

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

13

1. Name of Property

historic name West Plains Bank Building

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 107 Washington Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town West Plains [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Howell code 091 zip code 65775

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 nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Claire F. Blackwell 19 Dec. 00

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date _____

entered in the National Register.
See continuation sheet [].

determined eligible for the
National Register.
See continuation sheet [].

determined not eligible for the
National Register.

removed from the National
Register.

other, (explain:)
See continuation sheet [].

West Plains Bank Building
Howell County, Missouri

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	0	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0	objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
_____ N/A _____

Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National
Register.
_____ N/A _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution
COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

Current Functions

VACANT/Not in Use
WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

LATE VICTORIAN: italianate
OTHER: two part commercial block

Materials

foundation stone
walls brick
roof asphalt
other cast iron
tin

See continuation sheet [].

See continuation sheet [].

Narrative Description

See continuation sheet [x].

West Plains Bank Building
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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

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1883-1889

Significant Dates

1883

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheet [x].

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

See continuation sheet [x].

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other:
Name of repository:

West Plains Bank Building
Howell County, Missouri

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	602460	4065200			

C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title see continuation sheet
 organization _____ date September 2000
 street & number _____ telephone _____
 city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FOP for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FOP.)

name C. Toney Aid
 street & number #1 Court Square telephone (417) 256-6487
 city or town West Plains state MO zip code 65775

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West Plains Bank Building
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7. Description, continued.

Summary:

The West Plains Bank Building is located at 107 Washington Avenue in downtown West Plains, Howell County, Missouri. Constructed in 1883, it is a brick commercial building. The building is set directly on the sidewalk, as are other nearby commercial buildings, which are similar in materials and scale. The facade of the narrow rectangular building faces east and is parallel to Washington Ave. A modern storefront, which appears to date to the mid-twentieth century, fills the lower portion of the facade; the upper portion retains the original windows (behind plywood panels) and original decorative features. The second floor, which is divided into four bays, has three windows of equal size and one narrower window. Above the second floor windows, a rectangular wooden signboard is flanked by rectangular attic vents, that have been covered with plywood. A wide pressed metal cornice runs the width of the facade. Two rear additions cover the first floor of the rear elevation; one dates to ca. 1913, the other dates to ca. 1923.

The West Plains Bank Building is currently undergoing rehabilitation. In June, 2000, the second story of the building collapsed due to excessive weight stored on the upper floor. As a result, the windows and door trim on the second floor are the only original interior features that remains. However, as part of the rehabilitation, the original exterior features has been restored, the second floor has been replaced, and a new storefront, designed to closely replicate the original storefront, has been constructed.

The West Plains Bank Building is the only resource on the property, and it is a contributing building.

Elaboration:

The West Plains Bank Building is located in downtown West Plains, Missouri. It faces east and is located on the west side of Washington Avenue approximately one-half a block from the courthouse square. It sits on a lot which slopes gently to the west. On the north, the building shares a party wall with the W. J. Smith Building at 109-113 Washington Avenue. (See Photo No. 2.) To the south, an alley and parking area separate the building from a commercial building which faces the courthouse square. To the west, another alley separates the building from a parking lot.

The building is a two story two-part commercial block. It has a stone foundation, brick walls and a flat roof with parapet walls. The building is 20 feet wide and 60 feet deep. Two one story brick rear additions, extend the depth of the building approximately 38 feet. (See Figure One.) The storefront on the ground floor spans the entire facade. (See Photo Nos. 1, 2.) This storefront, which has a central recessed entrance, wooden bulkheads, and

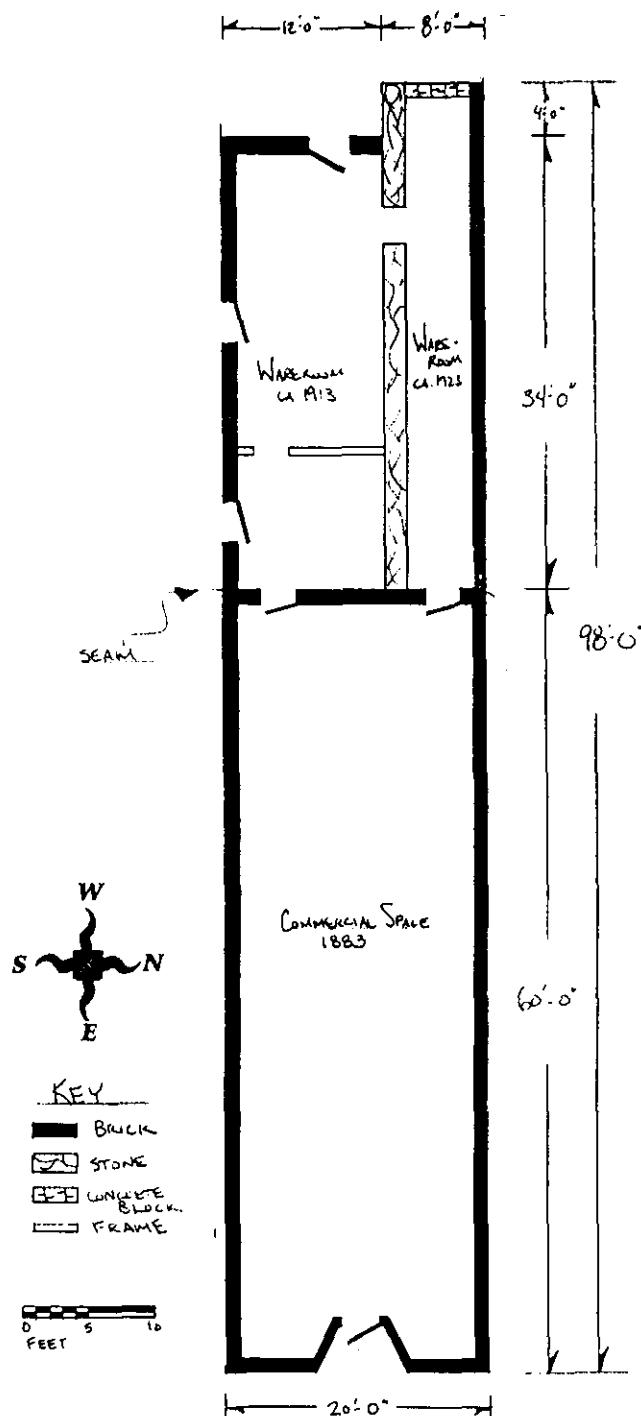
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West Plains Bank Building
Howell County, Missouri

Figure One: First Floor Plan. Drawn by Becky L. Snider



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West Plains Bank Building
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large plate glass windows, appears to date to the mid-twentieth century. The original transom above the storefront has been boarded over, but the original steel lintel above the transom is still visible.

The upper part of the facade is divided into four bays. (See Photo Nos, 1, 2.) There are three equally-sized and equally-spaced windows and one narrower window in the north end bay. These windows, which are tall and narrow, have hooded, arched brick lintels and brick lugsills. All of the windows on the facade have been boarded over, but the original one-over-one double hung windows remain intact behind the plywood. (See Photo Nos. 1, 2) The top sash of these windows is curved to match the arch of the brick lintels. Above the windows, a rectangular signboard is flanked by two rectangular attic vents. The words "West Plains Bank" can be made out beneath the brown paint on the signboard. The vents have been boarded over by plywood. The pressed metal cornice, which runs the width of the facade, has wide end brackets and dentils. (See Photo No. 3.)

The south elevation of the building is unstyled. (See Photo Nos. 2, 3.) The brick walls have been covered with stucco. The first floor of the side elevation does not have any openings. However, there are three windows and a door on the second floor. Two of the three windows are in place and appear to be early or original. The third window opening has been filled in with plywood. The existing windows are double hung with two vertically divided lights in the upper sash and one single pane in the lower sash. The upper sash, like those in the windows of the front elevation have arched tops. The door, which is reached via an exterior steel staircase, is a five panel solid wood door and also appears to be early or original. Originally, a staircase on the rear elevation led to a second story walkway which ran the depth of the building thereby providing access to the second story rooms. (See Figure Two.) Today, this entrance is reached via a metal staircase on the side elevation.

The rear of the building is also unstyled. The first floor of the rear elevation is covered by the rear additions; the second floor has three equally-spaced window openings. (See Photo Nos. 4, 5.) However, one opening has been bricked in and the other two windows have been boarded over and are missing their sashes and frames. There are two rear additions to the building. (See Figure One.) The earliest wareroom addition is one story tall, is constructed of brick and has a parapet wall roof. It is 12 feet wide by 34 feet long. This addition first appears on the 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for West Plains.¹ A second rear addition covers the space between the rear addition of the bank building and the rear addition of the adjacent W. J. and Ed Smith Building. A stone wall extends this addition approximately four feet beyond the

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Map of West Plains, 1914.

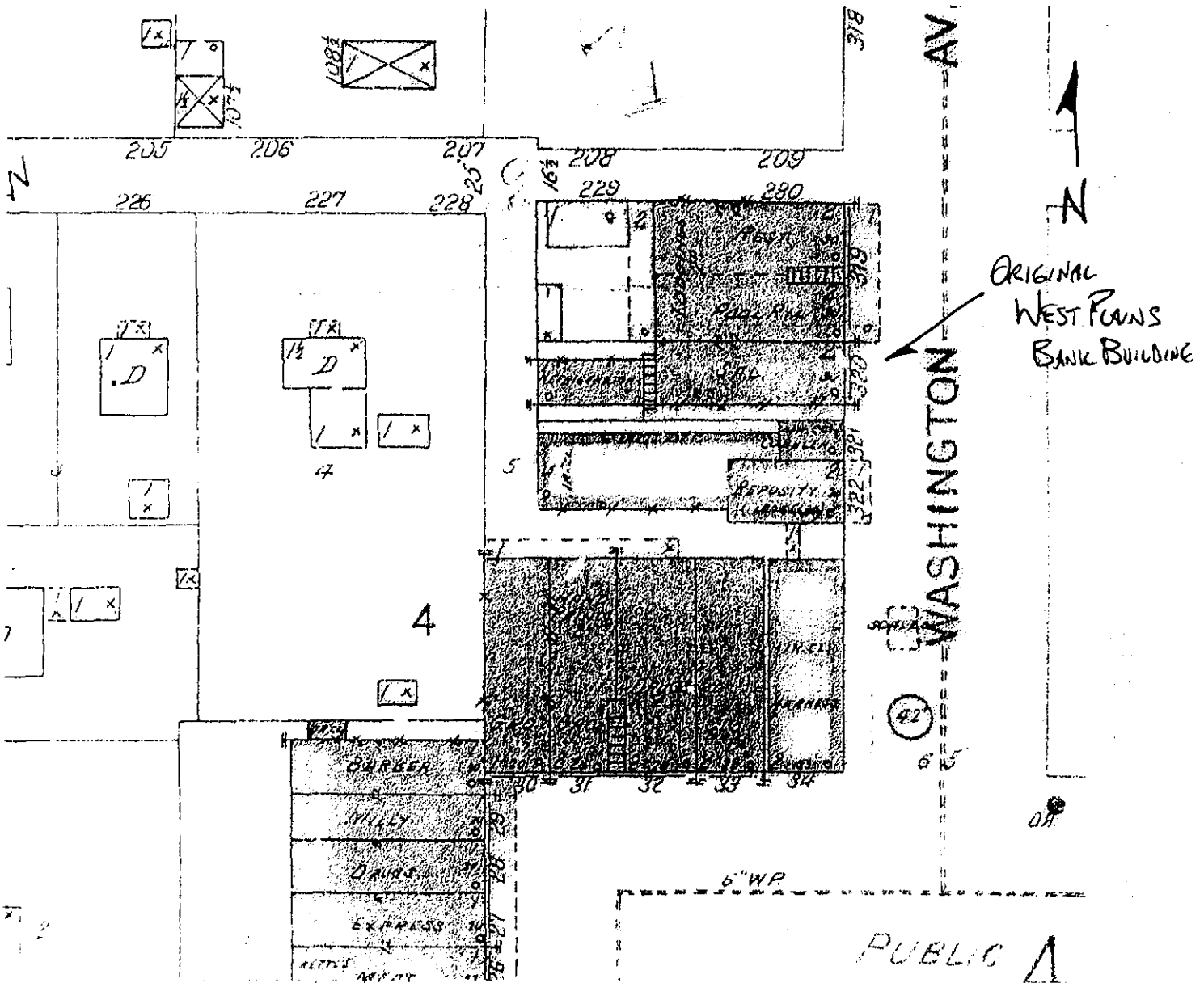
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West Plains Bank Building
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Figure Two: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Map of West Plains, 1906.



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**West Plains Bank Building
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back wall of the earlier addition. (See Figure One.) It has a concrete block rear wall and shed roof. It was constructed ca. 1923.²

Prior to its collapse, the second floor of the building had been used for storage for many years. However, up until the last year, the first floor served, as it had for more than 110 years, as a place of business in downtown West Plains. Over the years, the first floor interior of the West Plains Bank has seen many changes, and the collapse of the second floor of the building resulted in the loss of the remaining interior historic fabric. (See Photo No. 6.) However, many of the original second floor windows remain and will be rehabilitated. (See Photo No. 7.) Furthermore, the exterior of the building is largely intact; the defining features of the building - the windows with arched brick openings and arched top sashes and the dentiled pressed tin cornice - are still in place. After the rehabilitation is complete, the building will be returned to its combined use with a business on the first floor and an apartment on the second floor. The West Plains Bank Building still retains integrity of design, materials, craftsmanship, setting, and association.

Building Conditions After Rehabilitation:

Between August 2000 and June 2001, the West Plains Bank has been extensively rehabilitated. The first floor storefront has been reconstructed to resemble the original storefront. The original iron columns were revealed, and the storefront has been rebuilt with paneled wooden bulkheads, wood-framed storefront and transom windows, and a central recessed entrance with paneled doors. (See Photo No. 8) In addition, the entrance to the second floor was returned to the front of the building, and the stairs leading to the second floor were rebuilt in their original location. All of the second floor windows, which are early or original, were rehabilitated and reinstalled. The first floor of the building has been put back into use as commercial space, and the second floor is a loft style apartment.

The rehabilitation of the West Plains Bank Building was done as a tax credit project. Part One and Part Two of the Historic Preservation Certification Application for the project have been approved by the National Parks Service, and Form One of the Missouri Historic Tax Credit has been approved by the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

² Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Map of West Plains, 1924.

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West Plains Bank Building
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Summary: The West Plains Bank Building, 107 Washington Avenue, West Plains, Howell County, is significant under Criterion A in the area of COMMERCE and under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. The two story commercial building housed the first bank in West Plains, an institution which was instrumental in the commercial development of the town. The building housed the bank for six years, during which time it was the only such institution in the Howell County seat, and continued to be used for commercial purposes throughout its history.

The West Plains Bank Building is also the oldest, extant brick building in West Plains, the first brick building on Washington Avenue, which became the main commercial thoroughfare with the arrival of the railroad.³ Construction of the bank building presaged a building boom in the community, in which the largely wooden town was gradually transformed to one of brick. It was constructed in 1883, the same year the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad reached West Plains, a time of enormous commercial development in the town. The building was designed and built by Fort Scott, Kansas, contractor G.W. Goodlander. Goodlander was also the contractor for the fourth Howell County Courthouse (the third constructed on the town square), which was also built in 1883, a few months after the West Plains Bank Building. The West Plains Bank Building has played an important role in the commerce of West Plains for more than a century. It is important for its long association with the commercial activities of the community, as well as for its significance as the oldest brick building in West Plains.

The main part of the building was constructed in 1883, the two wareroom additions were constructed circa 1913 and circa 1923. The West Plains Bank Building can be classified as a "two-part commercial block," a common building type used for American commercial buildings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Architecturally, the building displays features which were mirrored on of the later commercial buildings in downtown West Plains. The building is constructed of brick, the windows have arched brick lintels, and a decorative pressed tin cornice spans the width of the facade.

Prior to rehabilitation, the West Plains Bank Building was slated for demolition. However, the building was still structurally intact, and it retained many of its historic features. Now that it has been rehabilitated, the building looks much as it did when it was constructed, and it will continue to serve as an important commercial building in West Plains. The period of significance runs from 1883, the year the building was constructed, to 1889, the year the bank moved to a new location on the courthouse square.

³ Although the G.H. Carter/Howell County Bank Building, a brick commercial building on the Courthouse Square, was constructed ca. 1881, only the original structural core of the building still exists. In 1910, the building's original facade was torn off and replaced, and the secondary elevation was refaced with new brick.

Becky Snider, Downtown West Plains Survey Final Report, 2001 (On file with the State Historic Preservation Office, Jefferson City, Missouri).

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Elaboration:

The first post office was established in West Plains, Missouri in 1848, but the original plat for the town was not filed until ten years later. The town plan chosen for West Plains, the Lancaster courthouse square, is unusual in Missouri.⁴ Of the twenty towns described by Marian M. Ohman in her book, Twenty Towns: Their Histories, Town Plans and Architecture, only one was laid out using the Lancaster plan. Ohman describes the features of the plan, which is named after an eighteenth century model from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She states "In this design only four streets open to the central square. They enter at the middle of the four blocks surrounding the central square rather than at the corners."⁵ (See Figure Three) In West Plains as in other towns, commercial buildings line the perimeter of the square. However, the first two courthouses constructed in West Plains were located on the south side of the square rather than in the middle of the square.⁶

During the Civil War, West Plains was abandoned, looted, and burned to the ground. After the war, some former residents returned and many new settlers came to the area. West Plains was rebuilt and began to develop once again. According to Howell County historian, Dorothy Reavis,

In 1870, West Plains boasted of four retail stores, one whiskey dealer, one shoemaker, one tavern keeper, two wagon makers, a blacksmith, a brick mason, one school teacher, three physicians and a brand-new Methodist Church, which had been built in 1869.⁷

Although West Plains continued to grow, it was the anticipation and arrival of the railroad that resulted in the town becoming the commercial and cultural hub for south central Missouri. The tracks laid through West Plains in 1883 were not only the first railroad tracks to the town, but also they were the first tracks laid to the entire south central Missouri area. Before 1883, the

⁴ The courthouse square plan was modified somewhat in West Plains ca. 1900 when narrow pedestrian passageways or "arcades" were created at the corners of the square.

⁵ Marian M. Ohman, Twenty Towns. (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1985) p. 150.

⁶ Dorothy Reavis, "Howell County History: 1865-1899," West Plains Gazette. Number Two, Spring, 1979, p. 11.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 10

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nearest railhead was in Rolla, Missouri, more than 100 hilly miles away by dirt road. The coming of the railroad meant that southern Missouri citizens could travel more easily to other destinations throughout the state and the country, and also commercial goods could be bought and sold more readily. The arrival of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad in West Plains in February, 1883 set off a building and commercial boom in the small rural community that has never again been matched.

Prior to the construction of the railroad, the majority of the commercial buildings were located around the central square. However, the siting of the railroad tracks and the placement of the depot on the north end of town resulted in the expansion and rapid development of Washington Avenue. In anticipation of the development that would follow the railroad, two additions to West Plains were platted in 1882. Foust's Addition, which included part of Washington Avenue, extended the boundaries of the town north to the railroad tracks; Johnson and Catron's Addition expanded the town westward. (See Figure Four) The wood frame depot was constructed at the end of Washington Avenue on the north edge of town. Washington Avenue ran from the depot up to the courthouse square. Today, Washington Avenue begins at the courthouse square, runs downhill six blocks to the railroad tracks and continues north another six blocks.

On April 10, 1883, a small group of prominent West Plains citizens, who recognized the important role the railroad would play in the development of their town, met to organize the West Plains Bank, the town's first bank. The original board of directors included B. J. Olden, O.H.P. Catron, T. J. Whitmire, and Elizabeth Thomas. Also elected to the board were H. T. Smith who was named to serve as the bank's first president and Joseph L. Thomas, who was named to serve as the bank cashier.⁸ The original capital of the bank was \$15,000.⁹

The West Plains Bank Board of Directors wasted no time in the construction of a new bank building. Preparations for the building began almost immediately after the bank was established. In the West Plains Bank Original Minute Book, the entry for May 8, 1883 reads,

Plans and specifications of bank building and vault by G. W. Goodlander submitted and discussed. Specifications amended and ordered copies and submitted to be signed in duplicate.¹⁰

⁸ West Plains Daily Quill. December 13, 1978, West Plains Bank 95th Anniversary Supplement.

⁹ Toney Aid, "Receivable in Payment of All Dues," West Plains Gazette. Number 2, Spring, 1979, p. 24.

¹⁰ West Plains Bank Original Minute Book, May 8, 1883.

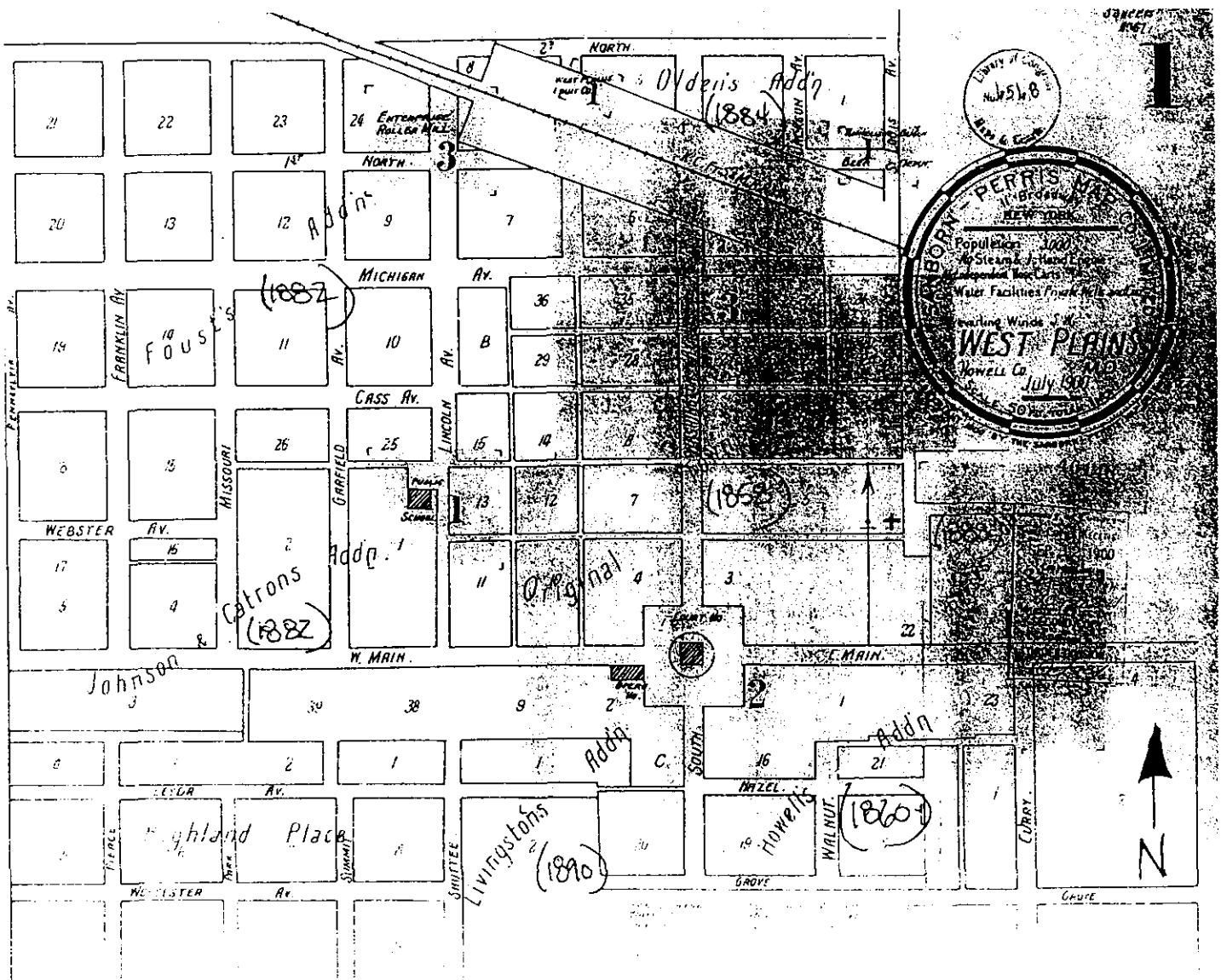
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Figure Four. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Map of West Plains, 1900.



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West Plains Bank Building
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Figure Five: Washington Avenue in the 1880s. West Plains Gazette, No. 16, March 1882, p. 17.



Washington Avenue in the early 1880s. The new railroad bed can be seen in front of the original depot (the building that appears to be in the middle of the street).

The new bank building, erected by the year's end, stood as an early example of the new prosperity West Plains and other towns along the railroad were experiencing. The West Plains Bank was one of the first brick buildings in West Plains, and it was the first brick commercial building on Washington Avenue. At the time it was constructed, all of the other buildings on Washington Avenue and all but one building on the courthouse square were of frame construction. (See Figure Five.) In the decade after the railroad arrived in West Plains, the commercial center of West Plains began to expand down Washington Avenue towards the railroad tracks, and the more established merchants with buildings around the Courthouse Square began to replace their frame buildings with one and two-story brick commercial buildings. Many, if not all, of these new buildings were undoubtedly financed to some degree by the West Plains Bank. The first brick courthouse was finished in 1883 just a few months after the West Plains Bank Building.¹¹ By 1893, the year of the earliest Sanborn Maps for West Plains, the Courthouse Square was lined almost exclusively with brick buildings. However, the West Plains Bank Building was one of only a few brick buildings on Washington Avenue until the mid-1890s.¹²

¹¹ The courthouse constructed in 1883 was replaced by a new courthouse in 1936.

¹² Sanborn Map Company. Map of West Plains, Missouri, 1893.

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West Plains Bank Building
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In the decade after the arrival of the railroad, the population of Howell County more than doubled, and the town of West Plains developed into a bustling commercial center with a wide variety of business establishments. Despite this rapid commercial expansion of West Plains, the West Plains Bank was the only bank in town from 1883 to 1890, the year the Howell County Bank was established.

By the 1890s, not only were the necessities of life readily available, but also luxuries, such as jewelry and musical instruments, could be purchased in West Plains.

An article in 1890 in the *Howell County Gazette* boasted that West Plains had: 2 banks; 1 college; 4 hotels; 2 saloons; 1 railroad depot; 1 sawmill; 7 doctors; 2 nurseries; 2 laundries; 6 shoe shops; 1 cafe; 8 grocery stores; 8 churches; 2 gunsmiths; 16 lawyers; 1 woolen mill; 1 cooper's shop, 2 brickyards; 1 pool hall; 1 dentist; 1 marble shop; 2 notion stores; 2 jewelry stores; 2 flouring mills; 1 broom factory; 3 barber shops; 3 school houses; 3 livery stables; 7 meat markets; 3 harness shops; 3 tinsmiths; 2 drygoods stores; 4 millinery shops; 3 clothing stores; 7 secret societies; 1 second-hand store; 5 real estate offices; 3 hardware stores; 5 blacksmiths; 1 bedspring factory; 1 photography studio; 1 boot and shoe store; 44 brick buildings; 1 candy store and bakery; 6 combination drygoods and grocery stores; 1 feed store and implement company; numerous boarding houses; 2 foundries and machine shops; 3 planing mills and lumber yards; 1 music store and sewing machine shop; 2 furniture and undertaking establishments; 1 daily, 1 bi-monthly, and 2 weekly newspapers.¹³

Just as the railroad brought merchandise for the town's many stores, it also carried away, goods from the area. Dorothy Reavis noted that "By the turn of the century, fruit was being shipped out by the boxcar load, and Howell County was on the road to becoming one of the most popular fruit growing regions in the nation."¹⁴ As prosperity came to the area, the bank began to grow quickly. The West Plains Bank was so successful that by 1889 it had outgrown its original building, and the business moved to larger quarters on the Court House Square.¹⁵ The bank continued to grow, and a new larger bank was constructed in 1916 on the same site as the bank's second location. In 1978, the bank moved across the street to a new modern

¹³ Terry Fuhrman Hampton, "The History of West Plains: A Decade by Decade Account," West Plains Gazette, Number 30, Winter, 1987, p. 26.

¹⁴ Reavis, p. 46.

¹⁵ Aid, p. 24.

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Figure Five: Advertisement for the West Plains Bank. West Plains Gazette. Number 2, Spring, 1979, inside back cover.



WEST PLAINS BANK

Downtown: 11 Court Square, 256-2147 • Motor Bank: 318 Broadway, 256-2146 • Member FDIC

The commitment we made in 1883
and built upon in 1916 stands today
as a landmark of West Plains history.

"West Plains' only home-owned bank"

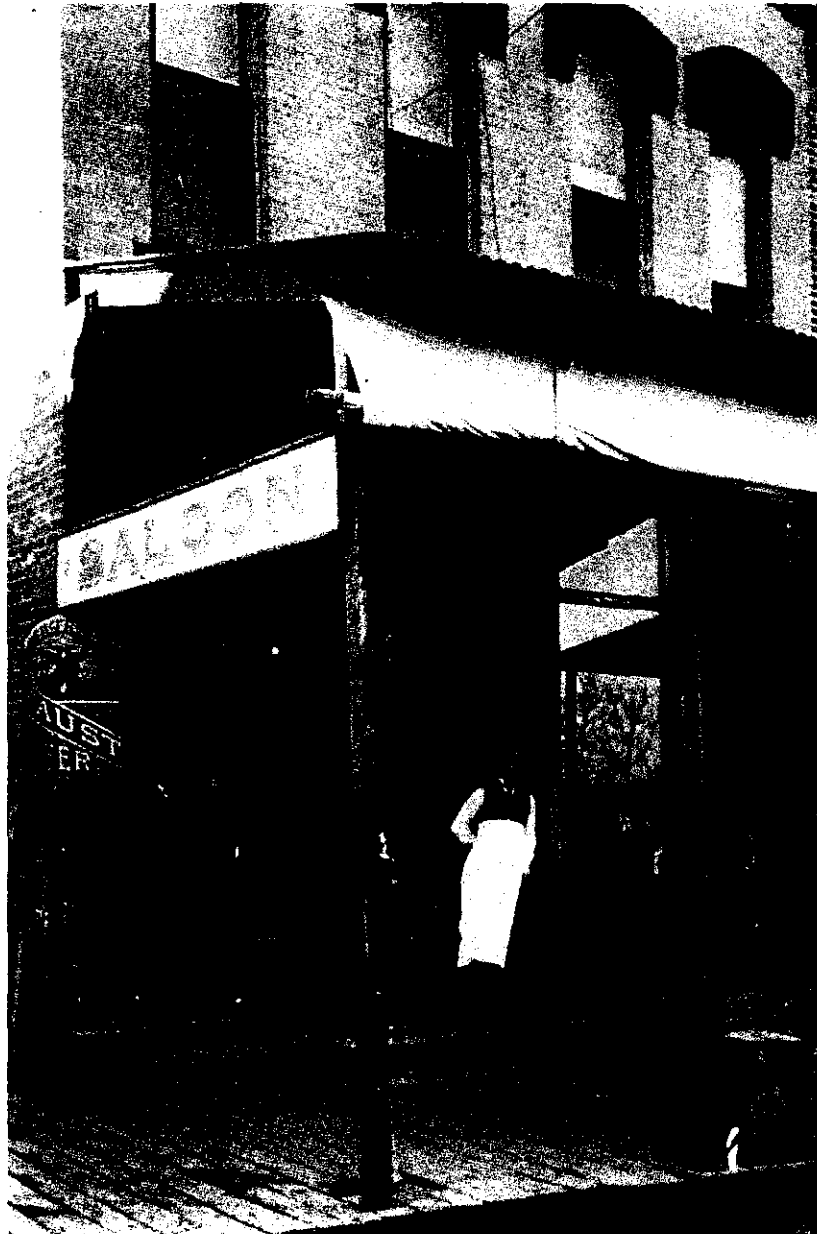
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Figure Seven: Photo of the West Plains Bank Building during its years as a saloon, circa 1890. West Plains Gazette. Number 29, Summer, 1987, p. 29.



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building. (See Figure Six.) Today, the West Plains Bank still serves as one of the main banking institutions in West Plains.

After the West Plains Bank vacated the building at 107 Washington Avenue, the building served as a saloon for approximately two decades. From 1889-1896, the saloon was owned by Noe and Jones. (See Figure Seven.) After 1910, the Van Meter Restaurant was located in the building. However, by 1924, the former bank building had become a retail store, a use which was to continue up to present day. From the late 1940s to the mid-1980s, the building was home to a number of auto parts stores. Subsequent businesses in the building have included an ice cream parlor and a thrift shop.

The West Plains Bank Building is significant architecturally as West Plains' earliest intact brick building and as an example of the popular late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial building form known as a "two-part commercial block." The impact of the railroad on the appearance of West Plains was noted by Dorothy Reavis in her article "Howell County History: 1865-1899." She writes: "In 1883, the railroad was bringing in needed supplies to build fine buildings and the first brick buildings were built. The West Plains Bank was established in 1883 and the red brick courthouse was under construction."¹⁶

Prior to the arrival of the railroad, business establishments in West Plains were primarily located around the courthouse square. Furthermore, all of the buildings along Washington Avenue and all but one building on the courthouse square were of frame construction. However, beginning in the 1880s, Washington Avenue became the main commercial street in downtown West Plains, primarily because the railroad depot was located at its northern end. Today, all of the buildings along Washington Avenue are of brick construction; many of these buildings were built in the decade following the arrival of the railroad and the construction of the West Plains Bank. Undoubtedly, the fires which destroyed many of the wooden buildings during the 1880s and 1890s, along with the prestige of a building built of brick, prompted business owners to follow the example of the West Plains Bank when they built their new buildings.

In addition to being the oldest brick building in West Plains, the West Plains Bank Building is an intact example of a two-part commercial block, a type of commercial building which was popular throughout the country in late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The building is a two story rectangular building which is divided horizontally between the first and second floors. The first floor has served as a commercial space throughout the building's history while the second floor has been used as offices and living quarters. The West Plains Bank Building has many features common to other Victorian-era two-part commercial blocks. It is constructed of brick; it has a prominent pressed tin cornice and the building's windows are accentuated with arched brick lintels and cast iron lugsills.

¹⁶ Reavis, p. 46.

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Richard Longstreth, the author of The Buildings of Main Street, describes the two-part commercial block as "the most common type of composition used for small and moderate sized commercial buildings throughout the country."¹⁷ Two-part commercial buildings were prevalent in the United States from the 1850s to the 1950s. However, Longstreth traces the form "to Roman antiquity when many urban buildings contained shops at street level and living quarters above."¹⁸ In West Plains, Washington Avenue and the Courthouse Square were lined with two-part commercial blocks by the turn of the century.

Two-part commercial blocks are generally two to four stories tall, have flat parapet wall roofs, and, by definition, are characterized by a horizontal division of both use and appearance. They were designed to fit within the constraints of the urban downtowns developing in the mid-nineteenth century. As architectural historian, Richard Francaviglia notes: the "footprint" [of the two-part commercial block] had to be long and narrow to fit commercial lots; it was modular, that is, had to be built with regard to the structures located on the adjacent narrow lots on either side of it. These buildings were often called "blocks" even though they might occupy only one lot on the block."¹⁹ The lower, generally single story zones of these buildings were designed to be used as public or commercial spaces, while the upper floors were used for more private functions such as offices or residences. Ground floor spaces tend to feature large display or storefront windows and doors with half or three quarter height glass openings thereby encouraging passersby to look into the space, while the upper floors generally have smaller windows and no doorways on the facade. Emphasis in Victorian commercial buildings was on the facade, which was "often highly embellished with Italianate details."²⁰ Two-part commercial blocks from the period such as the West Plains Bank are more ornate than earlier examples of this compositional type. Large cornices accentuate the rooflines, ornamental elements are often incorporated into the wall construction in the form of stringcourses, pilasters, and quoins, and windows are detailed with decorative lintels and lugsills. Brick, pressed tin and cast iron were used, sometimes in combination, to construct wide cornices with brackets, dentils, and modillions.

The rehabilitation of the West Plains Bank is now essentially complete. Prior to the collapse of the second floor, the first floor of the building was vacant and the second floor was

¹⁷ Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street. (Updated Edition) (Walnut Creek, CA.: Altamira Press, 2000) p. 24.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Richard V. Francaviglia, Main Street Revisited. (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), p. 26.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

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West Plains Bank Building
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only used for storage. After the collapse of the second floor, the building was slated for demolition. Had the current owner not stepped in to purchase and rehabilitate the building, one of West Plains oldest and most significant commercial buildings would have been replaced by a concrete parking lot. However, now that the rehabilitation is nearly complete, the West Plains Bank Building has been put back into use. The first floor is going to be used as an upscale hair salon, and the second floor apartment has been rented to a local architect for office and living space. Not only does the West Plains Bank Building merit recognition as the location of the first financial institution in the area, but also it is an important symbol of early commercial development spurred by the arrival of the railroad in West Plains. Furthermore, the building is important architecturally as the earliest intact brick building in West Plains and as an example of a type of commercial building that was popular in West Plains and across the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

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West Plains Bank Building
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Chronology: (from Howell County tax records, city directories, the West Plains Daily Quill, the West Plains Gazette, and the Howell County Gazette)

- 1883 - West Plains Bank constructed.
- 1885 Tax Assessment - 20 feet of Lot 5 in Block 4 of the Original Town - West Plain Bank, \$263
- 1893 Sanborn - The building is shown as a saloon, 320 Washington Ave.
- 1896 Tax Assessment - pt. Lot 5, Block Four, Noe and Jones, \$1600
- 1900 Sanborn - A staircase has been added onto the back of the building and a one story beer cooler is shown behind the building.
- 1906 Sanborn - The beer cooler is now listed as a refrigerator
- 1909 Tax Assessment - pt. Lot 5, Block 4, Orig. Town, James & Seiberling, \$1250
- 1911 Directory - Van Meter Restaurant, 11 Washington Ave.
- 1914 Sanborn - The building is listed as a restaurant and the two main warerooms are in place, address changes to 11 Washington Ave.
- 1920 Tax Assessment - pt. Lot 5, 6, Block Four, Orig. Town, James & Seiberling, \$4000
- 1924 Sanborn - The building is listed as a store and a third rear addition is in place at the rear of the earlier addition
- 1924 Abstract - The building is sold by James and Seiberling to Peter Scherer
- 1930 Tax Assessment - pt. Lot 5, 6, Block Four, Orig. Town, Peter Shearer, \$2850
- 1932 Sanborn - The building is listed as a store, the rear addition added ca. 1924 is gone, and the rear additions of the bank building and the adjacent W. J. Smith Building have been joined by a new rear addition
- 1940 Tax Assessment - pt. Lot 5, 6, Block Four, Original Town, Joe R. Aid and Kate G. Wood, \$2700
- 1948 Sanborn - No changes to building, address changes to 107 Washington Ave.
- 1949 Tax Assessment - pt. Lot 5, 6, Block Four, Original Town, Joe R. Aid and Kate G. Wood, \$4800
- 1964 Directory - Mid West Auto Store, 107-109 Washington Ave.

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West Plains Bank Building
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SOURCES:

Abstract for 107 Washington Ave., In the possession of the owner, Toney Aid.

Aid, Toney. "Receivable in Payment of All Dues," West Plains Gazette. Number 2, Spring, 1979, p. 21-26.

Cochran, Michael. "The Advent of the Railroad: Opening the Door to the Ozarks," West Plains Gazette. Number 16, March-April, 1982, p. 11-25.

Francaviglia, Richard V. Main Street Revisited. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996.

Hampton, Terry Fuhrman. "The History of West Plains: A Decade by Decade Account," West Plains Gazette. Number 30, Winter, 1987, pp. 14-71.

Historic photographs in the collection of the owner, C. Toney Aid.

Howell County Tax Records, 1872-1949, Howell County Courthouse, West Plains, Missouri.

Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street. (Updated Edition) Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2000 (Originally published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987).

Mullin-Kille of Missouri and the State Directory Co. and the West Plains Daily Quill. West Plains Con Survey City Directory 1964. Chillicothe, OH, Nashville, TN and West Plains, MO: Mullin-Kille of Missouri, State Directory Co. and the West Plains Daily Quill, 1964.

Ohman, Marian M. Twenty Towns: Their Histories, Town Plans and Architecture. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1985.

Reavis, Dorothy. "Howell County History: 1865-1899," West Plains Gazette. Number Two, Spring, 1979, p. 9-11, 45-46.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. Maps of West Plains, Missouri, 1893, 1900, 1906, 1914, 1924, 1932, 1948.

West Plains Bank Original Minute Book

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West Plains Bank Building
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Sources continued.

Western Light and Telephone Co. Telephone Directory, West Plains, Missouri, June, 1941.
West Plains, MO: Western Light and Telephone Co., 1941.

Western Telephone Corporation of Missouri. Telephone Directory, West Plains, Missouri 1937-38. West Plains, MO: Western Telephone Corporation of Missouri, 1938.

Williams, Mills. Daily Quill's City Directory of West Plains. West Plains, MO: Daily Quill, 1991.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The property is parcel number 15-5-21-3-37-8.01 of Howell County Tax Map 15-5-21-3. The map was prepared by South Central Ozarks Council of Governments, with aerial photos taken in April, 1981 scale 1"= 100'. Copies of the map are available at the Howell County Assessor's Office in West Plains, MO.

The property is also known as:

A part of Lot Five (5) in Block Four (4) in the Original Town, now city, of West Plains, Missouri, described thus; Commencing at a point 40 feet south of the northeast corner of said lot in Block 4, running thence south 25 feet, thence west 156 links, thence north 25 feet, thence east to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries represent all of the property currently and historically associated with the building.

11. Form Prepared By:

Becky L. Snider, Ph.D
Historic Preservation Consultant
507 South Garth Ave.
Columbia, MO 65203
(573) 256-1105

C. Toney Aid
#1 Court Square
West Plains, MO 65775
(417) 256 -2587

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Howell County, Missouri

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

West Plains Bank Building

West Plains, Howell County, Missouri

Becky Snider

Negatives on file with Becky L. Snider, 507 South Garth Ave., Columbia, MO 65203

Photographs 1-7 taken in August 2000, photographs 8 and 9 taken in May 2001.

List of Photographs

Camera Angles are indicated on the Photo Key Map

1. Front (east) elevation, facing northwest.
2. Front (east) and side (south) elevations, facing northwest.
3. Cornice Detail.
4. Side(south) and rear elevations, facing northeast.
5. Rear (west) elevation, facing east.
6. First floor interior, facing west.
7. Second floor interior, front wall windows, facing northeast.
8. Front (east) elevation, after rehabilitation, facing southwest.
9. First floor interior after rehabilitation, facing west.

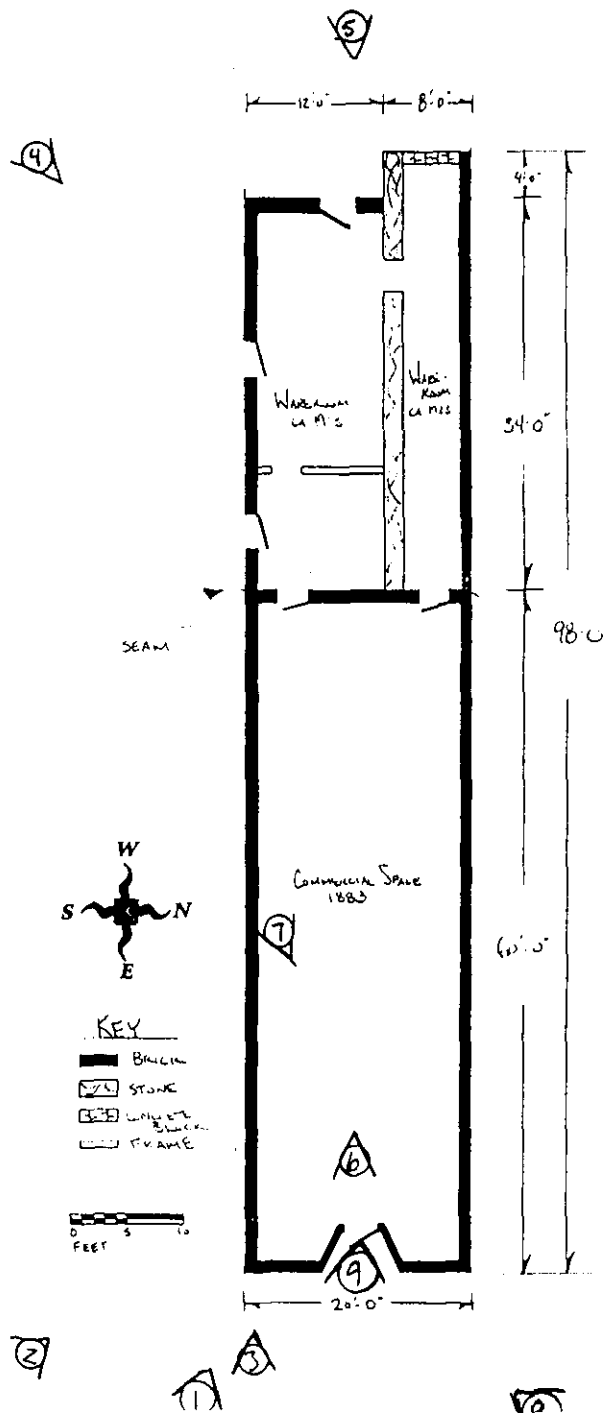
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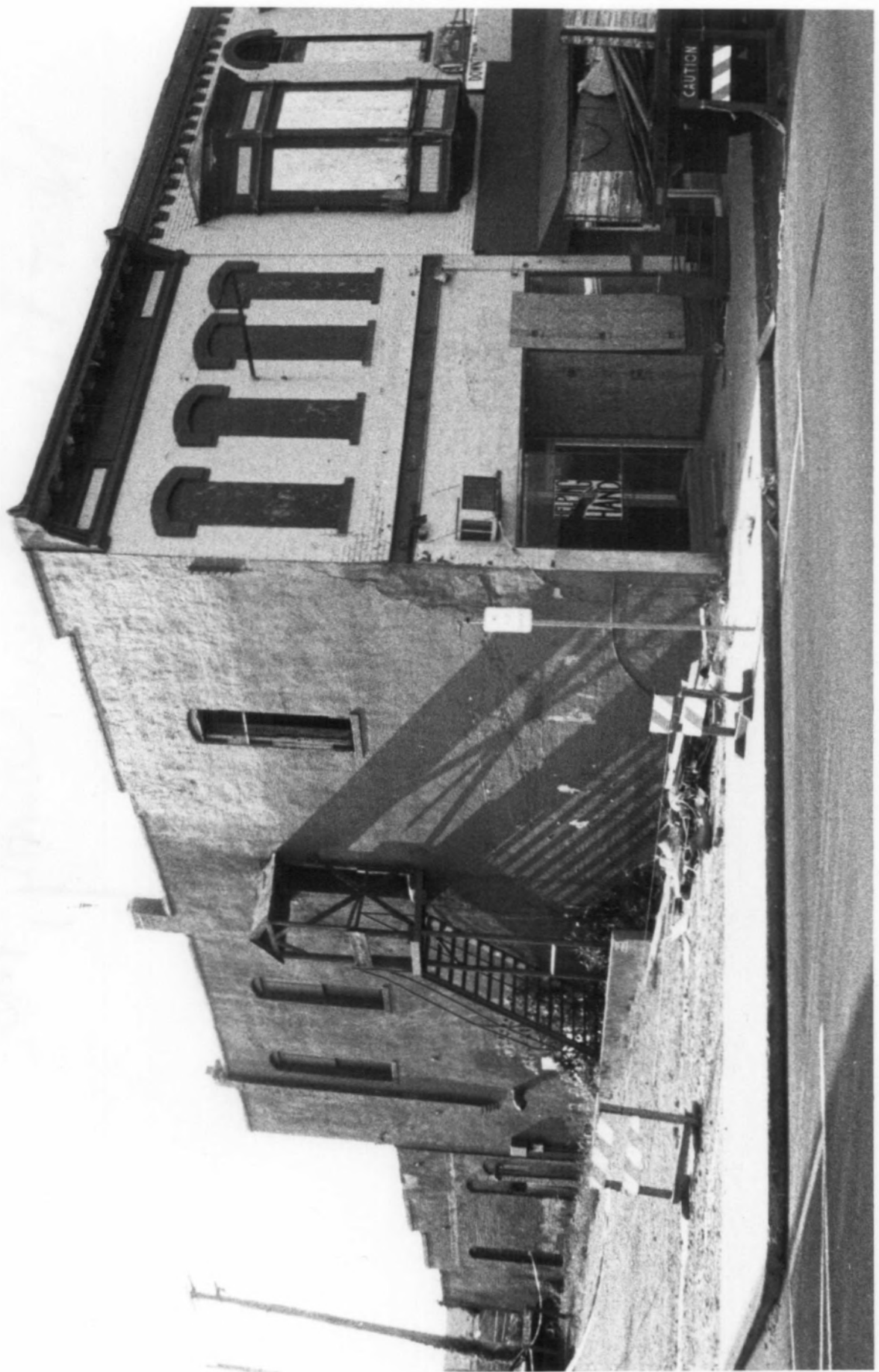
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Figure Seven. Photo Key Map. Drawn by Becky L. Snider

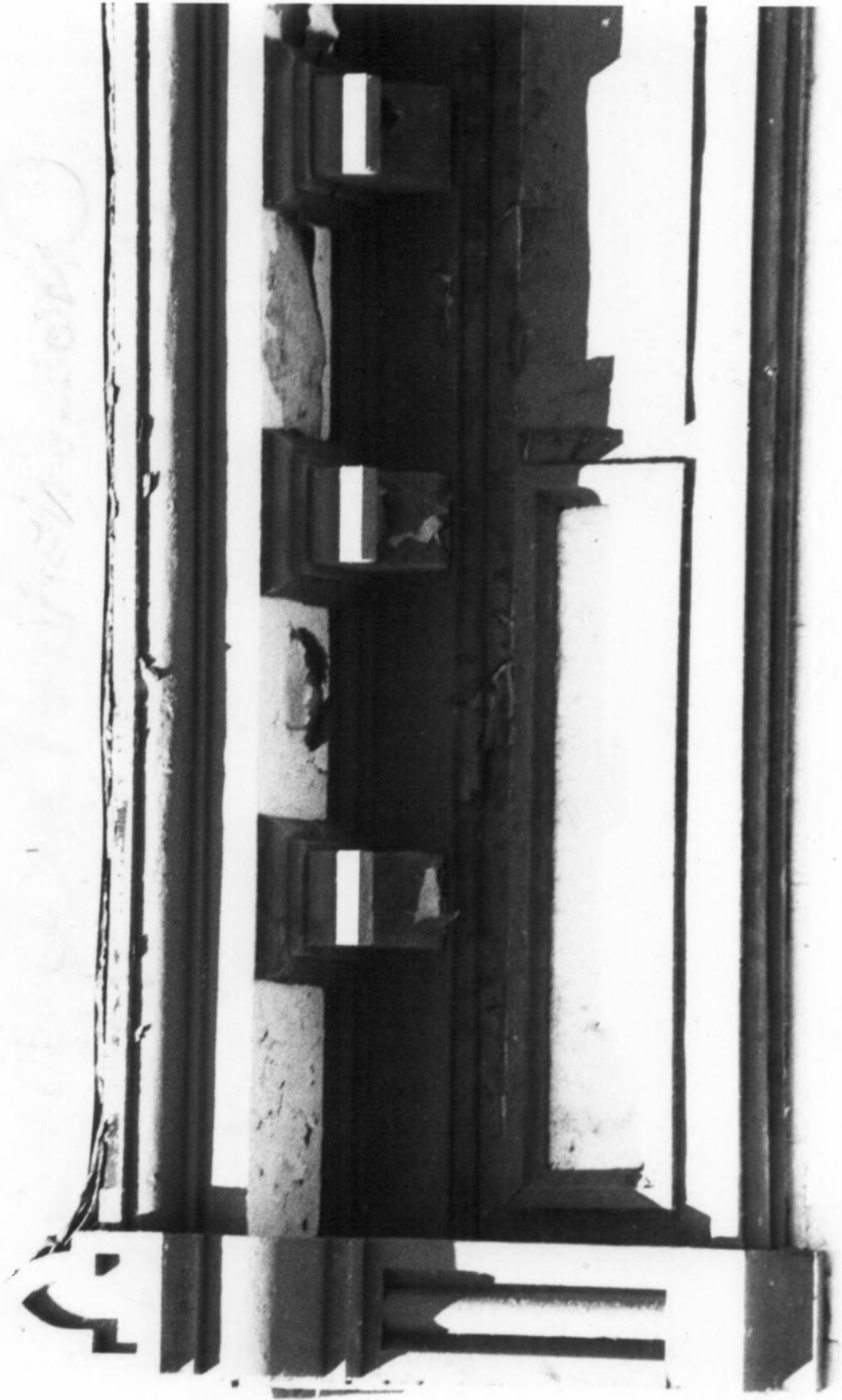






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