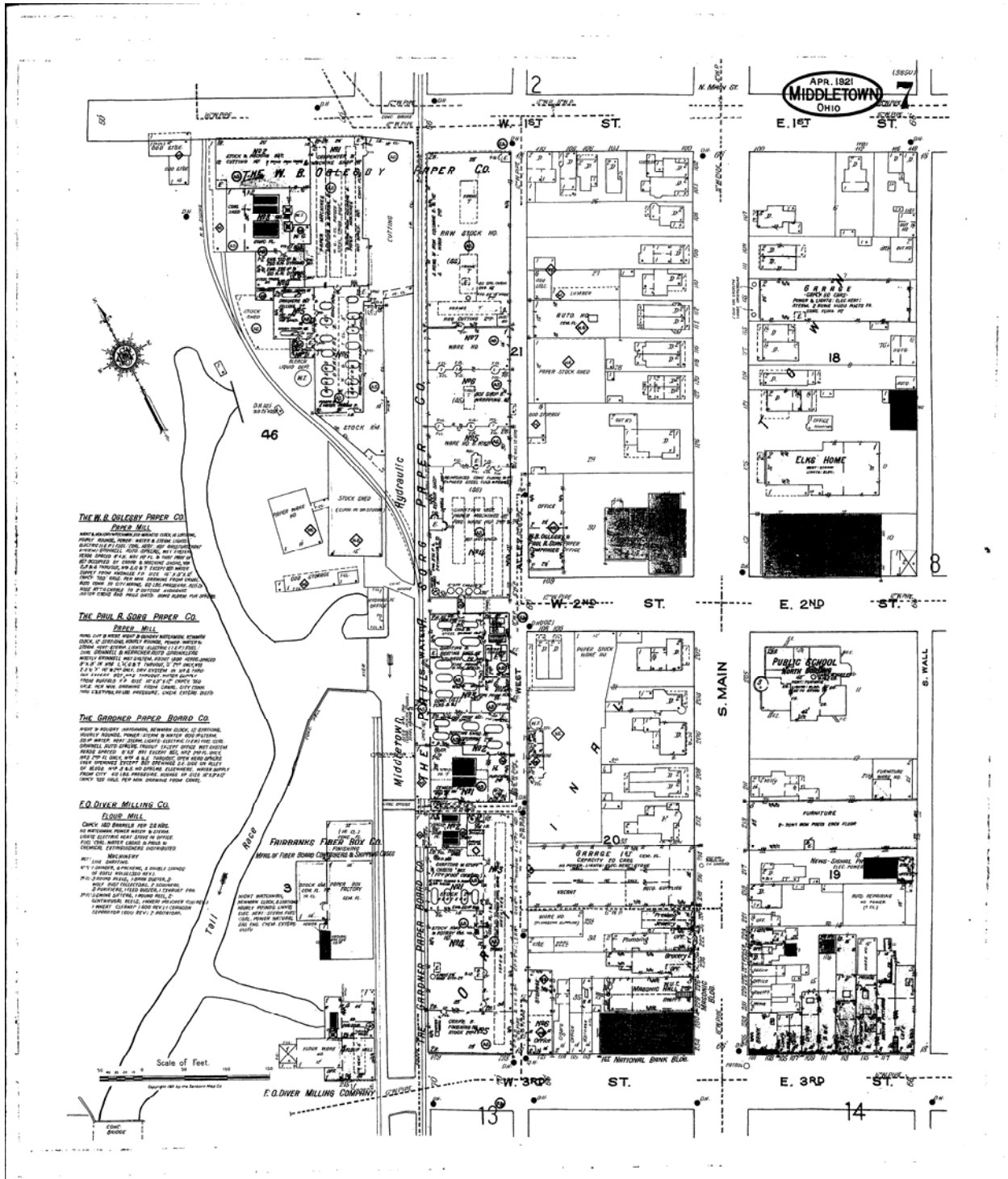


Figure 10. 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing newly constructed Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Second Street  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 9

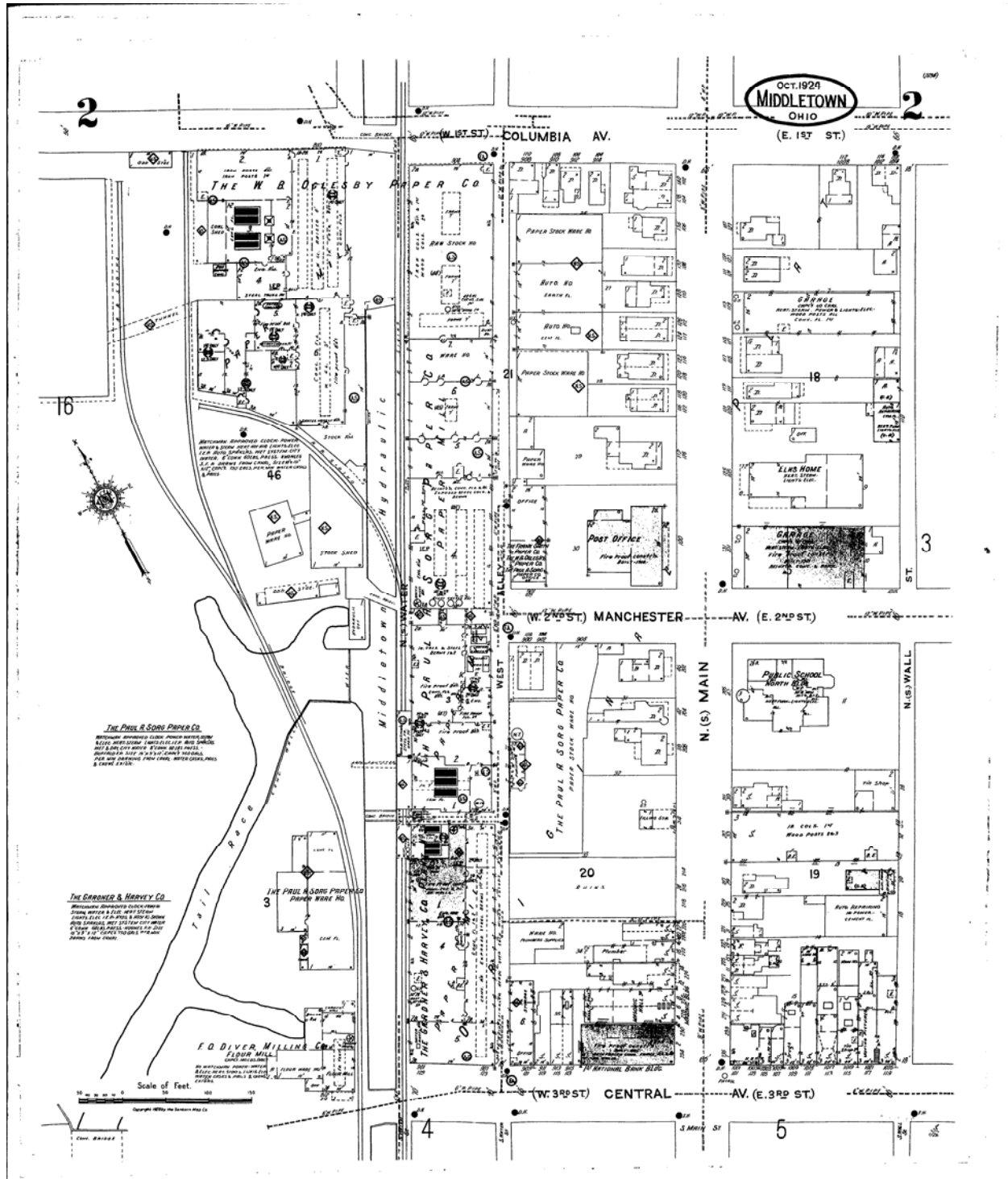


Figure 11. 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Manchester Avenue  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Name of Property  
Butler County, Ohio  
County and State  
N/A  
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 10

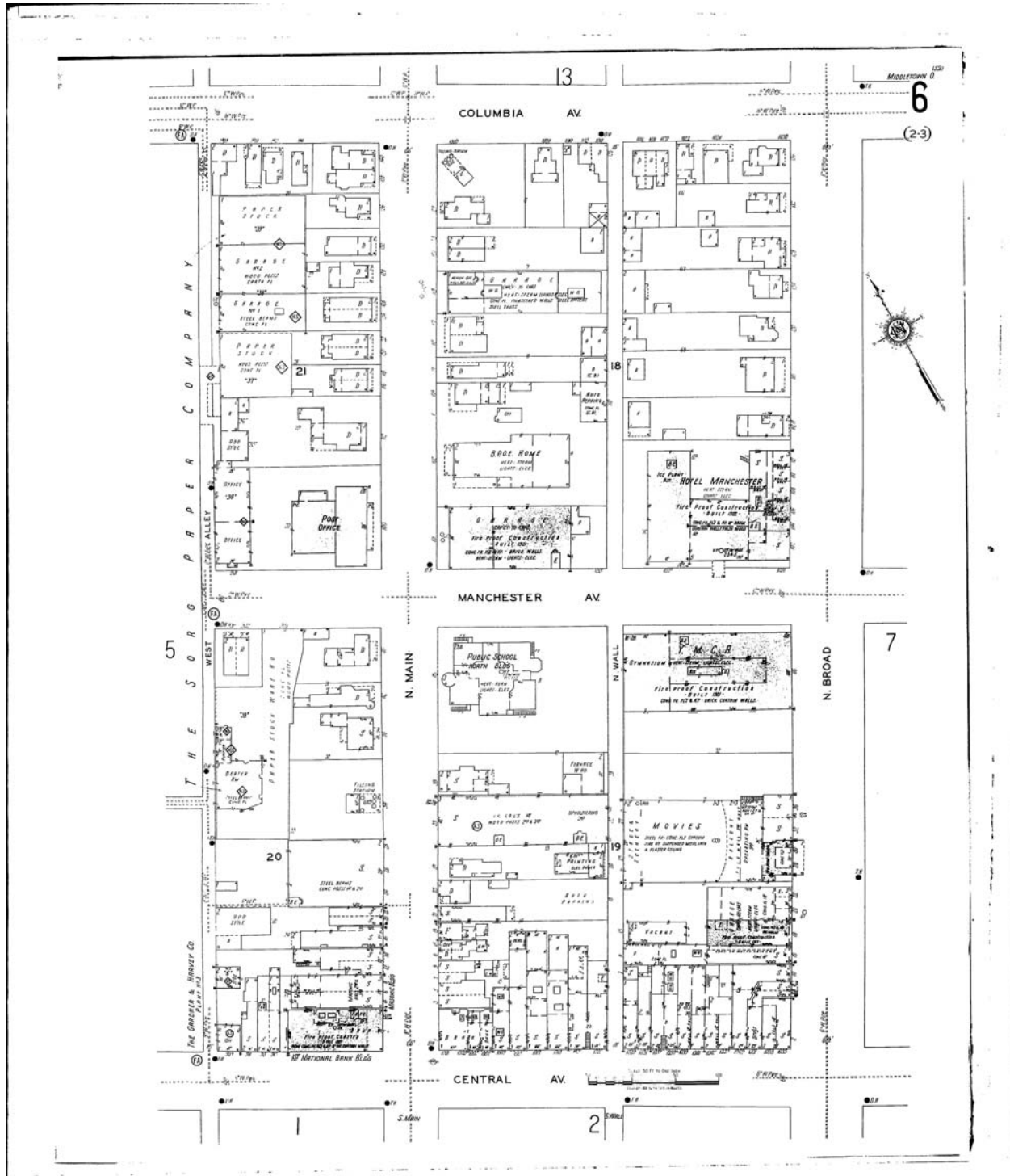


Figure 12. 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Manchester Avenue  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building
Name of Property
Butler County, Ohio
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information Page 11

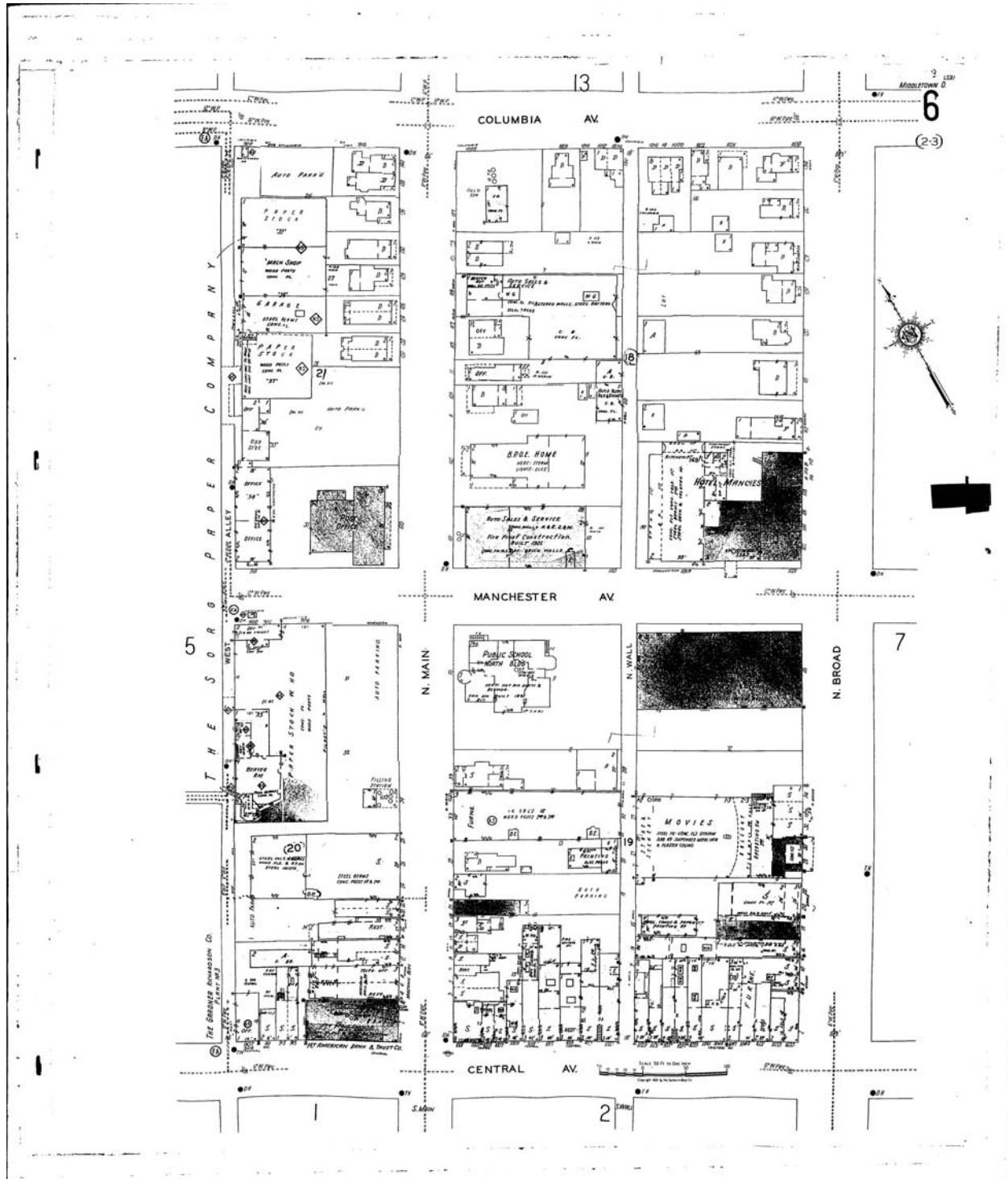


Figure 13. 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building located on northeast corner of Main Street and Manchester Avenue  
Source: Sanborn Map Company; Bell and Howell Information and Learning







N. MAIN ST

MANCHESTER

American Railroad  
Center County Pa. etc.

**The Manchester**  
HOTEL  
Established in 1870  
Where things are happening

Manchester Pa.  
is one of the  
most beautiful of the  
country's scenic spots.  
It is a lovely town & a  
very fine hotel.  
Sunday at 10:00 to 12:00



















EXIT

RESTRICTED  
HANDLING ONLY



DANBY  
(220)  
14

DON

7/1

PLEASE RETURN  
• Do not use this tool for  
any other purpose  
WARNING NOTICE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Snider, Dan F., Ford Dealership Building

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OHIO, Butler

DATE RECEIVED: 10/31/14      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/25/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/10/14      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/17/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14001050

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: Y PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT       RETURN       REJECT      12/11/14 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A  
REVIEWER Patrick Arduis      DISCIPLINE Historian  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_      DATE 12/11/2014

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NPS TRANSMITTAL CHECK LIST

OHIO HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
800 E. 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43211  
(614)-298-2000

The following materials are submitted on Oct. 24, 2014  
For nomination of the Dan E. Snider Ford to the National Register of  
Historic Places: Dealership

- Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form  
\_\_\_ Paper  PDF
- \_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination Cover Document  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_ PDF
- \_\_\_ Multiple Property Nomination form  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_ PDF
- Photographs  
\_\_\_ Prints  TIFFs
- CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)  
\_\_\_ Paper  Digital
- Sketch map(s)/Photograph view map(s)/Floor plan(s)  
\_\_\_ Paper  PDF
- \_\_\_ Piece(s) of correspondence  
\_\_\_ Paper \_\_\_ PDF
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

- \_\_\_ Please provide a substantive review of this nomination
- \_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- \_\_\_ The enclosed owner objection(s) do \_\_\_ do not \_\_\_  
Constitute a majority of property owners
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_



October 24, 2014

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Keeper of the  
National Register  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)  
Washington DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find three (3) new National Register nominations for Ohio. All appropriate notification procedures have been followed for the new nomination submissions.

NEW NOMINATION

Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building  
Bryant Building  
Eaton High School


COUNTY

Butler  
Cuyahoga  
Preble

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nominations for the Dan E. Snider Ford Dealership Building and the Bryant Building nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have questions or comments about these documents, please contact the National Register staff in the Ohio Historic Preservation Office at (614) 298-2000.

Sincerely,

*for* 

Lox A. Logan, Jr.  
Executive Director and CEO  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Ohio History Connection

Enclosures