

GIRARD ~~RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL~~ HISTORIC DISTRICT

Name: Girard ~~Residential/Commercial~~ Historic District, Phenix City, Russell County, Alabama

Location: *Roughly bounded by 7th St, 15th St, 5th and 8th Ave.*  
Along Dillingham Street to the bridge, west to 8th Avenue and north and south on Broad Street.

Acreage: Approximately 23

Verbal Boundary Description:

This district begins at the Dillingham Street Bridge and runs west up Dillingham through the commercial district to 8th Avenue into the residential section. Going one block north and south off Dillingham to 8th Avenue, Broad Street crosses Dillingham running north to Holland Creek Bridge and south to 8th Place. See line on attached scale tax map.

<u>UTM:</u>	A.	16	687890	3593530	H.	16	687640	3593000
	B.	16	688020	3593380	I.	16	687690	3593180
	C.	16	688070	3593360	J.	16	687650	3593270
	D.	16	688070	3593260	K.	16	687640	3593420
	E.	16	688020	3593260	L.	16	687710	3593500
	F.	16	687950	3593220	M.	16	687840	3593540
	G.	16	687700	3592960				

Description:

The Girard Residential/Commercial Historic District is located on Broad Street and Dillingham Street. The houses are all detached, wood frame, single-family dwellings. Styles represented are Greek Revival, Victorian cottages and shotguns. Many houses are plain and simple while others feature elaborate

detailing. The residential section is large and is composed of three sections of shotgun row houses. Two of the sections, along Broad Street, are simple, wood frame shotguns. On 7th Avenue off Dillingham Street are three restored shotguns with white picket fences along the front of the houses. There is one 1852 Greek Revival house in this area that has Victorian additions. As the district continues up Dillingham Street, the terrain begins to incline on the south side of the district. Located at the top of 9th Street are two ornate, 1880, Victorian cottages. The yards of these houses slope down to a stone wall and are surrounded by large trees.

The commercial district runs two blocks from the Dillingham Street Bridge to Broad Street. The most elaborate commercial building is the 1909, **Citizen's** Bank, with its keystone arched windows and columned portico. Other altered commercial structures in this area are the 1890 liquor warehouses. The other structures are one story attached brick stores. There is little landscaping in these areas due to the widening of Broad Street. Intrusions consist of two gas stations and a car lot.

Significance:

Local History. The Girard Residential/Commercial Historic District is significant in local history for several reasons. It was one of the first points settled in Russell County. The hilltop in the district, directly above the Dillingham Street Bridge was the site of Fort Ingersoll, a log trading post garrisoned during the 1836 Creek War to protect the bridge and launch attacks downstream. The bridge was built in 1832-33 by John Godwin and Horace King, who had their workshop in the vicinity. Houses and businesses soon followed Godwin's, including a store, a house of prostitution, and a hotel-tavern. In the early years after 1836, in the present commercial area

around the bridge, other stores opened. By 1850, the community had living there a lawyer, a river pilot, an engineer, a printer, several prosperous merchants, a clerk, two butchers, two physicians, and more than 80 skilled craftsmen -- styled "mechanics" in that era.

In 1865 the District was involved in the efforts of Wilson's Raiders to overtake the Dillingham Street Bridge. Their efforts were thwarted when one of the local citizens set fire to the bridge. Fired on by forts across Holland Creek, Union troops retreated, having lost the bridge.

As the area recovered from the Civil War, it became fashionable for middle-class citizens to live and work in this area. By the early 20th century a distinct residential and commercial section had developed with commerce around the bridge and residents located on the hills above.

The commercial district became the center of illegal alcohol and gambling during prohibition and continued to be involved with the alcohol trade throughout the history of organized crime in Phenix City.

Organized Crime. The Girard Residential/Commercial Historic District is significant in terms of organized crime because the commercial area was the center of liquor trade after Alabama went "dry" during prohibition. A large liquor warehouse, still standing in the district, was the scene of a crackdown in 1916, when barrels of whiskey were staved in and rolled into the gully behind the warehouse. Girard acquired a bad name as a bootlegging center, which is said to account for Phenix City being chosen as the name for the consolidated towns. The Citizen's Bank was established to handle the finances of the liquor trade, and bootleggers operated openly at times in the commercial portion of the district. During the Great Depression the trade slowed, but during World War II, with the rapid expansion of Fort Benning,

gambling and vice establishments boomed. Since prohibition, Phenix City and Russell County had been slow to prosecute gambling and liquor violator, and a state "home rule" policy left such enforcement for local governments. As a result, illegal establishments grew in size and boldness. Money from soldiers as well as area residents came to control the city and county governments. Girard remained one hub of an open city until the 1954 cleanup.

Architecture. The Girard Residential/Commercial Historic District is architecturally significant for its collection of turn-of-the-century commercial buildings, shotgun houses, and Victorian homes. The Collins Scott house, probably the oldest house in Phenix City was built in 1850 on a central hall, four up/four down Greek Revival plan, and updated c. 1870 by the addition of Victorian porch trappings. Victorian cottages of one story are located on the hill and are some of the finest in town in terms of detailing and proportioning. The shotgun houses which run along U.S. Route 431 form a neighborhood of workers cottages with ornate porch detailing. The commercial section has one outstanding building, the Citizen's Bank, built in 1909 in a renaissance revival style. This two-story, brick building is located on a corner with a corner pillar supporting the second floor, and creating a sheltered area which leads into the entrance. The building employs brick and rusticated stone to define different parts of the building. Other commercial buildings are one story, brick c. 1920's storefronts with plate glass.

STRUCTURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE GIRARD RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL  
HISTORIC DISTRICT

1. Old Columbus Electric and Power Warehouse-McCarley's Transmission (908 5th Avenue): c. 1900; warehouse; one-story, brick, flat roof; radiating arched windows and string courses.
5. Lockhart Building (516-518 Dillingham Street): c. 1930; store building; one-story, brick, square front, flat roof; imitation rock-faced stone facade in cast concrete painted; original large window openings bricked in; aluminum awning; narrow store or office space alongside larger store space.
6. Store building (520-526): c. 1920; four-unit store building; one-story, brick, flat roof; recessed panel in upper level with iron grill vents; corbelling at top; glass blocks over plate-glass show windows, aluminum awnings.
7. Store building (519-521 Dillingham Street): c. 1910; store building; one-story, brick, square front, flat roof; multilighted upper window over plate-glass show window; small-pane multilighted door; wooden corbelling at top square front with a recessed panel; rusty neon "Bennie's Cafe" sign still on building used as thrift store; divisible into two stores, one narrow.
8. Store building (523-525 Dillingham Street): c. 1910; two-story, brick, square front, flat roof; multilighted upper window over plate-glass show window; small-pane multilighted door; brick corbelling at crown.
9. Store building (528-530 Dillingham Street): c. 1920; store building; one-story, flat roof, brick, recessed panel with ornamental iron grill; transom over singelight glass door; aluminum awning.
10. Citizen's Bank Building (532 Dillingham Street): 1909; Renaissance revival commercial building; two-story, brick, flat roof; recessed portico with Doric columns and pilasters; brick and rock-faced stone facade; ornamental cornice; alternating radiating voussoirs over second floor windows, 1 over 1 sash windows; plate glass lower windows in metal framing; ornamental brackets and entablature; acanthas pattern carved keystones.
12. Rental House (605 Dillingham Street): c. 1890; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; L-shaped plan with L-shaped porch with beveled solid wood posts; modified side wing of porch.
13. Rental House (607 Dillingham Street): c. 1890; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; L-shaped plan with L-shaped porch with beveled solid wood posts; side porch enclosed to form room with shiplap siding.
14. Rental House (609 Dillingham Street): c. 1905; Neoclassical Cottage; one-story, wood frame, hip roof with vented gable in front hip; boxed eaves with dental trim; pedamented front portico with doric columns, louvered vent with entablature in portico gable; stone foundation with metal vents.

CONTINUATION: STRUCTURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE GIRARD  
RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

16. Rental House (702 Dillingham Street): c. 1920; Bungalow; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with craftsman-style brackets and ornate attic window-vent combination; porch with fluted doric columns on brick bases; transom over door; gray asbestos siding.
17. Rental House (704 Dillingham Street): c. 1920; Bungalow; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with craftsman-style brackets and ornate attic window-vent combination; porch with modified columns (ornamental wrought iron); transom over door; white asbestos siding.
18. Garrett-Cumbaa House (706 Dillingham Street): c. 1890; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gambrel roof; ornamental window and door surrounds and transom; porch enclosed 1933 and portico added using doric columns and original trim work; roof was truncated pyramid, roof line still visible; made gambrel c. 1945 with addition of apartments in attic; small brick office attached in 1950's.
20. Girard Baptist Pastorage (707 Dillingham Street): ; Bungalow; one-story, brick, hip roof with front gable extension and triangular vent gables at intersection of roof and extension; screened front porch with brick posts, craftsman-style brackets, and triple windows in porch gable, the center one round; brick front steps and foundation with metal vents.
21. Girard Baptist Church (707 Dillingham Street): ; one-story, wood frame brick veneered, gable roof; pedimented front gable with triangular louvered vent; pedimented portico with frieze, brick columns, and circular window in gable; double-leaf front door with fan transom; bellcast hip roof steeple with louvered sides; two-story, brick, gable-roof rear wing addition. Original frame building veneered, remodeled, in
22. Norris House (708 Dillingham Street): c. 1905; Neoclassical Cottage; one and a half story, wood frame, gable roof with intersecting front gable; L-shaped front porch with decorated frieze, Corinthian columns; ornamental door surrounds, transom with entablature; aluminum awnings; two gable dormers added and porch partially enclosed in apartment building conversion c. 1943; asbestos siding; build as doctor's home, now apartment building.
23. Rental House (710 Dillingham Street): c. 1905; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with boxed return eaves; shed porch with 4 x 4 posts on brick bases; asphalt "brick" siding; small rear addition with shed roof; originally office of Dr. Norris.
24. Garrett House (701 9th Street): c. 1895; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, hip roof with intersecting front gable pedimented with louvered attic vent and bargeboard; L-shaped porch with spindle gingerbread and jigsaw brackets, turned posts, cutout balusters; transom with entablature.
25. Nichols House (703 Dillingham Street): c. 1895; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, truncated hip roof with intersecting front gable; gable has boxed return eaves and circular ornamental vent; similar intersecting gables on sides; L-shaped front porch with cutout gingerbread and brackets, cutout balusters; transoms over matching ornamental front doors.

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26. Barnes House (mailing address 610 Dillingham Street, faces 7th Avenue on corner): c. 1870; Greek Revival Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; end gables for front portion, twin gables with valley in rear; beveled solid wood posts with simple cutout brackets and turned balusters; transom and sidelights; aluminum awning over front steps.
29. Zeim House (920 7th Avenue): c. 1895; Shotgun; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; fishscale shingled gable with boxed return eaves; turned porch posts and cutout gingerbread; transom with entablature over front door.
30. Crews House (921 7th Avenue): c. 1910; one-story, wood frame, truncated hip roof with recessed front porch; brick porch posts; multilighted transom and sidelights; boxed eaves.
31. Rental House (922 7th Avenue): c. 1895; Shotgun; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; fishscale shingled gable with boxed return eaves; turned porch posts and cutout gingerbread; transom with entablature over front door.
32. Rental House (923 7th Avenue): c. 1860; Saddlebag House; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; two front doors, four front windows, central common chimney; low flush-gable roof; 9 x 9 windows; beveled solid wood posts on stucco bases; porch altered apparently post-1930.
33. Steadman House (924 7th Avenue): c. 1895; Shotgun; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; fishscale shingled gable with boxed return eaves; turned porch posts and cutout gingerbread; transom with entablature over front door; third of three almost identical houses.
34. Basic Shotgun (unmarked even number 9th Place): c. 1900; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; unpainted; pipe posts; fair condition; unoccupied.
35. Basic Shotgun (unmarked odd number 9th Place): c. 1900; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; unpainted; pipe posts; fair condition; unoccupied.
36. Rental House (823 Seale Road): c. 1900; Victorian Cottage; hip roof with intersecting front gable with ornamental window and louvered vent; front porch with frieze and doric columns; transom with entablature over front door.
37. Rental House (825 Seale Road): c. 1900; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, truncated hip roof with intersecting front gable with louvered vent; L-shaped front porch with doric columns on brick bases, turned posts on side part; transom with entablature over front door.
38. Shotgun House (827 Seale Road): c. 1900; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with diamond-shape louvered vent; beveled solid wooden posts with cutout brackets; clapboard siding except for shiplap small rear wing addition.
43. Rental House (835 Seale Road): c. 1870; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; solid square wood posts; shotgun shape with side wing; 9 x 9 windows; modified front porch.

CONTINUATION: STRUCTURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE GIRARD  
RESIDENTIAL-COMMERICAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

44. Rental House (1837 Seale Road): c. 1870; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, low flushgable roof; L-shaped; 9x9 windows; porch missing.
45. Old "Pressing Club" (901 Seale Road): c. 1895; small commercial building; one-story, gable roof, wood frame; boxed return eaves; beveled solid wood posts, transom, paneled shutters on windows; currently used for storage.
46. Edwards House (903 Seale Road): c. 1895; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with intersecting front gable; beveled solid wood posts; cutout gingerbread, transom over front door.
47. Rental House (905 Broad Street): c. 1895; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with intersecting front gable; turned porch posts; transom over front door; altered porch rail.
48. Rental House (907 Broad Street): c. 1895; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, hip roof with boxed eaves; turned posts; front door transom with entablature; unoccupied, fair condition.
49. Old Liquor Warehouse (908 Broad Street): c. 1890; warehouse building modified as retail store; two-story, brick, flat roof; corbelling; arched radiating brick windows with shutters in upper floor, plate glass show windows in lower floor; one-story, c. 1910 addition with warehouse door adapted as shop window; wood-shingled solid awning and cloth awning over door; used as electrical supply store.
51. Old Service Station (912 Broad Street): c. 1925; one-story, brick, flat roof; drive-through station with heavy brick pillars; decorative entablature with brackets; pressed tin ceiling over drive-through; ornamental brickwork; drive-through partially enclosed with aluminum-frame doors and plate glass; unoccupied--previously used as taxi station and dry cleaners.
53. Rental Shotgun (919 Broad Street): c. 1900; one-story, wood frame, hip roof; recessed porch with modified multipost porch supports on brick bases; boxed eaves; rooms added in rear.
54. Rental Shotgun (921 Broad Street): c. 1900; one-story, wood frame, hip roof; recessed porch with beveled solid wood posts and cutout gingerbread; same as 53 except with unmodified porch.
55. Rental House (925 Broad Street): c. 1900; one-story, wood frame, hip roof; transom over front door; recent ornamental metal porch posts and rail on brick front porch.
56. Lewis House (927 Broad Street): c. 1890; one-story, wood frame, hip roof; wide shotgun house with recessed porch with beveled solid wooden posts and cutout gingerbread and balusters; aluminum siding.



CONTINUATION: STRUCTURES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE GIRARD  
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57. Hinton House (929 Broad Street): c. 1890; Victorian Cottage; one-story, wood frame, gable roof; diamond-shaped cutout attic vent; boxed return eaves; screen porch.
58. Collins-Scott House (931 Broad Street): c. 1845; Greek Revival cottage with Victorian additions; two-story, wood frame, gable roof; enclosed passage to detached Victorian kitchen with boxed return eaves and cutout vent; front porch with cutout gingerbread; multilight transom and sidelights; 2 over 2 central hall floorplan in main house; unoccupied; fair condition.

STRUCTURES WHICH DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE GIRARD RESIDENTIAL-  
COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

2. Store building (approx. 907 5th Avenue): c. 1945; store building; one-story, wood frame, flat roof; brick facade with plate glass window; shiplap siding; non-contributing, vacant.
3. Store building (501-503-505 Dillingham Street): c. 1910 with significant alterations; one-story, brick, flat roof; divided into three stores, all vacant; left side original building, right side rounded metal roof; consistent new brick facade c. 1950 with art-deco-influenced sawtooth brick columns between stores; recent aluminum framed doors and plate glass windows; non-contributing.
4. Used Car Lot Office (509 Dillingham Street): c. 1970; small one-story, concrete block, flat roof office building; plate glass windows; intrusive.
11. Modified store building-rental house (604 Dillingham Street): c. 1925; one-story, gable roof, wood frame; now Shotgun house; asbestos siding; screen porch, 4 x 4 posts; non-contributing.
15. Harris House (700 Dillingham Street): c. 1950; transitional ranch-style; one-story, brick, gable roof; louvered front gables; boxed return eaves on porch with ornamental wrought iron posts; non-contributing.
19. Girard Baptist Education Building (707 Dillingham Street): ; two-story, brick, gable roof; brick columned portico with pediment; double-leaf front door with fan transom; non-contributing but compatible with two contributing church properties.
27. Ragsdale House (917 7th Avenue): apparent c. 1870 or earlier Greek Revival Cottage but significantly altered; modified porch; iron posts, aluminum siding; origin suggested only by overall shape and size and by location of doors and windows; non-contributing.
28. Apartment buildings (918 7th Avenue): c. 1970; two identical, facing one-story, brick, gable-roof small apartment buildings; intrusive.
39. Garage building (829 Seale Road): c. 1960; commercial garage or warehouse building; one-story, concrete block, flat roof; metal frame windows; intrusive.
40. Service station (829 Seale Road): c. 1970; small office; one-story, wood frame, low hip roof; plate glass windows; intrusive.
41. Record store (831 Seale Road): c. 1940; small store building; one-story, wood frame, gable roof with louvered vent; bracket-supported recessed porch; shiplap siding; non-contributing but compatible.
42. Rental house (833 Seale Road): c. 1940; cottage; one-story, wood frame, low hip roof; battered pier columns; recessed porch; non-contributing.
50. Service station (911 Broad Street): c. 1965; metal and brick Texaco station; one-story; vacant, intrusive.

CONTINUATION: STRUCTURES WHICH DO NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE  
GIRARD RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

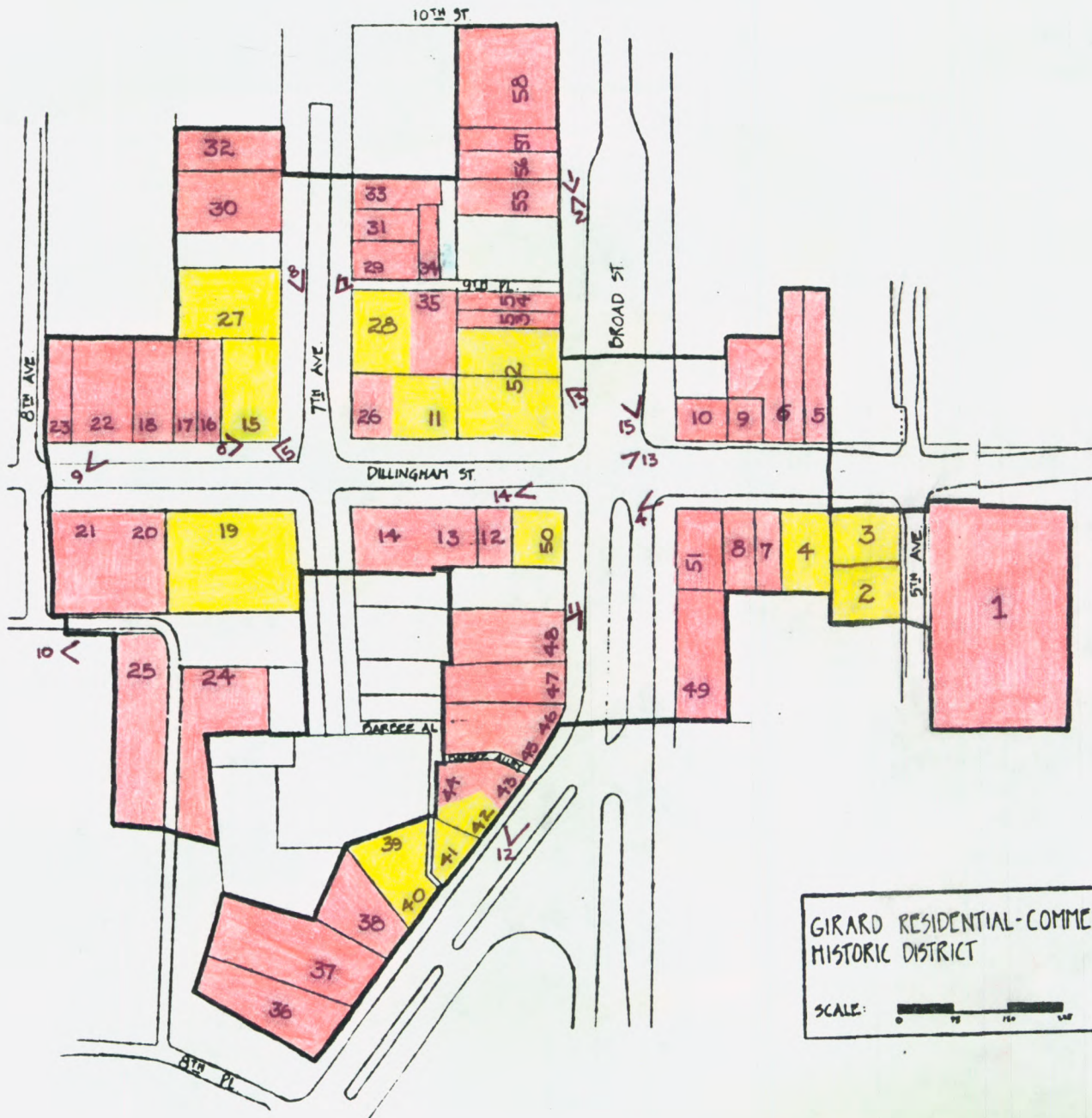
52. Service station (913 Broad Street): c. 1965; metal and brick; one-story;  
intrusive.

INCLUSIVE STREET NUMBERS FOR THE GIRARD RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

5th Avenue -	odd 901*	even 908@
Dillingham Street -	odd 501-707	even 514-710
9th Street -	odd 701-703	
7th Avenue -	odd 917-923	even 918-924
9th Place-	(vacant, unnumbered houses, one odd, one even, in 600's)	
Seale Road -	odd 821-903	
Broad Street -	odd 911-931	even 908-912*

\* unnumbered vacant structure, estimated

@ large business structure--if subdivided, would include other addresses.



GIRARD RESIDENTIAL-COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

SCALE: 0 10 20 30 40

N ↑

Contributing  
 Non-Contributing