

City, Village or Town: <b>BELOIT</b> ✓	County: <b>ROCK</b> ✓	Surveyor: Richard P. Hartung	Date: July, 1981	Street Afton	
Street Address: 2601 Afton Road.		Legal Description: Outlot 23 in the S.W. 1/4, Block 9, The Ravines (*Add.)	Acreage: less than 1.0		
Current Name & Use: "Swisstown Farmhouse"		Current Owner: Helgesen Enterprises			Number 2601
Film Roll No. RO-48 *RO-112	Affix Contact Prints	Current Owner's Address: Box 1128, Janesville, Wisconsin 53545			
Negative No. 25 *35		Special Features Not Visible In Photographs: UTM: Zone 16 Easting: 331570 Northing: 4711610 USGS Beloit Quadrangle/Scale: 1:24,000			
Facade Orient. W		Interior visited? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No			

Original Name & Use: (preferred)	Source	Previous Owners	Dates	Uses	Source	Town
✓ J. W. Crist House (Beloit MRH)	A					
Dates of Construction/Alteration 1904	A					
Architect and/or Builder:	Source					

<p><b>3</b> <u>Architectural Significance</u></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Represents work of a master</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Possesses high artistic values</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Represents a type, period, or method of construction</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Is a visual landmark in the area</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other: _____ <input type="radio"/> None</p> <p>Architectural Statement:  See Continuation Sheet</p>	<p><b>4</b> <u>Historical Significance</u></p> <p><input type="radio"/> Assoc. with lives of significant persons</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Assoc. with significant historical events</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Assoc. with development of locality</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other: _____</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> None</p> <p>Historical Statement:  See Continuation Sheet</p>	Section
		Map Name City Engineer's

<p><b>5</b> <u>Sources of Information (Reference to Above)</u></p> <p><b>A</b> Beloit Tax Rolls, RCHS Archives</p> <p><b>B</b> "History of Swisstown Farms," n.d., n.p. Bill Behling, RCHS Archives</p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p><b>D</b></p> <p><b>E</b></p> <p><b>F</b></p>	<p><b>6</b> <u>Representation in Previous Surveys</u></p> <p><input type="radio"/> HABS <input type="radio"/> NAER <input checked="" type="radio"/> WIHP <input type="radio"/> NRHP <input type="radio"/> landmark</p> <p><input type="radio"/> other: _____</p> <p><b>7</b> <u>Condition</u></p> <p><input type="radio"/> excellent <input checked="" type="radio"/> good <input type="radio"/> fair <input type="radio"/> poor <input type="radio"/> ruins</p> <p><b>8</b> <u>District:</u> _____</p> <p><input type="radio"/> pivotal <input type="radio"/> contributing <input type="radio"/> non-contributing</p> <p>initials: _____ date: _____</p> <p><b>9</b> <u>Opinion of National Register Eligibility</u></p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> eligible <input type="radio"/> not eligible <input type="radio"/> unknown</p> <p><input type="radio"/> national <input type="radio"/> state <input checked="" type="radio"/> local initials: _____</p>	Map Code CE 112/35
---	--	-----------------------

ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT:

Description: Asymmetrically composed of three gabled bays projecting from a main block (with steeply pitched hip roof) and an octagonal tower at the southwest corner, the J.W. Crist House rises two stories plus attic from a foundation of rock-faced stone. The first and second stories are constructed of brick while the steeply-pitched gables have walls of fish-scale shingles. Gable returns, flared eaves, and a broad frieze ornament the cornice line of the house while each story of the three-story tower is marked by a stone string course. A modified Palladian window in the west gable features Ionic mullions, a molded panel in place of a fanlight and a classical frame with entablature, while other attic windows feature similar frames. The first floor entries and the side bay windows are ornamented with entablatures and doors are framed with pilasters and sidelights. Although the posts and roof of the veranda are now gone, the heavily rusticated stone foundation and walls of the veranda remain. Perhaps the most fanciful ornament is the brick work above the second story of the tower where diagonal rows of raised brick intersect each other to create a diamond pattern. Several additional farm buildings, including an elaborate concrete, brick and steel dairy barn, built in the mid-20th century as part of the A.O. Smith operation, are located immediately behind the house but do not contribute to the significance of the house and are excluded from nomination.

Significance: Once called the "Klondike Farmhouse" because its owner/builder had recently returned from the Alaska gold rush of 1896, the J.W. Crist House is architecturally significant as one of the finest Queen Anne houses in the city of Beloit, reflecting the tall proportions, varied massing, and freely interpreted classical detail which are hallmarks of the style. Probably designed by its owner, the Crist house was built as a farmhouse (then on the outskirts of Beloit), and remains today the finest example of a rural Queen Anne house now located in the city of Beloit.

HISTORICAL STATEMENT:

This large and imposing Queen Anne house, known as the "Klondike Farm," was built in 1904 (A) by John W. Crist after he successfully mined gold in Alaska. But, if his fortune allowed him to build on a large scale, his background as a skilled carpenter helped him build well. As a young man, Crist worked as a carpenter for the Cunningham Brothers, a local contracting firm, before he moved west to Montana to build bridges for the Northern Pacific Railway. Eventually, Crist went to Alaska where he built a trading post in the Yukon Territory. During the great Klondike gold rush, Crist was reputed to have mined one of the first and richest mines in the territory.

In 1901, Crist returned to Beloit, bought the rights to his family's farm, named the operation the "Klondike Farm," and began to build the large brick home which stands today. A strong promoter of rural interests, Crist served on the Rock County Board and other civic panels where he represented agricultural

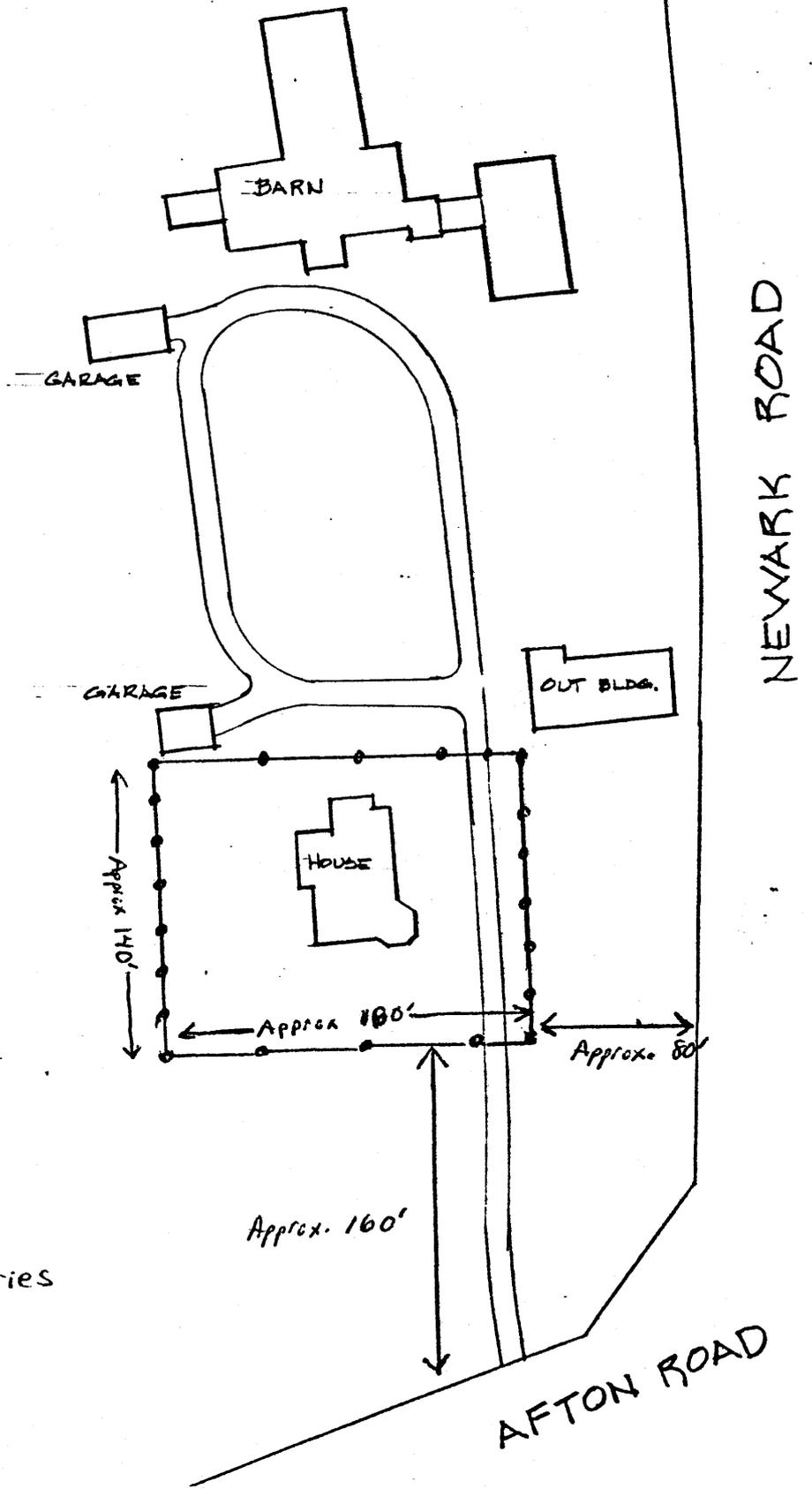
HISTORICAL STATEMENT: (Continued)

concerns. Throughout this period, the Klondike Farm was noted for its fine flock of sheep and its large herd of beef cattle, and the farm buildings that Crist built were considered among the finest in the county. But in 1914 fire destroyed many of those buildings and Crist sold the property to W. J. Allen of Beloit who rebuilt the barns. By the early 1940's, the farm was owned by W. C. Heath, an executive with the A. O. Smith Corporation of Milwaukee, who built the present elaborate concrete, brick, and steel dairy barn that stands near the house. Mr. Heath also directed the building of one of the finest herds of purebred Brown Swiss cattle on the farm, and gave the place a new name--Swisstown.

In 1947, the farm was bought by the A. O. Smith Corporation as a field research center. The corporation used the site for experimenting with such products as Harvestore crop storage units and dairying equipment. Eventually, A. O. Smith sold the property to Lester A. Helgesen of Janesville. (B) Helgesen operated it for a number of years prior to selling it, and in recent years the farm has been partially subdivided. The area is becoming suburbanized, and the site has been annexed to the city.

\*Addendum

Legal Description: Additional buildings on the property are not significant and are not included in the nomination. The specific verbal description of the nomination boundaries are as follows: The nominated property is a rectangular plot, beginning at a point approximately 160' east and 80' north of the northeast corner of the intersection of Afton and Newark Roads, proceed approximately 180' north, then turn east 90° and proceed easterly for approximately 140 feet, then turn southerly 90° and proceed southerly for approximately 180', then turn westerly 90° and proceed westerly approximately 140' to point of beginning. Said rectangular lot is located within the legal description earlier described (See Legal Description block) but does not include the other structures on the same property.



J.W. CRIST HOUSE  
 2601 AFTON RD.  
 BELOIT, WI.

—••••• = nomination boundaries  
 SCALE: APPROX. 1" = 80'

← N