

MAR 15 1982

HISTORIC NAME: Captain Austin Jenks House

COUNTY: Washington

CURRENT NAME:

CITY/TWP.: Stillwater

LEGAL DESC.: Lots 1, 2, & 3, excluding the west 50 feet,  
Block 47, Churchhill, Nelson & Slaughter's  
Addn.ADDRESS:  
504 South Fifth Street

CLASSIFICATION:

CONDITION:

SIGNIFICANCE:

THEME/S:

Building X  
Structure \_\_\_\_\_  
Object \_\_\_\_\_  
District \_\_\_\_\_Excellent \_\_\_\_\_  
Good X  
Fair \_\_\_\_\_  
Deteriorated \_\_\_\_\_Local X  
State \_\_\_\_\_  
National \_\_\_\_\_Primary Transportation \_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Industry \_\_\_\_\_  
Others Architecture \_\_\_\_\_OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes \_\_\_ No X Restricted \_\_\_

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No \_\_\_

four-plex

OCCUPIED: Yes X No \_\_\_

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1871

ORIGINAL USE: residence

ORIGINAL OWNER: Captain Austin Jenks

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: unknown

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Daryl Cloutier  
504 South Fifth Street  
Stillwater, MN 55082ACREAGE: Less than one acre X

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.:

N/A

UTM REFERENCE:

Stillwater, Minn-Wis. 7.5

15 / 514980 / 4988470

FORM PREPARED BY: Tom Harvey

DATE: 3/81

DESCRIPTION: The brick, 1½-story Jenks House is built on a cruciform plan with a 2½-story tower placed in one corner. A profusion of sawn woodwork dresses-up the dwelling. The steeply-pitched gabled roofs of the projecting wings have curved barge boards with ornate paired brackets and heavy pendants. The tower has a mansard roof with gable-roofed wall dormers. The tower entablature has brackets and an ornately carved frieze. Frame single-story porches are seen on all sides of the house with decorated square columns supporting narrow mansard roofs. The house sits on a limestone foundation. The water table, a second level belt course in the tower, window sills, and label molds above the windows are of granite. On the first level, the tower has an elliptical window with stone surround. This pattern is repeated on the second level with a raised-brick outline. Other windows are tall rectangular openings, paired in the gables. At the rear of the house, a single story, one-room wing and garage show little ornamentation. The interior has been converted to a four-plex.

SIGNIFICANCE: The early lumber operations in the St. Croix Valley were as dependent on water transportation as on the availability of timber. The river was a key to success, and the men who handled and transported logs were necessary to Stillwater's economy. Captain Austin Jenks was prominently identified with several of Stillwater's business interests from his arrival there in 1855 to his death in 1902, but he is best known for his work as a river pilot engaged in rafting logs on the St. Croix and upper Mississippi Rivers. He joined a fellow river pilot in 1855 for the business of buying, selling, and rafting logs. In 1871 Jenks advanced from river pilot to ship owner and built the steamer "Brother Jonathan" at Le Clair, Illinois, the second steamer to tow rafts on the upper Mississippi. With this boat he joined the firm of Durant, Wheeler and Company and remained in the lumber business until 1902. When the city of Hudson began building a bridge across the St. Croix, Jenks and the Brother Jonathan participated in the "Battle of the Piles," as Stillwater lumbermen removed the obstacles to rafting traffic. Jenks also served as a director of Stillwater's two principal banks, of the Stillwater Dock Company, and of the Stillwater Electric Light Company.