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6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic Functions, cont'd.

COMMERCE/commercial storage
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure
DOMESTIC/hotel
RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery
EDUCATION/school
HEALTH CARE/medical office

Current Functions, cont'd.

FUNERARY/cemetery
SOCIAL/civic
RECREATION/CULTURE/museum
RECREATION/CULTURE/monument/marker
LANDSCAPE/parking lot

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7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification, cont'd.

- Commercial Style
- Beaux Arts
- Federal
- Greek Revival
- Gothic Revival
- Other: Federal Revival
- Other: Period Cottage
- Other: Minimal Traditional
- Other: Ranch Style

Materials, cont'd.

Roof – Slate
Wood Shingle

Walls – Stone

Other – Wood
Brick
Metal

Narrative

The Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District is a mixed-use district centered on the intersection of Main and Bridge streets in downtown Wilkesboro, the seat of Wilkes County, in North Carolina's western Piedmont region. Wilkesboro's population is approximately 3,200. The Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District possesses 127 resources composed of 115 buildings, two sites, three structures, and seven objects. Of the 127 total resources, eighty-two are primary resources and the remaining forty-five are secondary. Forty-nine of the primary resources are residential, twenty-four are commercial, and the remaining nine include the town plan, four government buildings (historically), one church, one school (historically), one cemetery, and one commemorative marker. Of the secondary resources, most, by far, are garages, carports, and sheds or other storage buildings. However, there are also several barns

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and workshops, a well house, a curing house, an outdoor kitchen, a chicken hatchery, and six historical monuments and commemorative markers.

Among the district's resources are nine properties (including twelve contributing resources) previously listed in the National Register. These are the Old Wilkes County Jail (1971), the (former) Wilkes County Courthouse (1979), and, as part of the Wilkesboro Multiple Resource Area (Partial Inventory: Historic Architectural Properties) approved in 1982, the Brown-Cowles House and Cowles Law Office, the Federal Building, the J. T. Ferguson Store, the Thomas B. Finley Law Office, the Johnson-Hubbard House, the Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, and the Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel.

The district covers approximately thirty-seven acres that extend across all or parts of eighteen blocks. The district's streets follow a grid plan that reflects the original layout of the town as drawn in 1800. Within the district, east-west streets include (from north to south) Cowles, North, Main, and South streets, and Henderson Drive. North-south streets (from east to west) include Corporation, East, Broad, Bridge, and West streets, and Woodland Boulevard. The only exceptions to the grid plan within the district are the 300 block of East Main Street, which curves downhill to the northeast, and the 300 block of South West Street, which curves to the southeast after crossing West Henderson Drive. The intersection of Main and Bridge streets is the dividing point between east and west and between north and south in street name designations.

Located on a relatively level plateau between the Yadkin River to the north and Cub Creek to the south, the topography of the district exhibits some variations from the dominant flatness of Main Street through the center of the district. East of Corporation Street, East Main Street not only begins to curve from the grid layout of the district, but also heads downhill toward the flood plain between the Yadkin River and Cub Creek. Northeast of the intersection of North and Broad streets, the land heads slightly uphill. The length of South Street within the district is hilly, with a high point at each end and downward dips at East Street and between South Bridge and South West streets. South of South Street, the land slopes gently down toward Cub Creek. Other than the topography of the land, the only natural features are the ample supply of trees, shrubbery, and green lawns seen throughout the district except in the concentrated commercial area, particularly along the south side of Main Street between 111 East Main Street and 201 West Main Street.

Manmade elements within the district include the layout of streets and sidewalks and the buildings, structures, objects, and cemetery that make up the district's resources. Also included are the courthouse square, bounded by East Main, Broad, East North, and North Bridge streets, three vacant lots where buildings once stood, and several parking lots within the commercial area of the district. Most of the parking lots are specific to businesses and are either sandwiched between two commercial buildings or are located behind them. Two town parking lots (one owned jointly with the county), located between West Main and West North streets just west of

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North Bridge Street, are well landscaped with trees and shrubbery to soften their impact on the streetscape.

The Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District consists of a concentrated, cohesive group of historic resources that is distinguished from its surroundings due to a combination of manmade and natural factors. North of the district are found more recent construction, vacant land and, in some places, a steep topographical drop-off. The area east of the district includes a heavily remodeled building adjacent to 306 East Main Street and, otherwise, steep drop-offs and vacant land. The area south of the district boundary and east of South Bridge Street consists primarily of a combination of vacant lots and newer residential construction. South of 300 South West Street and 201 West Henderson Drive the land drops off sharply to Cub Creek Park in the flood plain of Cub Creek. Newer residential construction borders the south boundary of the district between South West Street and Woodland Boulevard. West and northwest of the district boundary, from the former Wilkesboro Elementary School at the southeast corner of West South Street and Woodland Boulevard to the Old Wilkes County Jail at 202 North Bridge Street, is a combination of more recent government and commercial buildings and parking lots.

Because the area encompassed by the district has always been characterized by mixed uses, the physical relationship among buildings and between buildings and streets varies. Throughout Wilkesboro's history, Main Street, moving east and west from Courthouse square, has been home to government, commercial, and residential buildings, along with several churches. Courthouse square has always been the psychological center of town, although with the passing of time, it no longer remains the physical center. Except for the 1915 Federal Building, located on West Main Street a couple of blocks west of the Wilkes County Courthouse, most other government-related buildings—a sequence of county jails and the 1930s Wilkesboro Municipal Building—were located close behind (north and northwest of) the Courthouse. Only after 1960 were newer municipal buildings and the present Federal Building erected farther west on Main Street. From the beginning, commercial buildings were erected as close to the square as possible and continued to be built there, particularly on the south side of Main Street. Meanwhile, dwellings were initially erected amidst the commercial buildings and outward from the square in all directions. Churches and schools were built somewhat farther from the square; only Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church at 205 East Main Street, and the (former) Wilkesboro Elementary School at 215 West South Street, are within the boundary of the historic district.

With the mixed-use character of the district, lot sizes vary tremendously, from the expansive lot of the Brown-Cowles House at 200 East Main Street to the small, narrow lots of many of the commercial buildings, such as the J. T. Ferguson Store at 111 East Main Street. Almost all lots are rectangular or square in shape. Occupying an entire block, the courthouse is set far back from East Main Street on the square, leaving a front lawn on which several monuments have been installed. The district's commercial buildings are almost entirely positioned flush to the sidewalk and, along Main Street, many are contiguous to each other as is

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typical in commercial districts. Others are separated by small parking lots – in some cases where earlier buildings were demolished, but in other cases where buildings may never have been erected. Other than the Brown-Cowles House, which is one of the oldest dwellings in Wilkesboro and is set far back on its large lot, most other houses in the district are set back only a short distance from the street with a relatively consistent façade line. Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, rather than following the domestic façade line along East Main Street, is set farther back on its lot.

The scale, proportions, materials, decoration, and design quality of the district's resources help to define its overall character. For the most part, the district's buildings reflect a small commercial and single-family domestic scaling. Exceptions include some of the district's most prominent buildings, including the former Wilkes County Courthouse, the Wilkesboro-Smithy Hotel, the former Federal Building, and the former Wilkesboro Elementary School, all of which have a larger, more institutional scale and presence. Of the seventy-nine primary buildings in the district, more than forty percent are one-story in height. One quarter of the buildings are one-and-a-half stories, and just over a quarter are two stories in height. Only two buildings are three stories tall. Nearly two-thirds of the district's primary buildings are three bays wide. Fifteen percent are four bays wide, thirteen percent are more than five bays wide, and the remaining few buildings are one, two, and five bays wide.

The district exhibits a variety of construction materials. Half of the primary buildings are of frame construction. However, only one-third of these retain their original wood siding. Just under two-thirds have been sheathed with vinyl or aluminum siding, while the remaining three have asbestos-shingle siding, which is possibly original. Largely due to the commercial resources in the district, forty-three percent of the buildings are of brick construction. The remaining few are of stone or concrete construction.

The decorative detailing of the district's buildings tends to be relatively simple, although a few buildings – such as the J. T. Ferguson Store and the Jesse T. Ferguson House – have ornate decoration. The type of decoration seen in the various buildings reflects the particular architectural styles represented. In most cases, such as with the sawnwork bargeboards of the Jesse T. Ferguson House and the Judge Thomas B. Finley Law Office and the fancy corbeled brickwork of the Wilkesboro-Smithy Hotel, the ornamentation is executed in the same material as the body of the building. In other cases, such as the classical wood entrance surround of the brick Joe and Laura Pearson House II and the terra cotta classical decoration of the yellow-brick former Federal Building, ornamentation is achieved through the use of a contrasting material.

Because construction dates of the district's buildings span more than a century – from the second quarter of the nineteenth century through the third quarter of the twentieth century – a broad range of architectural styles is represented. Most numerous are buildings in the vernacular Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Craftsman bungalow, and Commercial styles. However, there are also notable examples of the Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Beaux Arts, Federal

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Revival, Period Cottage, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch styles. Overall, the quality of design and workmanship in the district ranges from good to excellent.

Buildings from Wilkesboro's first half century – ca. 1780 to ca. 1830 – do not survive. However, the original town plan, laid out in 1800, remains almost totally intact, and the earliest known marked gravestone in the Presbyterian Cemetery dates from 1811. Construction history within the district follows a natural progression, as seen in the buildings themselves, beginning with the ca. 1835 Brown-Cowles House at 200 East Main Street and continuing to the most recent contributing resources – the commercial building at 101 West Main Street and the Whittington House at 203 South West Street – which date from 1956. Several buildings in the district post-date 1960. Sanborn maps of Wilkesboro from 1920 to 1945 add to an understanding of the district's evolution during those years. After North Wilkesboro – established on the north side of the Yadkin River to take advantage of the arrival of the North Western North Carolina Railroad in 1890 – became the county's trade center, Wilkesboro's commercial district expanded very little. In fact, the biggest change was that as the earlier frame stores aged and were eventually demolished, only a few were replaced by brick buildings. This was probably because there was less perceived need for new stores with North Wilkesboro's expanding commercial district just across the river. On the other hand, houses continued to be built within the district, filling vacant lots and, in some cases, replacing earlier houses. During the period of significance, a large elementary school was erected at the west end of the district. Of the seventy-nine primary buildings currently standing in the district, only seventeen (eighteen percent) were erected in the nineteenth century. Eight more buildings had been added by ca. 1920. The 1920s and 1930s constituted the busiest period of construction, with nearly a third of the district's buildings dating from those decades. Building activity diminished only slightly during the forties and fifties before and after World War II. Only seven buildings have been erected since 1960, and most of these date from the 1960s.

Buildings in the historic district range from fair to excellent condition. Many have remained little-altered and well-maintained since their construction. Others have been remodeled, most commonly – for frame houses – through the addition of vinyl or aluminum siding. This, however, has not significantly detracted from the architectural character of the district as a whole. There also have been restorations in the district, most notably the Old Wilkes Jail around 1970. Two buildings have been moved. The Dr. William C. Hayes House and the Reins House at 101 and 103 East Street, respectively, were originally located on East Main Street just outside the district but were moved to East Street ca. 1955. Of the 127 total resources in the district, nearly seventy percent are contributing and approximately thirty percent are noncontributing to the historical and architectural character of the district. More than half of the noncontributing resources are secondary: primarily garages, carports, and sheds or storage buildings. One third of the noncontributing resources are primary and are divided almost evenly between buildings that have been significantly altered and buildings erected after the end of the

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period of significance. The remaining six noncontributing resources are monuments or commemorative markers. With the impact of eighty-four contributing resources, most of which are primary, the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District possesses excellent historic integrity in terms of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Inventory List

The following inventory list provides basic information for all properties in the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District. Included are each property's name, current address, date or approximate date of construction and major alterations (when known), contributing or noncontributing status, and a summary of each property's physical character and history. Notes: Property names used in the nomination are based on the first or earliest-known owner or use associated with the building or on the building's most historically significant owner or use. Unless otherwise stated, roofs are asphalt-shingled.

Buildings, sites, structures, or objects that add to the historic associations or historic architectural qualities for which the district is significant, were present during the district's period of significance (1811-1956), relate to the documented significance of the district, and possess historic integrity, or that independently meet the National Register criteria are contributing resources. Buildings, sites, structures, or objects that do not add to the district's historic associations or historic architectural qualities for which the district is significant, were not present during the period of significance, do not relate to the documented significance of the district, or due to alterations, additions, or other changes no longer possess historic integrity, or that do not independently meet the National Register criteria are noncontributing resources. Lack of historic integrity is defined by the alteration, addition, or loss of enough original details that the building no longer conveys a strong sense of its appearance during the time when it achieved its significance. Parking lots and vacant lots are listed in the inventory, but are not counted as either contributing or noncontributing resources.

The inventory list is arranged alphabetically by street name, with east listed before west and north before south. Within this framework, properties on the east side of a street are listed before those on the west side, and properties on the north side of a street are listed before those on the south side. Property addresses on each street are listed in ascending order.

Property addresses and the contributing or noncontributing status of the district's primary resources are keyed to the accompanying district map. Secondary resources (e.g. outbuildings) are listed only within the inventory list. Survey files containing photo proofs, survey forms, maps, and other physical information and historical data for district properties are maintained by the Western Office of North Carolina's Division of Archives and History in Asheville.

Inventory entries are based on the on-site recording and research conducted by Laura A. W. Phillips during the late summer and fall of 2007. Abbreviations for sources used are given in

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parentheses at the end of each inventory entry. The following is a list of source abbreviations and the names of the sources for which they stand. Complete citations are provided in the nomination bibliography.

JP	<i>Journal Patriot</i>
NR	National Register nomination
SM	Sanborn Maps
TR	Wilkes County Tax Records
WJP	<i>Wilkes Journal Patriot</i>

Wilkesboro Town Plan

Contributing site

Bounded by Cowles Street, Corporation Street, Henderson Drive, and Woodland Boulevard
1800

General William Lenoir laid out the original town plan – a grid of streets with thirty-six rectangular lots and an open square near the center for the courthouse – in May 1800. Resurveys and/or minor revisions were made to Lenoir’s plan in 1807, 1848, and 1891, but today the original plan remains largely intact and can be clearly understood on a present-day map of Wilkesboro. Most of the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District is located within the 1800 plan. At the same time, some areas of the original plan – particularly in the northwest section – are not included in the district due to vacant land and later construction (Lenoir Plat, Martin Map, Dejournett Plan, Wilson Map).

NORTH BRIDGE STREET (West Side)

Lowe Building

Contributing building

101 (and 103; 201 and 203 – second floor) North Bridge Street
Ca. 1935

The original owner of this building is not known, but it has been in Lowe family ownership since the 1930s. Through the years the building has been used for a variety of offices and shops, including the offices of a doctor, a lawyer, the American Red Cross, Stroud Insurance Company, a barber shop, and a beauty shop. In addition, an apartment occupied part of the second floor for a number of years. The two-story, four-bay-wide building with a plain parapeted roofline has large office/shop windows on the first-story façade associated with metal-framed glass doors, and one-over-one sash windows on the second floor and on the other elevations. The building is

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distinguished by its rough and irregularly cut granite stone sheathing with thick grapevine mortar joints. Exaggerated and irregular flat arches with keystones head each door and window. A narrow chimney rises from the south side of the shallow rear ell (Absher Interview).

Auxiliary Building
1961

Noncontributing building

For some years, Dr. T. R. Bryan occupied an office in the stone building. As his practice grew, more space was needed, and a one-story, gable-roofed, frame structure with a gable roof was added to the rear of the building to serve as two examining rooms. The auxiliary building has since been detached from the stone building and is now sheathed in vinyl siding. It has a modern door and one-over-one horizontal-sash windows. Currently a dog grooming business occupies the small building (Absher Interview).

Parking Lot

Colonel Ben Cleveland Statue

Noncontributing object

West side 100 block North Bridge Street between sidewalk and parking lot
1975

Between the sidewalk and the parking lot stands a concrete statue of a standing Colonel Ben Cleveland, whose raised left arm holds a metal sword. Ralph Williams was the sculptor. A marble plaque in front of the statue is inscribed, "Colonel Ben Cleveland, 1738-1806, Wilkes County Militia." Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia was the speaker at the dedication on November 23, 1975 (Anderson, 117; Bell Interview).

(Intersection with West North Street)

(Former) Wilkesboro Municipal Building

Contributing building

100 North Bridge Street
1930s; last quarter twentieth century

Constructed as part of the Works Progress Administration during the Depression, the brick building with concrete trim displays a modernist tendency unusual in Wilkesboro. The one-story (two-story on the north and west elevations below street grade) rectangular building is five bays wide on the North Bridge Street (east) side and three bays wide on the West North Street (south) side. The exterior of the building remains intact, except for the windows and doors, which were altered during the last quarter of the twentieth century. The new window openings are slightly

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resized and are filled with a single pane of glass. The recessed entrance on North Bridge Street has been altered with a modern single-leaf door in a space that appears to have had originally a double door. The flush roll-up door of the fire engine entrance on West North Street has been replaced with a slightly recessed entrance that consists of two brick steps leading to a modern glass and wood door on the east side, a single-pane window on the west side, and a background of wood shakes. Despite these changes, the brick exterior still conveys a strong sense of its original period and style. Of particular note are the modern, sawtooth-fluted, brick pilasters with concrete caps on the east and south facades and the raised parapets above the entrance bays on these two sides. On the east side, a concrete panel above the entrance reads “Municipal Building,” while on the south side, a similar panel is inscribed with “WFD,” – both in modern lettering (WJP).

Old Wilkes County Jail
202 North Bridge Street
1859

Contributing building (NR, 1971)

The former jail is a rectangular, two-story brick building with a combination of Flemish bond and three-to-one American bond. It has a wood-shingled low hipped roof with widely overhanging boxed eaves, interior end chimneys, and a concrete handicap ramp that runs across the rear and north sides of the building, ending at the north entrance on the east facade. The three-bay-wide, two-bay-deep structure was divided approximately in half by use. The south side of the building, with two-panel doors with transoms on front and rear and nine-over-six sash windows, was the jailor’s quarters. Modern wood stairs lead to both doors in this half. The north half, with a transomed entrance of double thickness and six-over-six sash, iron-barred or grilled windows, held the jail cells. The building was used as the county jail until 1917, when a new jail was erected. It now houses a museum. The old jail is one of the best preserved examples of nineteenth-century penal architecture in North Carolina (NR).

Confederate Monument
1998

Noncontributing object

In 1998 the Sons of Confederate Veterans erected a Confederate monument adjacent to the Old Wilkes County Jail. The granite monument is in tablet form and rests on a granite base above a larger semicircular brick base. Flagpoles flank the monument: one with a United States flag and the other with a North Carolina flag.

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SOUTH BRIDGE STREET (East Side)

Vacant Lot

W. Carter Winkler House

100 South Bridge Street

Ca. 1892

Contributing building

The two-story frame house is a restrained version of the Queen Anne style. Built with an irregular configuration, it has a brick-pier foundation, German-siding, one-over-one sash windows (single and paired) with wood louvered shutters, and a hipped and gabled roof pierced by an interior chimney. On the north side of the house is a two-story, cut-away bay, behind which is a small screened porch with a shed roof. A one-story, hip-roofed porch wraps around the front and most of the two sides of the house. It has a balustrade of turned posts and balusters across most of the front, a solid skirt covered with wood shingles along the north side and the northwest corner, and a screened area with a solid wood skirt on the south side. A pedimented porch bay accents the center front entrance, whose door has wood panels in the lower half and a glass panel in the upper half surrounded by small panes of alternating patterned etched glass and stained glass. A small porch above the main entrance features a shed roof and a plain, low balustrade. One-story shed rooms across the south half of the rear of the house are topped by a second-story porch with paneled posts and fancy sawnwork brackets and balustrade. The house remained in Winkler family ownership and occupancy for nearly a century (TR; Hubbard, 24).

Outbuilding

Undetermined date

Noncontributing building

Directly behind the south side of the house is an overgrown and deteriorated outbuilding of unknown use. It has a concrete foundation, board-and-batten siding, and a shed roof (material unknown). Its date of construction and original use are unknown.

Outbuilding

Undetermined date

Noncontributing building

At the rear of the lot at the northwest corner of East South Street and an alley is a heavily overgrown and deteriorated outbuilding whose age is undetermined. It has a concrete-block foundation, weatherboard siding, and a shed roof of undetermined covering. An opening in the concrete foundation on the south side forms a single garage bay. Above this, on the main, weatherboarded, level, is a window. A largely collapsed frame shed is attached to the north end of the outbuilding.

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(Intersection with East South Street)

Henry and Edith Smithy House
200 South Bridge Street
1955

Contributing building

Henry and Edith Smithy built this simple Ranch house in 1955 behind the home of his father, Ed Smithy, who lived just up the hill at the southeast corner of South Bridge and East South streets. Now, just over a half century later, the house is still in Smithy ownership and occupancy. The one-story frame house has a concrete-block foundation, vinyl siding, and a broad gable roof with wide, overhanging eaves on the east and west sides. The house is rectangular in shape, with long east and west sides. A brick chimney rises at the rear of the house and two brick flue stacks rise through the east slope of the roof. Windows are one-over-one sash, except for the large living room window that is divided into six horizontally oriented panes. The house's two entrances are both on the north side, next to the driveway, where a small, single-bay wing with gable roof projects (Bell Interview).

Garage
Ca. 1965

Noncontributing building

Northeast of the house stands a frame garage, which appears to have been built after the house. It has a concrete-block foundation, plywood (or similar) siding, and a broad, street-facing gable roof. The north half of the building has an enclosed garage bay with a lift door, the south half has an open carport bay, and storage rooms run across the rear (east side).

SOUTH BRIDGE STREET (West Side)

Wilkesboro Building and Loan Association
103 South Bridge Street
1958; ca. 2000

Noncontributing building

Now occupied by Stroud-Miller Insurance, this two-story brick building was erected as a modernist office building. A comparison of the present building with a 1956 sketch of the proposed building, shows that some of the signal features of the façade have been altered in recent years. The south bay of the three-bay façade projects slightly forward and above the rest

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of the façade. It is sheathed in stretcher-bond brick surrounding a stuccoed vertical panel, a modification of the original facade. The double-leaf glass doors with sidelights, the twelve-light shop window, and the two second-story windows are all part of the recent alterations to the facade. Small, modern replacement windows, mostly on the second story, line both sides of the building (WJP)

Parking Lot

A paved parking lot south of the Wilkesboro Building and Loan Association building replaced a one-story early-twentieth-century frame house.

Vacant Lot

Until recent years, a one-story early-twentieth-century frame house occupied the site of the current grassy vacant lot at the northwest corner of South Bridge and West South streets.

BROAD STREET (East Side)

Thomas B. Finley Law Office
104 Broad Street
Ca. 1880

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

The diminutive, one-bay-wide and two-room-deep frame building has a brick foundation, weatherboard siding, a steeply pitched gable roof, and an interior brick chimney. The building has six-over-six sash windows; those on the south side retain their louvered wood shutters. A hipped-roof front porch has slender, square posts and a flush-sheathed wall. The front door features two glazed panels above two wood panels and is topped by a transom. Originally, the rear portion of the north elevation also had a porch. Although the porch was removed at some unknown time, the door – identical to that on the front of the building, but no longer used – survives, as does the surrounding flush sheathing. The most distinguishing features of the building are the fanciful Carpenter Gothic bargeboards and finials that decorate the front and rear gables. The bargeboards are set off by wide fascia boards beneath the gable eaves. One of two nineteenth-century law offices remaining in Wilkesboro, the building was occupied for at least a century by a succession of Wilkes County attorneys. It is believed to have been built by lawyer Isaac “Ike” Welborn. He was followed by Luther Lyons, about whom little is known. The most prominent nineteenth-century attorney to occupy the building was Thomas B. Finley, an entrepreneur who was heavily involved in the development of North Wilkesboro. After being

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admitted to the bar in 1885, Finley established his law office in Wilkesboro, where he continued an active practice until 1919, when he was elected Superior Court Judge for the Seventeenth District. During Finley's early years in Wilkesboro, Herbert L. Greene joined his practice. After Greene was elected to the State Legislature in 1900, Finley went into partnership with Frank B. Hendren. Hendren remained in the little office after Finley became a judge, and in 1922, J. Floyd Jordan joined him in practice. Jordan remained in the building for well over half a century, longer than any other the building's occupants. It no longer serves as a law office (NR).

EAST COWLES STREET [formerly Hillside Lane] (North Side)

House

Contributing building

200 East Cowles Street
Second quarter twentieth century

The date of this Craftsman bungalow is not known, as a one-story house of a different configuration appears on the Sanborn maps of 1926 and 1945. The house has a concrete-block foundation, vinyl German siding, and a side-gable roof that kicks out across the rear to form shed rooms and across the front to shelter a porch. A central chimney pierces the roof, and a shed-roofed front dormer has triple four-over-one sash windows. The front porch exhibits paneled, tapered, wood posts set on brick plinths and shelters a front door with a combination of glazed and wood panels. The Craftsman-style windows of the house are also four-over-one sash (SM).

Garage

Noncontributing building

Ca. 1940

Built into the hillside southeast of the house next to the street are the remains of a concrete-block garage. It no longer has a roof (SM).

Saylor-Dancy House

Contributing building

202 East Cowles Street
1929

In overall form, the house is like that at 200 East Cowles Street, except that the gable of the roof is broader. The one-and-a-half-story frame Craftsman bungalow has a brick foundation and is sheathed with asbestos-shingle siding. Its broad gable roof has knee-braced eaves and kicks out across the rear to create shed rooms and across the front to shelter a porch. The house has gable-end chimneys, shed-roofed front and rear dormers with exposed rafter ends and paired four-over-

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one sash windows. Fenestration on the body of the house consists of four-over-one sash windows. The three-bay façade has a central door with four vertical lights over two wood panels and sidelights, flanked on either side by a pair of windows. The front porch is detailed with paneled, tapered wood posts set on brick plinths connected by a plain balustrade. The Saylor family was the first known owner of the house. Mr. Saylor was in the lumber business. After the Saylor family, the Dancy family lived here until around the 1960s (SM; TR; Bell Interview).

Outbuilding
Ca. 1930

Contributing building

Behind the house stands a one-story, German-sided, frame outbuilding set on a fieldstone-pier foundation. It has a metal-sheathed gable roof with exposed rafter ends and a four-over-four sash window on the south side (The north and west sides could not be seen.) Its use is not known.

Roy and Virginia Foster House
204 East Cowles Street
1920

Contributing building

Roy and Virginia Foster are the earliest known owners of this one-story frame Craftsman bungalow. The son of Hayes Foster, who lived across the street at 208 East Cowles Street, and the brother of Charlie Foster, who lived at 201 East Cowles Street, Roy Foster worked in the family road construction business. In the latter 1920s, the Fosters moved to Georgia, after which the Saylor family, of 202 East Cowles Street, moved to the house. Other than its replacement paired and triple six-over-one sash windows and the tight lattice balustrade added to the porch, the asymmetrical house remains largely intact. It has a brick foundation, weatherboard siding, a multi-gabled roof with overhanging knee-braced eaves, and an interior chimney. The central front gable holds a four-light window, while the other gables have louvered wood vents. A porch carries across the eastern two thirds of the house and wraps around part of the east side, where it ends in an enclosed sun room. It features paired paneled posts set on brick plinths. A small, modern, wood deck, which includes a latticed pergola, is attached to the rear of the house (Bell Interview, TR, SM).

Garage
Second quarter twentieth century

Noncontributing building

Northwest of the house stands half of the original garage; the other garage bay collapsed during a storm. The remainder has a single vehicular bay, vertical-board siding—except

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on the east side, which has horizontal-board siding—and a shed roof that slopes from west to east.

Shed

Ca. 2000

Noncontributing structure

Immediately behind the garage stands a makeshift shed. It has a framework of metal pipes forming the sides and gable roof and is enclosed by tarps.

Workshop

Ca. 2000

Noncontributing building

Directly north of the house and east of the garage and shed stands a long, narrow, one-story frame workshop. It has a foundation of unknown material, T-111 siding, a gable roof, a double-leaf barn-like door near the north end of the west side, a glass-and-wood pedestrian door at the south end, and several asymmetrically placed windows. It is currently being converted to living space for the owner's son.

EAST COWLES STREET (South Side)

Charlie Foster House

201 East Cowles Street

1921; last quarter twentieth century

Contributing building

Charlie Foster, son of Hayes Foster (208 East Cowles Street) and brother of Ray Foster (204 East Cowles Street) was the first known owner of this house. Like his brother, he later moved out of state. The one-story frame bungalow with compatible addition on the west side is set far back on its lot facing south (North Street). It has fieldstone foundation under the original body of the house, but a brick foundation under the front porch and addition and steep brick steps leading to the front porch. Although the house has been sheathed in vinyl German siding and has replacement ironwork porch posts and balustrade, it retains salient Craftsman features. These include a broad, side-gable roof with slightly tapered eaves brackets, a gabled front dormer with an eight-light window, an engaged porch across the three-bay façade, slightly projecting square bay windows on the east and west sides, and a shed-roofed rear entrance porch and adjacent enclosed room at the northeast corner of the house. The west-side addition has a side-gable roof. The house has one-over-one sash windows, paired on the façade and in the bays. A sheltered

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walkway leads from the rear door of the addition to East Cowles Street (Bell Interview; SM; TR).

Gillis and Mildred Yates House

Noncontributing building

203 East Cowles Street
1963

Set back on its lot, the Yates House is a rectangular, one-story (two-story in rear), brick, Ranch house typical of the 1960s. The asymmetrical dwelling has a side-gable roof with deeply overhanging eaves on the front and rear that encompasses a carport at the east end and a chimney at the west end. There are one-over-one horizontal sash windows on all but the façade, where the front door is flanked by windows with eight horizontal lights (Bell Interview; TR).

John Cranor House

Contributing building

208 East Cowles Street
Ca. 1890; third quarter twentieth century

First owner of this two-story, frame, Queen Anne-style house was John Cranor, a Wilkesboro lawyer who served as Register of Deeds in 1879 and as state senator in 1893. Cranor's son, John, was also an attorney and served as mayor of Wilkesboro for many years. Hayes Foster, a Wilkes County road contractor, and his family subsequently owned and occupied the house, Local attorney Joe Brewer has owned and occupied the house now for more than a quarter of a century. The house has an irregular configuration, a brick foundation, vinyl siding, a multi-gable roof with deep eaves and gable returns, and interior chimneys. The three-bay façade has a two-tier wraparound porch, with the first level projecting forward beyond the upper level. Both tiers have turned posts and replacement balustrades; the upper tier has been enclosed with glass that does not obscure the porch details. The house has a variety of window types, including two-over-one, one-over-one, and six-over-six sash. A one-story, gable-roofed addition with a lower-level, two-car garage was built to the east side of the house in the third quarter of the twentieth century. It has a bay window on the rear. The rear of the original house has a modern, balustraded deck. A curved, concrete driveway just east of the house connects East Cowles Street with East North Street. Sanborn maps show that several outbuildings once stood east of the driveway near the end of East North Street (SM; Hubbard Interview; Hayes).

Thomas Rudy and Lillie Dean Bryan House

Noncontributing building

210 East Cowles Street
1985

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Built for Joe Brewer's (208 East Cowles Street) parents-in-law, the house is a one-story frame dwelling with a brick foundation, vinyl siding, and a gable roof with exposed beams that encompasses a wraparound porch on the south and half of the east and west sides. The house is perched on the edge of a sharp drop-off in the land to the east (Bell Interview; TR).

EAST STREET (West Side)

Dr. William C. Hayes House

Contributing building

101 East Street

Ca. 1937; Moved to site ca. 1955

The one-story frame Craftsman bungalow, now sheathed with vinyl siding, rests on a concrete-block foundation and has a clipped-gable roof with overhanging knee-braced eaves. The center-bay entrance porch with bonnet roof supported by paneled posts shelters the glass-and-wood entrance with fanlight transom. It is flanked on either side by a single one-over-one sash window. On the south side of the house is a set-back, single-room wing with a flat roof. Originally the home of Dr. William C. Hayes and located downhill from 305 East Main Street (outside the district), the house was moved ca. 1955 to its present location, where it has served subsequently as a rental house (Bell Interview).

Reins House

Contributing building

103 East Street

Ca. 1937; Moved to site ca. 1955

Like the house at 101 East Street, this house was originally located downhill from 305 East Main Street (outside the district) and was moved to its present location ca. 1955. Initially the home of the Reins family, the house has been a rental house since its move. Set on a concrete-block foundation, the one-and-a-half-story frame Craftsman bungalow is sheathed with vinyl German siding and has a broad, side-gable roof with a low, shed-roofed dormer with a paired window on the front slope. Windows on the house include four-over-one, one-over-one, and two-over-two sash. The three-bay façade is sheltered by an engaged porch with tapered posts. At the center of the façade, the front door features four vertical lights set above two wood panels (Bell Interview).

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WEST HENDERSON DRIVE (North Side)

House

Noncontributing building

104 West Henderson Drive
Ca. 1960

Although this house faces West South Street, it is set far back on its lot, and its address is actually on Henderson Drive. The one-story, brick-veneer, Ranch house has a broad front-gable roof. The front gable is brick veneered, but the rear gable is sheathed in asbestos shingles. An exterior chimney rises on the west elevation of the house. The three-bay façade has an off-center entrance with a gabled entry porch supported by ironwork posts and an ironwork balustrade that extends to the west end of the house to border a walkway from the driveway. East of the entrance is a one-over-one sash window with diamond muntins in the upper sash. West of the entrance is a picture window composed of a large, stationary center pane of glass flanked by narrow one-over-one sash with diamond muntins in the lower sash. The rear of the house has a side-gable-roofed addition and a large, modern wood deck.

Carport

Noncontributing structure

Last quarter twentieth century

A carport stands on driveway on the west side of the house. It has metal supports on either side that extend upward to provide the framework for the slightly arched metal roof.

WEST HENDERSON DRIVE (South Side)

Paul Lenderman House

Contributing building

201 West Henderson Drive
Ca. 1927; mid-twentieth century

Paul Lenderman and his family were the first known occupants of this one-story frame Craftsman bungalow. He worked in the Main Street grocery of his father, C. E. Lenderman, and Mrs. Lenderman taught at the Wilkesboro Elementary School. Now covered with vinyl German siding, the house has a concrete foundation and low front and side gables with overhanging knee-braced eaves. There are two interior chimneys. Windows are four-over-one sash. An engaged front porch is supported by replacement metal posts and balustrade and has a concrete floor. The recessed front entrance is accented by a large wooden grill on its north protecting wall. The rear

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entrance at the southeast corner of the house opens to a small wood deck. Behind the house, an attached concrete-block garage, which appears to have been added in the mid-twentieth century, has two bays and a concrete stair leading to a flat deck above the garage. A brick and decorative pierced concrete-block wall runs eastward from the garage, bordering the rear of the triangular-shaped lawn (Bell Interview).

EAST MAIN STREET (North Side)

(Former) Wilkes County Courthouse
100 East Main Street
1902; ca. 1930; late 1950s

Contributing building (NR, 1979)

Located on the town square, the former Wilkes County Courthouse is a monumental two-and-a-half-story brick building reflecting Beaux-Arts styling. The building rests on a brick foundation. Most of the windows are segmental-arched, two-over-two sash with rusticated granite sills. The exceptions are the windows of the most recent additions, which are also two-over-two sash, but with flat lintels. Brick belt courses encircle the building beneath the windows (except for around the side additions), and a brick water course is near the base of the building. The five bays of the original façade are divided by two-story classical pilasters. The focal point of the façade is the central two-story, tetrastyle, Ionic portico with pedimented cornice which shelters the double-leaf front entrance with its round-arched fanlight transom. Rising from the center three bays of the façade is a three-story, hip-roofed section, the center of which is crowned by an oblong mansard cupola with bull's eye windows in the base. The cupola is sheathed with copper shingles. The remainder of the building has a flat roof, although the rear wing is also parapeted. Additions to the courthouse include four two-story bays added to the rear wing around 1930, and in the late 1950s, two-story wings expanding the façade to either side, one-story sections behind these wings, and a small one-story addition to the rear wing. After these last additions, the formerly red-brick building was painted white, because the new brickwork did not match the old.

The county's first courthouse was a log building erected in the late eighteenth century. It was replaced in 1830 by a brick courthouse, which continued in use until the 1902 courthouse was built. This courthouse was designed by the Charlotte architectural firm of Wheeler, McMichael, and Company and built by Charlotte contractor L. W. Cooper and Company. Wheeler and various other partners designed nine courthouses of this style in North Carolina around the turn of the twentieth century; they were especially popular in Western North Carolina. The third courthouse served as such until 1998, when the present courthouse was built outside the town center. The former courthouse is now used as the Wilkes County Heritage Museum.

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The front lawn of the courthouse is filled with three large and two small monuments or commemorative markers.

Time Capsule
1978

Noncontributing object

On the west side of the center walk leading to the courthouse is a time capsule buried beneath a granite rectangle. A large, concrete-paved, circle radiates from the granite plaque.

Obelisk
1970s

Noncontributing object

East of the square's center walk is a tall granite obelisk on a granite base which stands on a square of concrete pavers. Inscribed bricks lead from it to the center walk. The obelisk is a monument to the Wilkes County men who lost their lives in World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam Conflict.

Cannon Circle
Ca. 1980

Noncontributing object

Between the obelisk and the courthouse stands a cannon, date unknown, set on a paved concrete circle. In front of the cannon is a brass plaque on a concrete base that labels the monument as the Cannon Circle.

Stoneman's Raid Marker
1940

Contributing object

A metal highway marker on a metal pole stands at the southwest corner of the courthouse square. Placed in 1940 by the North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, it commemorates the occupation of Wilkesboro on March 29, 1865, by General Stoneman's United States Cavalry.

Daniel Boone's Trail Marker
Date unknown

Noncontributing object

At the southeast corner of the square, an iron plaque is attached to a rock set on the ground for that purpose. Marked by the North Carolina Daughters of the American

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Revolution, the plaque commemorates Daniel Boone's Trail from North Carolina to Kentucky in 1769.

(Intersection with Broad Street)

Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel
102 East Main Street
1891

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

The Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel is prominently located at the northeast corner of East Main and Broad streets across from the Courthouse square. The three-story brick building is one of the most architecturally impressive in Wilkesboro, due both to its size and detailing. It has a brick foundation and a parapeted roof. The principal façade, facing Broad Street, is nine bays wide, while the East Main Street elevation is six bays deep. The primary entrance, with its replacement modern glass-and-metal door, is on the southwest corner. The façade is accentuated by a deeply corbeled cornice, narrow brick pilasters that divide the nine bays into three major bays, and third-story segmental-arched windows surrounded by corbeled hood molds. The hotel's other two-over-two sash windows and doors have segmental-arched heads with simple brick hood molds. A two-story, hip-roofed gallery wraps around the west and south elevations. The east gallery has been enclosed with wood, brick, and decorative, pierced, concrete blocks. There is no gallery on the plain north side. The second story of the gallery has plain wood posts and brackets and a replacement wood railing that is half the height of the gallery. The first-story gallery has wood posts on brick piers. The façade storefronts retain large windows with paneled dados, recessed entrances, and cast iron pilasters from Mesker Brothers of St. Louis. Transoms are enclosed. Iron fire stairs are located on the north and south elevations.

In 1891 the Wilkesboro Hotel Company was organized to build a brick hotel. However, by 1906, the hotel had failed, and Nikeard Bruce Smithey had purchased it, changing the name to the Smithey Hotel. Nike Smithey and his wife, Hattie, lived in the hotel until his death in 1953. Smithey not only operated the hotel that became a local institution, but he also opened his first dry goods store on the first floor of the building. From this beginning, his business grew to a multi-million-dollar chain of seventeen stores in northwestern North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee (NR).

Smithey's Discount Grocery
104 East Main Street
1953

Contributing building

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Shortly before his death, Nike Smithey built this one-story brick store on what had been the garden behind the Wilkes-Smithey Hotel. Initially it was used as a discount grocery, but it has had several occupants in the half century since its construction. The building has five-to-one common-bond brickwork, metal-framed corner doors and plate-glass show windows, a flat roof with a front parapet, blind side elevations, and concrete coping along the roofline. The only physical change to the building has been the replacement, during the last quarter century, of the original flat canopy across the façade with a pent-roof canopy that carries across the façade and wraps around the southwest corner of the building. A paved parking area lies to the west of the building (Woodruff Interview).

W. H. H. Cowles Law Office
106 East Main Street
Ca. 1871; 1920s; ca. 1950

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

Located at the southwest corner of the Brown-Cowles lot next to the street, the Cowles Law Office is one of only two remaining examples (with the Thomas B. Finley Law Office) of nineteenth-century law offices in this county seat town. The law office was probably built by Cowles shortly after he purchased the property in 1871. It is a diminutive one-story frame building with a brick foundation, weatherboard siding, a low, side-gable roof, and a gable-end chimney. Originally consisting of only two rooms, the building was enlarged with a gabled addition to the rear in the early 1920s by then-owner Pressley E. Brown. An extension of the rear ell was added ca. 1950. The three-bay façade consists of a central two-panel door flanked by six-over-six sash windows. (Those on the rear ell are two-over-two sash and a pair of stationary four-light windows.) An unusual exterior decorative feature of the façade is the Tudor-style labels over the front door and front windows. Although originally the building may not have had a porch, a shed-roofed front porch was in place by 1920. The side wraparound porch appears to have been added after 1945. The entire porch is supported by plain wood posts; the side porch has a plain wood balustrade. Lawyers known to have used the building in addition to W. H. H. Cowles include William W. Barber and John A. Holbrook (NR, SM).

Brown-Cowles House
200 East Main Street
Ca. 1835; ca. 1880; first quarter twentieth century

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

The two-story frame house set far back from the street has had a sequence of building periods. The entire house has a brick foundation and weatherboard siding. Except for several shed-roofed additions across the rear, the house has a gabled roof. Windows include nine-over-six, six-over-six, four-over-four, two-over-two, and twelve-over-eight sash; those on the front have louvered

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wood shutters. The original two-story frame center section is four bays wide and has a side-gable roof with gable-end chimneys. It was probably built shortly after Hamilton Brown (1786-1870) purchased the property from John T. Finley in 1834. Brown served variously as Wilkes County Sheriff and as a county justice during the first third of the nineteenth century. After Brown's death, William H. H. Cowles (1840-1901) purchased the property in 1871. After studying law under Judge Richmond Pearson at Richmond Hill, Cowles was licensed to practice in the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions and in the Superior Court. In 1872 he was elected Reading Clerk of the State Senate, and two years later he was elected Solicitor of the Tenth Judicial District. In 1884, Cowles was elected to Congress from the Eighth Congressional District and served four terms in office. Local tradition claims that Cowles built the two-story west wing with its gable-front roof and nine-over-six sash windows and possibly the one-story east, side-gable addition. An 1885 photograph shows that the west wing had been constructed by then, but that the east wing had not. The present shed-roofed front porch with its plain balustrade, lattice posts, and decorative sawnwork brackets apparently dates from after the time of the construction of the east wing, although a shed-roofed porch across the original four bays of the house had been present earlier. Pressley E. Brown purchased the property in 1912, and it remained in his family ownership until at least 1980. Brown was a manufacturer and wholesale dealer in lumber. He also was prominent politically, serving as Wilkes County Sheriff from 1906 to 1914 and then representing the county in the North Carolina House between 1925 and 1929, where he was minority leader. The porte cochere and multiple shallow rear additions probably date from the first quarter of the twentieth century (NR).

Curing House-Garage

Mid-nineteenth century; ca. 2000

Contributing building

The curing house stands on the rear property line behind the house. It is a small frame structure with a brick foundation, weatherboard siding, a four-over-four sash window on the south side, and a front-gable roof whose west end projects over the batten door. In later years a shed room with a chimney was added to the north side and a shed-roofed garage and shed were added to the east side. In recent years all the additions to the curing house were removed, and a front-gable-roofed garage with connector room has been added where the old garage was removed. It has unpainted wood siding.

Kitchen

Mid-nineteenth century

Contributing building

The kitchen, separate from the rear of the house and west of the curing house, is a rare survivor in Wilkesboro. The one-room building has a stone-pier and concrete-block-pier

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foundation, vertical siding on the north and east sides, and weatherboard siding on the south side. The west end of the kitchen has board-and-batten siding where a later addition was removed in recent years. The kitchen has a metal-sheathed, side-gable roof with exposed rafter ends and a large brick chimney at the west gable end whose upper stack has been rebuilt. The south side of the building has a diagonal-board door and a six-light window, while the north side has two four-light windows.

Dr. Gurney Talmadge and Julia Phillips Mitchell House
204 East Main Street
1932

Contributing building

Built during the middle of the Depression, this one-and-a-half-story with full basement, four-bay-wide, brick dwelling in the Period Cottage style has multiple clipped gables with cornice returns. The center front medieval-style door is sheltered by an entrance porch with segmental-arched openings. The windows are six-over-one sash and mostly in groups of three. At the east end of the house, an engaged porch has segmental-arched openings, although they have been enclosed with vinyl siding pierced by a glass-and-wood-paneled door with sidelights on the front and sash windows on the side and rear. The house has two chimneys and a clipped-gable dormer on the front and rear roof slopes. A one-story section with parapeted ends and a separate recessed entrance at the west end carries across the rear of the house and served as Dr. Mitchell's office. The house has two secondary entrances on the east side – one on the house and one on the office – each sheltered by a bracketed, shed-roofed hood. The house is now used as the office of a local law firm (Bell Interview; TR; SM).

Garage
1932

Contributing building

Behind the house stand a two-bay brick garage with glass- and wood-paneled garage doors and a front-facing clipped-gable roof with cornice returns.

Somers-Bumgarner House
206 East Main Street
1860s; ca. 1913; last quarter twentieth century

Noncontributing building

The original house, a one-story frame structure, was built by James F. Somers (1834-1907). He was Wilkes County Sheriff during the late-nineteenth century. After Somers's death, James M. and Emma Louisa Pennell Bumgarner purchased the house. He was Chief Deputy Sheriff of Wilkes County for thirty years and then became the Deputy Marshall for the Middle District of

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North Carolina. Around 1913 the Bumgarners added the second story, using Foster and Allen Construction Company as their contractor. At that point, the house had a brick foundation, was three bays wide, and had a hipped roof with side gables, cornice returns, and a hip-roofed front dormer with triple nine-light windows. The primary windows were two-over-two sash, and a one-story porch wrapped around all but the west side of the house. In the late-twentieth century, the house was completely remodeled with the addition of vinyl siding and the enclosure of the porch, which took on three gables across the front and large multi-paned picture windows beneath the gables. In addition, a long, one-story, gable-front addition was built to the east side of the house. Connected by an enclosed hyphen, it has a concrete foundation and a bracketed shed roof sheltering the front. It is divided into two offices: the west side has an entrance in the hyphen and a large bay window, and the east side has a door with large sidelights. The addition has a blind east-side elevation (Bell Interview; Hubbard, 19).

Somers-Foster House
210 East Main Street
Ca. 1907; 1930s

Contributing building

Originally, this was a frame Queen Anne-style cottage. Charles H. Somers is believed to have been the first owner. He was the son of James F. Somers (206 East Main Street) and served as Wilkes County Clerk of Court for twenty years or more. The Somers had a large family, and in the early 1910s they moved to a larger house with more land on the outskirts of town. Annie Somers, the eldest daughter, married Dr. Fred C. Hubbard, who grew up across the street from her at 211 East Main Street. When the Somers family moved, Thomas Meshack and Rosa Belle Reins Foster purchased the house. He was a contractor who built much of the Chatham Manufacturing Company in Elkin as well as many of the public and private buildings in Wilkesboro. He was also was one of the owners of the Blue Ridge Hatchery, located behind the house. The one-story house, in its current Colonial Revival form, is four bays wide with a slate-covered, side-gable roof and three gabled and weatherboarded dormers on the front. The façade has a central front entrance with a paneled door flanked by glazed and paneled sidelights. Sheltering the door is a metal-covered hip-roofed entrance porch with square, paneled posts. The west-side porch has a metal-covered, balustraded, hipped roof and paired, paneled posts set on a stone skirt. Between the entrance and side porches is a picture window surrounded by small panes of glass. North of the side porch it is what appears to have been a terrace or separate porch at the same height as the other side porch with a stone skirt and stone steps on the north side. It is now enclosed with weatherboard siding, paired one-over-one sash windows, and a metal-sheathed hipped roof. The excellent cut-stone work with grapevine joints, probably added in the 1930s, distinguishes the house. Of particular note are the front and sidewalk step risers that are set with diagonally laid stones, the keystoned flat arches above the windows, and the stone-

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bordered porthole vents in each gable. A low stone retaining wall runs across the south and east edges of the front yard. Next to the sidewalk is a small stone structure of later date with a slate-covered side-gable roof and a plaque with the name of the law firm that current occupies the building (Bell Interview; Hubbard, 18; TR).

Blue Ridge Hatchery Building

Contributing building

Ca. 1940; last quarter twentieth century

From around 1940 through at least the late 1950s, the Blue Ridge Hatchery, with its numerous buildings, was located behind the Somers-Foster House and down a steep hill. T. M. Foster, then owner of the house, was one of the owners of the hatchery, which produced white broiler-type baby chicks. In 1956, with an annual production in excess of 1,500,000 chicks, it was a leader in what became a major industry in Wilkes County for half a century. The building has been covered with vinyl siding and its original six-over-six sash windows have been replaced with one-over-one sash. Nevertheless, the one-story-with-basement form of the building, the brick foundation, the corrugated-metal-sheathed side-gable roof, the five-bay façade with central glass-and-wood-paneled door flanked by paired windows on the west side and two more separate windows on the east side, as well as the placement of the door and two windows on the east side, at least, remains intact, so that it can still be read as the former hatchery building. The building is the only one from the hatchery that survives, and it is the only physical evidence of this important industry within the district. Its current use is not known (SM; JP, October 15, 1956).

(Intersection with Corporation Street)

Ruby Pearson House

Contributing building

300 East Main Street

Ca. 1941; 1950s; last quarter twentieth century

Based on the 1945 Sanborn map and on-site inspection, this one-and-a-half-story brick-veneered house was built in stages. Originally the Colonial Revival-style house consisted of the center three projecting bays and a slightly set-back bay on the west side. Later, probably in the 1950s, a slightly set back brick-veneered bay was added to the east side. Still later, one-story, single-bay, wings were added to both the east and west ends of the house. The east wing has a flat roof and vinyl siding. The west wing has a shallow-gable balustraded roof with vinyl siding on the façade and asbestos shingles on the side and rear. The brick sections of the house exhibit a steep, side-gable roof with asbestos-shingled ends, asbestos-shingled gabled dormers across the front and

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rear, and center, rear and east-end chimneys. The recessed front entrance of the house is off-center and has a classical fluted surround. Windows are six-over-six sash. The house, built by Ruby Pearson, sits atop a steep hill overlooking East Main Street. Her parents had owned and lived in the frame Victorian-style Robert Staley House, which had stood on the site until it was demolished to make way for this house. Ruby Pearson later married A. B. "Dick" Johnston, who had a furniture business in North Wilkesboro (SM; TR; Bell Interview).

Garage
Ca. 1941

Contributing building

Immediately northwest of the house stands a matching single-bay, brick-veneered garage. It has a steep side-gable roof with asbestos-shingled gable ends. The vehicular entrance was on the east side but has been enclosed to turn the garage into an office (SM).

Shed
Mid-twentieth century

Contributing building

Behind the garage, at the edge of a steep drop-off, stands a frame shed. It has vertical-board siding, a metal-sheathed front-gable roof, and a single pedestrian door on the south gable end. Just east of the shed are concrete steps—now nearly hidden by overgrowth—that lead down the hill (SM).

Joe and Laura Pearson House II
302 East Main Street
Ca. 1940

Contributing building

Joe Pearson was the brother of Ruby Pearson (300 East Main Street). He and his wife built this house, which is very similar to Ruby Pearson's house, and occupied it for many years. Joe Pearson worked with Nike Smithey in his discount store business. The one-and-a-half-story, brick-veneered dwelling reflects the Colonial Revival style. It has a four-bay-wide façade, a steep, asbestos-tile-sheathed, side-gable roof with three asbestos-shingled gabled dormers on the front and a shed dormer on the rear, and both an interior and an east-side chimney. The off-center front entrance has a classical surround with sidelights. Windows are six-over-six sash. A gable-roofed porch with square posts extends from the east end of the house. A service porch, now enclosed, is located at the northwest rear corner of the house. Both porches are apparently original. Two flights of concrete steps lead from the street up the terraced front yard to the entrance of the house (Bell Interview; SM; TR).

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Garage
Ca. 1940

Contributing building

Northwest of the house stands the original single-bay garage. It is brick-veneered and has a front-gable roof with exposed rafter ends and asbestos-shingled gables.

Shed
Third quarter twentieth century

Noncontributing building

West of the house stands a shed with concrete-block walls, a flat roof, and an open south side.

Mac and Edith Foster Brown House
304 East Main Street
1932

Contributing building

Building contractor T. M. Foster (210 East Main Street) is believed to have built this house for his daughter and her husband, Mac Brown, who was an attorney. The one-story, brick-veneered, Craftsman bungalow has a brick foundation of a slightly different color than the rest of the house, a gable-front roof with knee-braced eaves, an off-center, vinyl-sided, gabled front porch with tapered wood posts set on tall brick plinths and a modern balustrade, and steep steps leading to the porch. About halfway along each side of the house is a shallow projection. A soldier course of bricks runs around the house at water table and cornice height and above the windows. The three-bay façade has a center entrance with a four-vertical-light-over-wood-paneled door flanked by a single window on the east side and a pair of windows on the west side. Windows are four-over-one sash in the Craftsman style. A brick retaining wall runs around the front yard (Bell Interview; SM; TR).

Garage
Ca. 1950

Noncontributing building

Behind and between 304 and 306 East Main Street is a shared former garage with concrete-block walls and a broad, front-gable roof sheathed with asphalt shingles. The wide single bay has been covered with T-111 siding with a pedestrian door.

Joe and Laura Pearson House I
306 East Main Street
1932

Contributing building

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Joe and Laura Pearson lived in this one-story brick-veneered Craftsman bungalow before they built their larger home a few years later at 302 East Main Street. The house is identical to the adjacent bungalow at 304 East Main Street, except that its brick foundation is the same color as the rest of the house and it has a concrete-block, rather than a brick, retaining wall around the front yard. Like its match, the house was probably constructed by building contractor T. M. Foster (Bell Interview; TR).

EAST MAIN STREET (South Side)

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

103 East Main Street

First quarter twentieth century; ca. 1950; last quarter twentieth century

When first built, this was a three-story brick store occupied by the Miller Brothers. After they left the building, it was used for several years as Spainhour's Store. By 1945, it was still three stories tall, but a 1956 newspaper photograph shows that the building had been reduced to one story. At that time, it was home to the Blue Ridge Tractor Company, which had been established in 1948. Through the years, the building has had numerous uses. The rather plain building has a rectangular brick panel in the upper façade and stepped parapets along the sides of the building. The current storefront has a central display window flanked by matching metal-and-glass doors – a reconfiguration from the last quarter of the twentieth century of the recessed entrance with flanking windows of the storefront in 1956. A small stuccoed addition was built to the rear of the building during the last quarter of the twentieth century. East of the building is a paved parking area (SM; Hubbard, 24; JP, October 15, 1956).

Northwestern Bank

Noncontributing building

105 East Main Street

Ca. 1950; last quarter of twentieth century

The two-story brick building was originally the Wilkesboro branch office of Northwestern Bank. Although the center three bays of the five-bay façade have been altered on the first story, the rest of the exterior remains intact. At either end of the first story, there are round-arched brick borders that frame a door in the east bay and the brass night deposit box in the west bay. The original two large circle windows and central door within a round-arched brick frame that distinguished the storefront were replaced with a plate-glass door and rectangular windows during the last quarter of the twentieth century. The second story of the façade has a pair of

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metal casement windows, while the side and rear windows are six-over-six sash (JP, October 15, 1956).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

107 East Main Street

Ca. 1925; last quarter twentieth century

Sanborn maps show that an auto repair shop was located in this one-story brick building from at least the 1920s through the mid-1940s. By the mid-1950s, the building was in use by a dry cleaning business. During the late twentieth century, the façade was brick-veneered and otherwise remodeled with new windows and door (SM; JP, October 15, 1956).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

109 East Main Street

Ca. 1910; mid-twentieth century

The storefront of this two-story brick building – with its recessed central entrance flanked by plate-glass windows and secondary entrance at the east end, all against a blank, painted brick wall – is a remodeling of the original, probably dating from the mid-twentieth century. Probably also at that time, the original two-over-two sash windows of the second-story façade were replaced with smaller metal casement windows. However, the brick segmental arches of the original four windows remain intact, as does the decorative paneled and corbeled cornice. The earliest known use of this building was as the Benbow and Tomlinson Store, operated by L. S. Benbow and S. V. Tomlinson. During the mid-twentieth century, Mrs. DeBerry operated a restaurant on the first floor and lived upstairs, until she built her house at 200 South West Street (Hubbard, 23; Bell Interview).

J. T. Ferguson Store

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

111 East Main Street

Ca. 1890

The date of construction of this two-story brick commercial building is not certain, but its present appearance, with its lavish pressed and cast iron storefront replete with classical details, dates from ca. 1890. Mesker Brothers of St. Louis manufactured the façade in 1887. Largely intact, the façade retains most of its metal work, its two-over-two sash windows, and its recessed front entrance flanked by glass display windows and topped by a transom band. The metal store front is a rare example of this type of commercial design in this area of North Carolina. The name J. T. Ferguson is emblazoned across a panel in the center of the cornice below the central parapet.

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Ferguson (1836-1907) was not only a dry goods merchant, but served as sheriff of Wilkes County in the 1870s and as mayor of Wilkesboro in the 1890s. By 1920 the Wilkes Patriot was being printed in the building, and for many years Parker Electric Company has occupied the building (NR).

Johnson-Hubbard House

113 East Main Street
Ca. 1855; ca. 1885

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

Merchant Stephen Johnson built the two-story frame, vernacular Greek Revival-style house within a couple of years of purchasing the property on November 2, 1854. After Stephen Johnson's death, his niece, Lula C. Hubbard and her husband, Julius Cicero Hubbard, purchased the house in 1885 and added the one-story rear ell that contained the dining room and kitchen. Merchant Julius C. Hubbard was in business with Jesse T. Ferguson, another uncle of Lula Hubbard, who owned the metal-front store building next door. The house remained in the ownership and occupancy of the Johnson-Hubbard family until 1987. The house has a stone foundation, weatherboard siding, classical corner posts, and gable-end brick chimneys, whose stuccoed and scored finish has been painted over in recent years. The triple-A gable roof has a wide frieze board beneath the overhanging eaves and a highly decorative round metal vent in the front gable. The five-bay-wide, single-pile house has six-over-six sash windows with louvered wood shutters. The center entrance bay has a double-leaf door with twelve-light sidelights and a thirty-light transom, all set against a flush-sheathed wall. Sheltering the front entrance is a hip-roofed porch with a sheaf-of-wheat balustrade and lattice posts. The interior of the house is sheathed with flush board. The center hall has a graceful open-string stair with a slender balustrade and newel, scrolled stair brackets, and a paneled skirt. One of the most outstanding features of the interior is the colorful painted marbling found on the baseboards, stair risers, and Greek Revival mantels of the two-story section of the house. The second-floor ceilings retain decorative smoked painting. The decorative painting in the house is believed to have been executed by an African American man named Harris, whose descendents are still painters in Wilkes County. A white picket fence borders the front of the property, giving it a decidedly domestic feel. Although the house once had several outbuildings, none survive (NR; Hubbard, 18).

Julius Cicero and Nellie White Hubbard House

115 East Main Street
1925

Contributing building

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This one-and-a-half-story frame house was originally the home of Julius Cicero Hubbard Jr. (son of Julius Cicero and Lula Hubbard of 113 East Main Street) and his wife, Nellie White Hubbard. It is now used as the offices of a local law firm. Sheathed in vinyl siding, the Colonial Revival-style house has a brick foundation and a side-gable roof with overhanging eaves and cornice returns. Two gabled dormers with cornice returns and casement windows are on the front of the house, and a shed-roofed dormer is on the rear. The three-bay façade has triple windows – four-over-one flanking a six-over-one sash – on either side of the central entrance with its sidelights and fanlight transom. Sheltering the entrance is a gabled porch with classical posts and deep cornice returns. A porch with a plain balustrade extends from the east side of the house, and two short ells project from the rear of the house (Bell Interview; SM; TR)

Storage Shed

Noncontributing building

Last quarter twentieth century

Southwest of the house stands a small frame storage shed with a concrete-pier foundation, vertical T-111 paneling, an asphalt-shingled side-gable roof, and a double-leaf door on the east side.

(Intersection with East Street)

George and Cordie Hayes Johnston House

Noncontributing building

201 East Main Street

Ca. 1930; last quarter twentieth century

The one-and-a-half-story house has a brick-veneered first story and a frame upper half story sheathed with vinyl German siding. Its side-gable roof is pierced by a pair of interior chimneys and large vinyl-sheathed gabled dormers on the front and rear slopes. The center entrance has sidelights, and six-over-one sash windows with brick flat-arched lintels are in pairs. Originally, porches carried across the front and the rear of the house. Probably during the last quarter of the twentieth century, the front porch was replaced with a center-bay entrance porch with classical columns and an iron-balustraded upper deck, while the rear porch was enclosed to create shed rooms. George Johnston worked at the Smoot Tannery across the river in North Wilkesboro (Bell Interview; SM).

Bumgarner-Bullis House

Contributing building

203 East Main Street

Ca. 1927

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The one-and-a-half-story frame Craftsman bungalow was built by Percy Bumgarner, who was a Wilkesboro merchant. When he bought a farm several years later, he sold the bungalow to Carl W. Bullis. Bullis was a craftsman—a jack of all trades—who had a workshop behind his house. This typical Craftsman bungalow has a brick foundation, replacement aluminum siding, a side-gable roof with overhanging knee-braced eaves and front and rear shed dormers, and a pair of interior chimneys. The roof flares out in front to cover an engaged porch with tapered wood posts set on brick plinths and a plain balustrade and in the rear to cover shed rooms. The house has paired bungalow-style windows and front entrance sidelights (SM; TR; Bell Interview).

Garage-Workshop

Contributing building

Second quarter twentieth century

Behind the house stands a two-bay garage with a concrete-block foundation, German siding, a side-gable roof, and sliding vehicular doors. A frame workshop, also with a gable roof but with exposed rafter ends, plain lapped siding, and a pair of French doors, is attached to the rear of the garage.

Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

205 East Main Street
1850

The Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, established in 1837, is the oldest Presbyterian church in twenty-one western North Carolina counties. Begun in 1849 and completed in 1850, the church building is one of only a few that remains from Wilkesboro's pre-Civil War development. With its chaste simplicity and temple-front tetrastyle portico, the church is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style. "Old Dameron," who also built the 1849 St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Wilkesboro, was the contractor for the Presbyterian church. Set far back from the street, the building is constructed of five-to-one common-bond brick. At the center of the three-bay façade is a double-leaf, paneled front door with long iron hinges and a five-light transom. Windows are nine-over-nine sash. The pedimented front gable is flush-sheathed, and four heavy, stuccoed-brick Doric columns support the portico. The belfry atop the church – with its steep metal roof, weatherboard siding, and scrolled brackets – dates from the late-nineteenth century. The interior continues the simplicity of the exterior (NR).

Education Building

Noncontributing building

Ca. 1980

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West of the church stands a one-story, brick-veneered, Colonial Revival-style Education Building whose four-bay façade is oriented eastward toward the church. The building has a side-gable roof, a classical cornice with cornice returns, a pedimented classical entrance porch, and four-over-four sash windows.

Dr. Ware's Dentist Office
207 East Main Street
1960s

Noncontributing building

Dr. Dwight Ware, a local dentist, built his office here in the mid-1960s. In recent years, the church bought the building, and it is currently used for children's art classes. The one-story, brick-veneered, Colonial Revival-style structure is two bays wide and has a broad front-gable roof with a vinyl-sheathed gable and a dentiled cornice. The building has twelve-over-twelve sash windows on the facade, and an engaged corner porch with Tuscan columns across the east half of the façade (Chambers Interview).

Store Building
209 East Main Street
Ca. 1950

Contributing building

The two-story frame building has a brick foundation, asbestos-shingle siding, a shallow front-gable roof, and six-over-six sash windows. The store front has a recessed glass-and-wood paneled door and flanking shop windows with transoms. A porch that sheltered the shop front was removed at an unknown date, but probably in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Exterior stairs on the east side of the building and at the rear lead to the second floor. A two-tier porch carries across the rear of the building. Its second floor is enclosed with screens and a solid, vertical-board skirt. Originally, this was the Parks-Reid Store, probably built during the second quarter of the twentieth century and located just outside of town. James Hubbard dismantled and moved the building to its present site in the mid-twentieth century when he and his wife came to take care of his mother, Annie Hubbard, who lived next door at 211 East Main Street. However, James died before he could make use of the building. Since then it has served variously as a Justice of the Peace office downstairs, an apartment upstairs, Dick Perdue's radio shop, Dolly Wagner's dress shop and, for nearly the last half century, as Harvey Chambers's upholstery shop (Chambers Interview; Bell Interview).

Calloway-Hubbard House
211 East Main Street
1873

Contributing building

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Dr. James Calloway (1806-1878) was the first of the Wilkes County doctors to graduate from a recognized medical school, the University of Pennsylvania. He practiced medicine for forty years in Wilkesboro at the southwest corner of West Main and South Bridge streets, a location that came to be known as Calloway Corner. In 1870 he moved to Kansas, where he owned 7,000 acres, but after two years he returned to Wilkesboro and built the home at 211 East Main Street where he lived until his death. One of the Calloway daughters, Annie, married Joel T. Hubbard, and they reared their children in the house. One of their children, Fred C. Hubbard, became another prominent Wilkesboro doctor and historian. The house remained in Hubbard family ownership and occupancy until recent years. The two-story frame house, now sheathed in vinyl German siding, has a brick and concrete-block foundation and triple-A gable roof with single-shoulder brick chimneys with penciled joints at east and west gable ends. The one-story hip-roofed porch that wraps across the three-bay façade and down the east side of the house has turned posts, sawnwork brackets, and pedimented front and side entrance bays. The glass-and-wood-paneled front entrance has a transom and sidelights; windows are replacement one-over-one sash. A two-story ell with a large interior chimney extends to the rear of the house, and one- and two-story brick and frame rooms have been built within the two wings formed by the ell. The house stands on a large corner lot, and a low stone retaining wall with grapevine mortar joints borders the front yard and part of the east side of the lot. Stone posts flank the steps leading from the sidewalk to the front walk leading to the house. An iron safety fence borders the street side of the sidewalk (Hubbard, 15; Hubbard, *Physicians*, 6-8).

Smokehouse-Garage

Contributing building

Last quarter nineteenth century; second quarter twentieth century; third quarter twentieth century

Standing directly behind the rear ell of the house is a smokehouse that was expanded in later years to become a garage. The original part of the one-story building has a brick foundation, weatherboard siding, a steep, metal-sheathed gable roof, a six-over-six sash window at the west end, and two entrances at the east end. Board-and-batten and German-sided sheds, both with metal-sheathed roofs, were added to the north and south sides of the building, probably during the second quarter of the twentieth century. Probably during the third quarter of the twentieth century, a garage with a concrete-block foundation, T-111 siding, and a side-gabled roof sheathed with asphalt on the north side and metal on the south side was added to the east end of the smokehouse. Its large single bay opens to the north.

Well House

Contributing building

First quarter twentieth century

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A well house stands near the east property line. It has a brick and concrete foundation, lattice walls with openings on the north, south, and west sides and a steep standing-seam metal roof with German sided gable ends. The well has been covered with a concrete slab.

Barn

Contributing building

First quarter twentieth century

Near the southeast corner of the property stands a one-story frame barn. It has a gable roof sheathed in standing-seam metal, vertical-board siding, and sheds, now closed with plywood, on the north, east, and west sides, giving the barn the appearance of having a gable-on-hip roof. At the rear of the barn are a pair of two-over-two sash windows and a concrete block stack.

(Intersection with Corporation Street)

Davis-Crysel House

Contributing building

301 East Main Street
1888; ca. 2000

The form of this two-story frame house remains the same, along with some of the details, but there have been ca. 2000 alterations and additions including vinyl siding, replacement six-over-six sash windows, replacement porch posts, a low border of modern landscaping stones around the wraparound hip-roofed porch and a wood deck in the rear. Nevertheless, the house retains its brick foundation, triple-A gable roof with diamond-shaped louvered vents in the gable ends, interior chimney, one-story rear ell with shed-roofed porch, and sidelights and transom around the front door. Of particular interest is the 1888 date cut out on the front gable vent. The first known occupants of the house were the C. U. Davis family, who may have been the original owners. After they moved to Winston-Salem, Thomas M. and Cora Crysel and their descendents lived in the house until at least 1980. They operated a boarding house there through the 1930s. According to Thomas Crysel's gravestone in the nearby Presbyterian Cemetery, he was the court cryor for forty-five years, missing only three sessions of court (Hubbard, 13; Bell Interview).

Pharr House

Contributing building

303 East Main Street
Ca. 1900

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The one-story frame house, now sheathed in vinyl German siding, has a concrete-block foundation, a triple-A gable roof with the outline of the original diamond-shaped louvered vents in the east and west gables, and the original crossetted, peaked vent with louvers in the front gable. The three-bay façade retains its one-over-one sash windows with louvered wood shutters and the central entrance with crossetted surround. A hip-roofed porch with turned posts shelters most of the façade. The house has a rear ell and shed rooms and a wood deck at the rear. A stone retaining wall borders the front yard. Retired Civil War veteran Lafayette M. Pharr and his wife, Flora Bell, were the original owners of the house. They had five children; their two sons, Wrenn and Welborn, published North Wilkesboro's *The Hustler* newspaper for many years (Hubbard, 13)

Starr House

Contributing building

305 East Main Street
Ca. 1910

The Starrs were the original owners of this one-story-with-basement frame house. Mr. Starr was a tinner. He and his wife had three children: Eloise, Robert, and Weaver. Eloise taught school in Wilkes County for many years. Robert and Weaver both worked for the Bank of North Wilkesboro and both were members of the Wilkes Concert Band. The plain house, now covered with vinyl siding, has a concrete-block foundation, a triple-A gable roof, two-over-two sash windows, a three-bay façade, and a replacement shed-roofed porch with square posts that shelters the center-bay glass-and-wood-paneled entrance. The two-story rear ell (the land slopes away sharply from the street creating a lower story) has wood stairs on the west side leading to the shed-roofed side entrance porch. Concrete steps from the sidewalk lead down to a basement entrance on the east side (Hubbard, 13).

WEST MAIN STREET (North Side)

Texaco Station

Noncontributing building

100 West Main Street
1964

Built in 1964 as a Texaco service station, this one-story modernistic commercial building replaced a 1920s gas station. Set back from the corner with concrete pavement on the south and east sides, it is a one-story building with metal panels on the front (south) and east sides and concrete blocks on the rear (north) and west sides. The building has a low gable roof with vinyl-sheathed gables and overhanging eaves on the south and east sides. A glass-enclosed office is in

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the east half of the building. Its door and the two restroom doors on the east end have transoms. The west half of the building has two service bays with twelve-light steel doors (Cantor Interview).

Parking Lot

This landscaped city parking lot was the site of the early-nineteenth-century Waugh-Peden House, which stood far back on the lot, but was demolished during the third quarter of the twentieth century.

Prevette-Lenderman Building

Contributing building

104 West Main Street

Ca. 1900; second quarter twentieth century

This two-story frame commercial building has a stuccoed foundation, a standing-seam-metal gable-front roof with deep eaves, a two-bay façade, and one-over-one sash windows, many on the sides covered with lattice. Sheltered by a metal awning, the façade storefront has a recessed central entrance with a double-leaf door, a painted transom, and flanking two- and four-light shop windows. The front and two sides of the building were covered with rough stucco, probably during the second quarter of the twentieth century. The rear, with its exterior wood stair to a second-story porch and shallow shed-roofed addition, was sheathed in vinyl German siding in 2007. According to local historian Dottie Hubbard, attorneys John G. and Joseph M. Prevette built the building and may have used it as their law office. In 1917 they bought the Wilkes Patriot from Charles H. Cowles, but at that time the paper was being printed in the J. T. Ferguson Building. Mrs. Prevette ran a popular millinery shop in the building. The post office was located here in the early 1910s, and between 1920 and 1922 Dr. A. R. Gray operated a drug store in the building. C. M. Gray was a linotype operator and had a print shop in the building. He bought the Wilkes Patriot and printed it there. In the early 1930s, J. L. Garwood operated a piano store here. From the late 1930s to the early 1990s, the building was owned by the Lenderman family and served as the Lenderman Shoe Shop (Hubbard Interview; Porter Interview; Hubbard, 27).

Storage Shed

Noncontributing building

2007

Behind the Prevette-Lenderman Building stands a small, pre-fabricated, frame storage building with T-111 siding, a front-gable roof, and a double-leaf door on the west gable end.

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Prevette-Lenderman House

Contributing building

106 West Main Street
Ca. 1900; ca. 2000

The two-story, L-shaped, frame house of simple Queen Anne style has a stone-pier foundation, weatherboard siding, a gabled roof, and two interior chimneys. Most of the original four-over-four sash windows have been replaced with six-over-six sash; the louvered wood shutters remain intact. The west third of the hip-roofed front porch has been enclosed in recent years, but the remainder of the porch retains its original turned posts, sawnwork brackets, and turned balustrade. The central entrance has a glass-and wood-paneled door flanked by three-light sidelights above wood panels. At the rear of the house, multiple shed rooms from various periods group around the north and east sides of the ell; the second story of the ell has a shed-roofed, balustraded porch which is accessed by a steep, exterior wood stair. Attorney Joseph M. Prevette was the original owner of the house. Around 1938, Henry and Alma Lenderman purchased the house, which remains in Lenderman family ownership and occupancy (Porter Interview; SM)

Barn

Contributing building

Ca. 1900

At the northwest, rear, corner of the deep house lot stands a center-passage frame barn. The barn has a stone foundation, a combination of weatherboard and vertical-board siding and a metal-sheathed front-gable roof with slatted vents under the gable eaves.

Storage Shed

Noncontributing building

Ca. 2000

Northwest of the house, along the side property line, stands a small metal storage shed on concrete blocks with a low front-gable roof and double-leaf sliding doors on the east end.

Jesse T. Ferguson House

Contributing building

108 West Main Street
1877

Although the two-story frame house has been sheathed in recent years with vinyl German siding and the original six-over-six sash windows have been replaced with four-over-four sash, it retains many original features, particularly those of a fanciful nature on the exterior. The house has a brick foundation and a side gable roof. The three-bay façade has a projecting second-story

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center bay whose window has four-light sidelights that echo those on the first-floor center-bay entrance. The front roof gable is decorated with a curvilinear, pierced bargeboard, whose central pendant carries the cut-out inscription “77,” presumably reflecting the date of construction. Running across the façade and wrapping around the east corner of the house is a one-story, hip-roofed porch with a turned balustrade, posts with lattice above panels, and lacy sawnwork brackets. The east side of the porch shelters an exterior stair to the second floor with a metal-roofed enclosure at the top. The whole reflects the romantic Picturesque movement in architecture popular in America during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. A two-story ell with an interior chimney extends to the rear of the house, where there are several shed-roofed additions of undetermined date. Jesse T. Ferguson, Wilkesboro merchant and county sheriff between 1870 and 1874, was the original owner of the house. The Daniel Smoak family occupied the house during the 1910s. Fred C. Henderson and his family purchased the house in 1933, and it remained in their ownership and occupancy for over half a century (Henderson Interview).

WEST MAIN STREET (South Side)

Commercial Building

101 West Main Street
1956

Contributing building

The Dodge House was located at this site in the nineteenth century; later the site became known as Calloway Corner. By 1945 the corner lot stood vacant, and the present commercial building was erected in 1956. The two-story, rectangular, brick-veneered structure is three bays wide and six bays deep and has a flat, parapeted roof. The recessed storefront that carries across the east three-fifths of the façade has a square, fluted-wood corner post and aluminum-edged door and windows. A secondary wood door at the west end of the façade opens to the stair to the second floor. A smaller display window is positioned on the east elevation just around the corner from the façade. Metal casement windows line the second story. A mechanical lift is located at the rear of the building (Hubbard, 29).

Parking Lot

Between 101 and 105 West Main Street is a paved parking lot that serves both buildings.

Commercial Building

105 West Main Street
Ca. 1950

Contributing building

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Currently used as a law office, this one-story brick-veneer building has a parapet roof with terra cotta cornice coping. The deeply recessed central entrance consists of a pair of French doors with a two-light transom above. Large shop windows flank the entrance. The east side of the building has a blind stepped elevation. On the rear are a central garage bay with adjacent pedestrian door, above which are two industrial windows flanking a smaller one-over-one sash window.

Bank of Wilkes

Contributing building

107 West Main Street

First quarter twentieth century; ca. 1950

The one-story brick commercial building was originally the Bank of Wilkes, which failed in 1929. Beginning around 1950, along with 109 West Main Street, the building was occupied by People's Drug Store. The upper façade dates from the original construction and is composed of checkerboard brick with a central panel and a two-layer dental course. The parapet roof has a terra cotta coping. The remodeled lower façade, with its aluminum-bordered glass door and display windows set within a simulated masonry background and headed by a broad band of black Carrara glass panels, dates from the mid-twentieth century, when the building became a drug store. A round fabric awning shelters the entrance (Bell Interview; Hubbard, 31).

People's Drug Store

Contributing building

109 West Main Street

Ca. 1950

A one-story brick commercial building stood on this site from as early as 1920. However, the present building may not have been erected until the mid-twentieth century. Its upper façade has running bond brick, and there is a parapet roof. The lower façade bears the same treatment as 107 West Main Street in its aluminum-bordered doors and windows, simulated masonry, and wide band of black Carrara glass panels. Both the west side elevation and the rear of the building have rows of header bricks that contrast in color with the stretcher rows. The rear of the building has a below-grade double-leaf door and a loading porch. Along with 107 West Main Street, it housed the People's Drug Store for a number of years during the mid-twentieth century (SM; Porter Interview; Hubbard, 31).

Morrison Hardware Store

Contributing building

111 West Main Street

Ca. 1890; second quarter twentieth century

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The two-story brick commercial building has a parapet roof. Two-over-two sash windows set within segmental-arched openings are on the second story of the façade; while the two-over-two sash windows on the east elevation are set within a rectangular opening. Probably during the second quarter of the twentieth century – at the same time as the Prevet-Lenderman Building across the street – the façade was covered with rough stucco. Around the same time, the store front was modified with metal-framed flush-glass windows and door with transom, brick aprons beneath the windows, and an applied dentil cornice. The building was originally the hardware store of F. C. Morrison. In the mid-twentieth century, Lester Gambill, who had worked for Morrison, took over the store (Hubbard, 31; Porter Interview).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

113 West Main Street

First quarter twentieth century; last quarter twentieth century

Although this one-story brick commercial building was likely built during the first quarter of the twentieth century, its façade was remodeled during the second quarter of the century, when a 1956 photograph shows it with a rough stuccoed façade – like the adjacent Morrison Hardware Store – a largely enclosed central entrance area with a pair of wood doors with a six-light transom, and large flanking windows that are eight-over-two and eight-over one sash. Probably during the last quarter of the twentieth century, the façade was altered again with the installation of aluminum-framed windows and door, the application of a metal simulated stone veneer, and a wood shake canopy over the sidewalk. The west side of the building retains a blind stepped elevation, and the rear retains its original segmental-arched openings.

Warren Miller's Grocery Store

Contributing building

117 West Main Street

Ca. 1945; last quarter twentieth century

This one-story brick commercial building is one of the most architecturally intact of those along West Main Street. It has a deeply recessed central entrance with a two-light transom, large shop windows with a low, stuccoed skirt, a three-light transom across the entire shop front, and an upper façade composed of three recessed corbelled panels and a parapeted roof line. The west side of the building has a blind stepped elevation and brick header rows that contrast in color from the rows of stretchers. During the mid-twentieth century, Warren Miller operated a grocery store in the original section of the building. A hip-roofed addition was built to the east side, probably during the late twentieth century, on what had been the site of the C. E. Lenderman's feed and seed store. It features a recessed entry flanked by small display windows (Porter Interview).

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Gray Brothers Furniture Company
125 West Main Street
1946; ca. 2000

Contributing building

This large two-story brick building (four stories in rear when the land slopes downward) was originally, and until 2004, the store of Gray Brothers Furniture Company, a prominent home goods business in Wilkes County. It is now an antiques mall. The four-bay-wide building has a corbelled cornice, metal tilt windows (partly covered on either side by added shutters), and added ironwork balconies. The façade's first story has been remodeled in recent years with Colonial Revival-style shop windows with pediments and a recessed entrance. The interior retains pressed metal ceilings and a mezzanine balcony around three sides. East of the building is a paved parking area associated with it (Hubbard, 32; *Journal-Patriot*, October 15, 1956).

Warehouse
Ca. 1950

Contributing building

Southeast of the furniture store, at the rear end of the parking area, stands the Gray Brothers Warehouse. The one-story concrete-block building has stepped end parapets, a banked basement drive-in bay at the south end of the west side elevation, and a brick veneered façade. A shed-roofed loading dock carries across the front of the building sheltering four windows, two pedestrian doors, and a roll-up loading door. An open shed runs across the rear of the building.

Storage Building
Last quarter twentieth century

Noncontributing building

Facing the alley southwest of the furniture store are two storage buildings erected at different times. The easternmost building is a one-story structure with asbestos-shingle siding and a broad side-gable roof covered with corrugated metal. The north side of the building, facing the alley, has a garage door, a pedestrian door, and a single, two-over-two horizontal-sash window.

Storage Building
Last quarter twentieth century

Noncontributing building

The westernmost storage building is the larger of the two. It is a taller one-story, concrete-block building with a side-gable roof with asbestos shingles in the gables. A double door, a garage door, and a pair of six-over-six sash windows are on the north

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elevation of the building; the south elevation has two pairs of six-over-six sash windows and a single window.

Gas Station

Noncontributing building

127 West Main Street
1964

A filling station has stood on this corner lot at least since 1926, but this modernist station was built in 1964. The rectangular, concrete-block building is sheathed in metal panels on the north and west sides, has a glassed-in office, replacement garage doors, and restrooms with transoms opening from the west elevation. The east elevation has a pair of steel industrial windows. The most interesting feature is the slanted canopy that extends northward from the office. Three modernist light poles are positioned along West Main Street and South West Street.

(Intersection with South West Street)

(Former) Federal Building

Contributing building (NR, 1982)

201 West Main Street
1915

A one-story, yellow, brick-veneered building with raised center section, the former Federal Building is an outstanding example of the Federal Revival style of architecture in this part of North Carolina. Designed by Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore, the building demonstrates a Palladian influence in its five-part symmetrical façade, and both the exterior and the interior exhibit elegant classical detailing and a high quality use of terra cotta, brick, wood, marble, and plaster. The base of the building has a windowed basement, separated from the primary wall surface by a concrete water table surmounted by a brick soldier course. All but the center block of the building is capped by a simple, moulded, terra cotta cornice and parapeted roof line. The three-bay center block rises to nearly a two-story height. Tall, round-arched windows at first-story level provide the feeling of an arcade. Slender classical pilasters separate the windows and rise another half-story height above the main level of the building. The upper level of this central section is punctuated by small round windows which encircle the building. Topping the façade pilasters is a full, pedimented entablature detailed with medallions, a dentil course, egg-and-dart moulding, and other classical motifs. At the base of the center block is a narrow terrace across the front that is bordered by a decorative ironwork balustrade of diamond-patterned design. The ends of the balustrade are marked by elaborate ironwork lamp posts. Beyond the lamp posts are steps leading from the sidewalk to the two front entrances located in the hyphens between the taller center block and the projecting one-story wings. The two double-

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leaf doors are flanked by fluted engaged columns and headed by a well-detailed full entablature. The whole is surmounted by a semi-circular fanlight of delicate design. The one-story side wings complete the five-part composition. The relatively simple wings have smooth brick walls punctuated by eight-over-eight sash windows headed by a four-light transom and with a paneled dado below. Accenting each window placement is a plain rectangular block that surmounts each. The building served as the United States Courthouse and Post Office for over half a century until the Johnson J. Hayes Federal Building at the west end of this block of West Main Street was completed in 1969 (NR).

EAST NORTH STREET (South Side)

House

105 East North Street
Ca. 1940

Contributing building

Hattie Smithey (Mrs. Nike Smithey) built this house and the one at 107 East North Street as rental properties containing three apartments each. This one-and-a-half-story, frame, period-cottage-style house has a brick foundation and basement, German siding, a side-gable roof with an intersecting east front gable, and a single gabled dormer on the front and rear. The asymmetrical façade has a central entrance with a pedimented porch. East of the entrance, a brick chimney with a single shoulder on the east side rises just east of the front-gable peak and is flanked by one-over-one sash windows at first-story level. Other windows are six-over-six sash. A single window is positioned just west of the chimney at upper story height, and another is located in the west bay of the façade. There are two rear interior chimneys and a rear screened porch (Bell Interview).

House

107 East North Street
Ca. 1940

Contributing building

Hattie Smithey (Mrs. Nike Smithey) built this house and the one at 105 East North Street as rental properties containing three apartments each. This one-and-a-half-story, frame, Colonial Revival-style house has a brick foundation and basement, beveled weatherboard siding, and a side-gable roof. An interior chimney rises from the main block of the house and another from the rear ell. Two front dormers have cornice returns. The three-bay façade has a central entrance sheltered by projecting walls on either side of the door that support a gabled roof. Windows are six-over-six sash. A sun room with an added balustraded roof-top deck extends

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from the east side of the house and has a separate entrance on the front flanked by four-over-four sash windows. A bay window projects from the west side of the house, and a gabled ell extends to the rear of the house and includes a shed-roofed screened porch (Bell Interview).

EAST SOUTH STREET (South Side)

Wallace House

Contributing building

101 East South Street

Second quarter nineteenth century; first quarter twentieth century

The small, one-and-a-half-story, heavy-timber frame house is one of the oldest dwellings in Wilkesboro. The three-bay-wide house rests on a fieldstone foundation, has weatherboard siding, and a side-gable roof with wide gable frieze and rake boards. A gable-end brick chimney has been stuccoed during the last quarter century. A shed-roofed porch with slender, classical, square posts and lattice panels at either end shelters the flush-sheathed façade. Windows are six-over-six sash in the main block of the house, and four-over-four sash, one-over-one sash, and fixed in the ell. A shed-roofed dormer with exposed rafter ends and triple four-light windows on the front roof slope probably dates from the first quarter of the twentieth century. The long, one-story, rear ell with several additions and screened porches has a brick foundation and basement and two interior chimneys. Like the front dormer, it appears to date from the first quarter of the twentieth century. Significant interior features recorded in 1981 include a hall-and-parlor plan, a transitional Federal-Greek Revival-style mantel, an enclosed corner stair with refined balustrade and newel in the loft, and a batten loft door with beaded-edged casing and H-and-L hinges. The first-known owner of the house was Captain Wallace, a Civil War veteran. In later years the house was owned and occupied by Ed Smithy and his family. The house remains in Smithy family ownership (Hubbard, 24)

George and Mildred Childress House

Contributing building

103 East South Street

Ca. 1949

Mildred Childress was the daughter of W. E. Smithey, who lived at 101 East South Street, and the sister of Henry Smithey, who lived at 200 South Bridge Street. This typical post-war, Minimal Traditional-style house is a boxy, one-story frame dwelling, three bays wide and two bays deep, with a short, gabled rear ell. Resting on a stuccoed foundation, the house has asbestos-shingle siding, one-over-one sash windows, a broad side-gable roof, and an interior rear

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chimney. A gabled porch with lattice posts and a fence-like railing shelters the center-bay entrance (Bell Interview).

(Intersection with East Street)

Presbyterian Cemetery

Contributing site

Southwest corner East South and Corporation streets
1811 – ca. 2004

Surrounded by a chain link fence, the Presbyterian Cemetery occupies the eastern half of the block bounded by East South Street, Corporation Street, East Henderson Drive, and East Street. Cedar, holly, and oak trees shade the serene cemetery. The approximately 175 gravestones range in date from 1811 (earliest marked stone) to ca. 2004, with more than half pre-dating 1910. Included are types of markers common during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and there are eleven unmarked fieldstones. Most of the markers are vertical tablets with both a head and a foot stone. These have curved tops in the baroque manner; peaked or angular tops in the neo-classical manner; or flat or slightly arched heads. Some are more monumental in size and design, and there are several obelisks. The most unusual marker dates from 1929 and is a railing marker. It looks like a low, concrete bed frame with an inscription in hand-cut sheet metal attached to the west end. Several family plots are enclosed with low stone, brick, or concrete walls. Most notable is the Finley family plot in the northeast corner of the cemetery, which is enclosed with a Victorian ironwork fence. As one of the two oldest cemeteries in Wilkesboro (the other being the Episcopal cemetery), the Presbyterian Cemetery contains the graves of many who were prominent during the town's first century of development. Among these people were the Calloway, Cowles, Cranor, Finley, Greene, Gwyn, Lenderman, Peden, Pharr, Somers, Staley, and Vannoy families (McNeil and McNeil).

WEST SOUTH STREET (North Side)

House

Noncontributing building

108 West South Street
Ca. 1947; 2007

This one-story, frame, post-war Minimal Traditional-style house has a brick foundation, a side-gable roof, and two interior brick chimneys. It is four bays wide. The house has been significantly remodeled recently with the application of vinyl siding, replacement one-over-one sash windows and doors, and a brick and concrete handicap ramp across half the front. To the

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east of the glass front door is a porthole window. During the early years of the house, J. R. Priester maintained an office here (Bell Interview; TR).

House

Contributing building

110 West South Street
Ca. 1947

Sited uphill from West South Street and having a large oak tree providing shelter to the front yard, this one-story, frame, Minimal Traditional-style house is typical of many built in the years shortly after World War II. Now covered with vinyl siding, the boxy house has a concrete-block foundation, six-over-six sash windows, a broad side-gable roof, and an interior ridge chimney. The three-bay façade has a center projecting entrance bay with a front-gable roof and ironwork railing on either side of the uncovered stoop. A double-shouldered front chimney rises just west of the entrance bay. On the east side of the house, a projecting gable-roofed room is set back from the main façade. In the same position on the west side of the house is a hip-roofed screened porch. Attached to the rear of the porch is a shed-roofed metal carport. At the southeast corner of the house, an ironwork rail marks the exterior stair to the basement (TR).

WEST SOUTH STREET (South Side)

Fidell and Sally Frazier House

Contributing building

101 West South Street
Ca. 1932

The one-and-a-half-story frame Craftsman bungalow has a brick foundation, weatherboard siding, a side-gable roof with knee-braced eaves and front and rear shed-roofed wall dormers, and two interior chimneys. Three bays wide, the house has paired two-over-two sash windows and a central entrance with a bungalow-style glass-paned door flanked by bungalow-style sidelights. A shed-roofed front porch supported by tapered and paneled wood posts on brick plinths extends west of the house to form a porte-cochere. A porch across the rear of the house was later converted to shed rooms with two-over-two horizontal-sash windows. This was the home of Fidell and Sally Frazier, who married on December 19, 1931. Frazier ran a plumbing business for thirty-two years. He served on the town board for nine years, and then served as the mayor of Wilkesboro from 1975 through 1997. The house has remained in family ownership (Bell Interview; TR; WJP).

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Shop
Ca. 1950

Contributing building

Behind the southwest corner of the house stands a shop building. It is German sided, has a front gable roof, an entrance with a batten door at the northeast corner, and small, asymmetrically placed windows on all sides.

House
105 West South Street
Ca. 1930

Noncontributing building

The one-and-a-half-story frame Craftsman bungalow retains its broad side-gable roof with overhanging knee-braced eaves, front and rear shed dormers, and wood-shingle siding on the upper level. However, the first story and the eaves have been covered with vinyl siding, the west half of the front porch has been enclosed, and the remaining porch corner post has been replaced by a plain post. Windows are a mix of old and new – four-over-one and one-over-one sash. Most of the front yard has been paved. For some years, the bungalow has been used as a rental house.

House
107 West South Street
1935

Contributing building

This simple, one-and-a-half-story frame house has a brick-pier foundation, vinyl siding, and a steep, metal-sheathed, gable-front roof with deep eaves. Three interior chimneys pierce the roof. All windows of the three-bay-wide, double-pile house, including the pair in the front gable, are one-over-one sash. A shed-roofed front porch, the east half of which is engaged, has plain posts and an off-center recessed entrance. Shed rooms run across the rear of the house.

(Intersection with former Brushy Mountain Road, now an alley)

Zachary and Nora Belle Yates Ferguson House
111 West South Street
Ca. 1945

Contributing building

Typical of many houses built in the wake of World War II, this one-story, Minimal Traditional-style frame dwelling has a concrete-block foundation, vinyl siding, and a broad side-gable roof with an interior brick chimney. Windows are paired four-over-four sash. The three-bay façade has a central gabled porch with simple classical posts that shelters a replacement front door. A

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gabled porch on the east side of the house has classical posts matching those of the front entrance porch. A short, gabled ell with an interior chimney projects from the rear of the house (Bell Interview).

Storage Shed
Ca. 1990

Noncontributing building

At the southwest corner of the lot stands a small metal storage shed with a low gambrel roof and a double-leaf door at the north end. A vinyl picket fence runs from the storage shed to the front of the property.

House
113 West South Street
Ca. 1950

Contributing building

This one-story, post-World War II, Minimal Traditional-style house is boxy in form, has a concrete -lock foundation, vinyl siding, a side-gable roof, and a chimney projecting from the rear roof slope. The three-bay façade features a central entrance sheltered by a gabled porch with an arched hood and square posts. The entrance is flanked by picture windows, and the house's other windows are one-over-one sash. A modern wood deck is on the rear of the house.

(Intersection with South West Street)

Parking Lot

The paved and gravel parking lot along the south side of the 200 block of West South Street once was the site of the late-1920s one-story frame building that housed primary grades 1 through 3 of the Wilkesboro Elementary School (Walsh Interview).

(Former) Wilkesboro Elementary School
215 West South Street
1937

Contributing building

The former Wilkesboro Elementary School was erected in 1937 with aid of Works Progress Administration labor and the state Literary Loan Fund. When built, the elementary school stood just south of the 1908 Wilkesboro High School, which was demolished in the early 1960s to make way for construction of the present Johnson J. Hayes Federal Building. The elementary school operated as such until 1964, when the current Wilkesboro Elementary School was erected

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at another location. From 1964 until 2006, the Wilkes County Board of Education continued to use the old elementary school building for a media and resource center, conference rooms, and offices. The building is currently owned by the county and stands vacant. Although the Wilkesboro Elementary School faces Woodland Boulevard, its address is currently on West South Street. Because of the slope of the land from north to south, the school is one-story at the north end and two-story at the south end. The rectangular building has a concrete foundation, six-to-one common bond brick walls with decorative basket-weave brick and concrete belt courses, and a side gable roof with parapeted ends with concrete coping. At the center of each parapet is a semi-circular, louvered vent. The roof is covered with patterned-metal shingles and has small, gabled, louvered dormers – three on the west side and one on the east side. An interior chimney pierces the roof near the center of the east slope. The intersecting east gable has a stepped-parapet end. Originally triple-hung sash, the windows have been replaced with smaller one-over-one sash windows and vinyl-sided infill. The doors have also been replaced, but retain original multi-light transoms and are recessed. On the west side of the building, tall steps rise to a classical pedimented entrance porch with tapered square posts. Inside the school, plastered walls, beaded-board wainscots, and glass and wood-paneled doors with multi-light transoms remain intact (Walsh Interview; *Lest We Forget*, 163).

Agriculture Department Building 1949

Contributing building

Southeast of the main school building along West Henderson Drive stands a one-story, concrete-block building that originally served as the agriculture department for the Wilkesboro High School on the adjacent property to the north. After the Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro high schools consolidated during the 1952-53 school year, this building was converted to a lunch room for the elementary school. The building has a parapeted roof with ceramic tile coping, large metal-frame tilt windows, and ground-level entrances on the east and west ends. At the center of the north elevation is a partially below-grade entrance with steps leading down to it (*Lest We Forget*, 163).

Storage Building Ca. 1980

Noncontributing building

Facing West Henderson Drive adjacent to the Agriculture Department Building is a long, low storage building whose shed roof barely rises above ground level on its north side. The concrete-block building has T-111 siding along the south side framing two pedestrian doors and three metal loading doors.

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SOUTH WEST STREET (East Side)

Worth Morrison House
104 South West Street
1940

Contributing building

First owner Worth Morrison was the son of F. C. Morrison, owner of the Morrison Hardware Store at 111 West Main Street. The one-and-a-half-story-with-basement brick-veneer house is a good example of the Period Cottage style. The steep front-gable roof swoops downward in a curve toward the north, ending with an engaged porch with segmental-arched openings. At the south end of the façade, a slightly projecting gabled entrance bay with a round-arched door echoes the main body of the house in the swoop of its roof. Windows are six-over-six sash, except for two small casement windows within the cross gable that flank the chimney on the south elevation. All are set under brick flat-arched lintels. An interior chimney rises from the southeast corner of the house. On the north side of the house is a steep and narrow shed-roofed dormer covered with asbestos shingles. At the rear of the house is a shed-roofed screened porch (Bell Interview; SM; TR).

Garage
Ca. 1950

Contributing building

Behind the house, and facing West South Street, is a two-bay garage with a concrete-block foundation, asbestos-shingle siding, six-over-six sash windows, lift vehicular doors, and a steep front-gable roof.

(Intersection with West South Street)

DeBerry House
200 South West Street
Ca. 1945

Contributing building

The DeBerry family was the first family known to occupy this one-and-a-half-story-with-basement, brick-veneer, Period Cottage. A curving stone walk leads from the street to the small entrance terrace of the three-bay façade. Features of note include the granite trim surrounding the round-arched front door and the adjacent front chimney with its decorative granite blocks. Other features include a brick foundation, a side-gable roof, a lower projecting front gable at the south end of the façade, a rear gabled wing, vinyl siding in the side and rear gable ends, and one-over-one sash windows. A secondary entrance on the north side of the house has an entrance

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stoop covered by a metal awning. A flat-roofed carport is attached to the rear of the house (Bell Interview).

House

Contributing building

202 South West Street
Ca. 1937

The one-and-a-half-story frame dwelling with Craftsman influence has a brick foundation and basement, vinyl siding, paired six-over-six sash windows, and a broad, metal-sheathed, front-gable roof. Gabled entrance porches with chamfered posts are on the west and north sides of the house. Concrete tracks form a driveway on the north side. Craftsman-style touches are seen in the front door with its six lights above a pair of tall wood panels and in the adjacent casement window. Other windows are six-over-six sash (SM; TR).

Roby R. Church House

Contributing building

204 South West Street
Ca. 1937

This was initially the home of salesman Roby R. Church. Now apartments, the one-and-a-half-story frame, Period Cottage-style house has a brick foundation, aluminum siding, an asymmetrical façade, two chimneys, and a side-gable roof with an off-center intersecting front gable. Two front entrances have small porches with ironwork posts. Flanking the main entrance are a pair of large, multi-paned picture windows, while at the south end of the house another picture window has a plain glass center section flanked by narrow four-over-four sash windows. Behind (east of) the house is a concrete addition, originally a garage, with a shed-roofed deck above it. A concrete-block retaining wall runs along the south side of the house (Bell Interview; TR).

Vacant Lot

(Intersection with West Henderson Drive)

Cundiff House

Contributing building

300 South West Street
Ca. 1946

The early history of this house is associated with a Mr. Cundiff, an African American house painter. The one-and-a-half-story frame Craftsman bungalow has a stuccoed foundation, vinyl

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siding, a broad side-gable roof with front and rear shed dormers, and an attached shed-roofed front porch with square posts and a plain balustrade that is balanced by shed rooms across the rear of the house. Steep steps rise to the front porch of the three-bay façade with its central Craftsman four-light-over-wood-panels door flanked by paired two-over-two sash. Other windows are single or paired two-over-two sash. An off-center brick chimney rises on the side of the house (Bell Interview; TR).

Storage Shed

Noncontributing building

Last quarter twentieth century

Northeast of the house stand two storage sheds. The larger of the two has a concrete-block pier foundation, vertical T-111 paneling, and a low front-gable roof. Double-leaf doors are at the west end of the shed facing the house.

Storage Shed

Noncontributing building

Last quarter twentieth century

Immediately north of the larger shed is a small metal shed with a gambrel roof. Its double-leaf entrance is on the west side facing the house.

SOUTH WEST STREET (West Side)

Lassiter-Greene House

Contributing building

101 South West Street

Ca. 1850; ca. 1875

The Lassiter-Greene House, whose history dates from two periods, is a large, two-story, double-pile, frame dwelling reflecting various stylistic influences. According to local tradition, it was built ca. 1850 as a one-story house by Josiah Lassiter, about whom little is known. The Greek Revival-style, center-hall-plan house from this period retains its weatherboard siding, two-panel doors, and simple post-and-lintel mantels. In 1874 William Columbus Greene purchased the property and soon thereafter added the second story and a two-tier, north-side porch (gone) that reflected the popular Stick Style of the late nineteenth century. W. C. Greene (1842-1921) was a physician as well as the first dentist of record in Wilkes County. Greene and his wife, Laura Ann Gray, had two children. Their son, Herbert L. Greene (1866-1908), was a prominent local attorney who practiced with Thomas B. Finley prior to 1900, served as mayor of Wilkesboro in the 1890s, and was elected to the State Legislature in 1900. The house remained in Greene

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family ownership and occupancy until the late 1980s. The Lassiter-Greene House has a stone foundation and cellar with a kitchen fireplace. While the first story is weatherboarded, the second story is sheathed with German siding. Wide accent boards encircle the house at the base of the first story and at the head of the first and second stories. Classical, paneled corner boards are found on both the first and second stories. Windows are a combination of six-over-six and two-over-two sash. Both north and south doors are double-leaf. The north door, originally the front door, has a four-light transom. Two tall brick chimneys pierce the steep hipped roof, which is sheathed with pressed-metal shingles. Two gables intersect the main roof on all four sides of the house and have sawnwork brackets at their base, suggesting the influence of the Queen Anne style. Originally the gables were ornamented with kingposts at the peak; all but one of these have been removed. The north gables retain peaked attic casement windows that recall the Gothic Revival style. After the front half of the lot (facing West Main Street) was sold for the construction of the 1915 Federal Building, the north porch was removed and was replaced with a hipped hood. One-story porches with square Classical posts and plain balustrades were added to the east and south sides of the house at this time. The east porch carries across nearly the full width of that elevation and has a slightly projecting, pedimented, center entrance bay with wood shingles within the pediment. At the north end of the porch is a door with a four-light transom; it may have replaced a window. The east side of the house probably became the primary elevation after 1915. The south porch, with its balustraded roof deck, shelters what currently serves as the main entrance to the house. The interior has a steep stair in the center hall that leads from the older first story to the 1870s second story. The second story retains a variety of fanciful mantels. A wooden picket fence runs along the north and east sides of the property (JP, January 6, 1992).

(Intersection with West South Street)

Edsel and Mary Dula Whittington House
203 South West Street
1956

Contributing building

The Whittington House is a long, one-story, Ranch-style dwelling with running bond brick veneer siding, a low side-gable roof, horizontal one-over-one sash windows, and a recessed front entrance. Immediately north of the entrance is a picture window with a large glass pane in the center and four horizontal panes on either side. Vertical wood louvers form a break between the house and the garage, all, however, under the same roof. The garage bays have lift doors that open to the rear (west side) of the house. The home of Confederate Colonel Thomas J. Dula (1831-1906) and his wife, Mary Emma (1840-1914), originally stood on this shady site. Mary Whittington is their granddaughter (Hubbard, 33; TR)

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Carport

Noncontributing structure

Last quarter twentieth century

Behind the house stands a carport. Six metal poles, three per side, support its flat metal roof.

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architect/Builder, cont'd.

Wetmore, James, A. – Architect (Federal Building)
Cooper, L. W. and Company – Contractor (courthouse)

Summary

The Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District encompasses the historic central core of Wilkesboro, the seat of Wilkes County in North Carolina's western Piedmont region. The mixed-use district's 127 resources include primarily residential, commercial, and governmental properties, but there are also a church, a historic school, a cemetery, and the original town plan, along with a variety of outbuildings.

Soon after Wilkes County was established in 1778, a central location on the south side of the Yadkin River was selected as the place for the county seat, to be called Wilkesborough (later shortened to Wilkesboro). In 1800 William Lenoir surveyed and laid out the town as a rectangle with a grid pattern of streets, thirty-six rectangular lots, and an open space near the center set aside for the courthouse. Although the town boundaries expanded during the twentieth century, particularly after mid-century, the original plan remains largely intact, and the historic district encompasses most of it.

Always a small town, Wilkesboro's primary role throughout its history has been as the county seat and center for the county's legal affairs. Throughout much of the nineteenth century, Wilkesboro also served as the county's commercial center. However, this changed with the arrival of the North Western North Carolina Railroad in 1890 and the rapid development of the town of North Wilkesboro at the railroad's terminus on the north side of the Yadkin River. Nevertheless, Wilkesboro maintained a small commercial center, needed for its own residents and for those who came to court.

Among the district's resources are nine properties previously listed in the National Register: the Old Wilkes County Jail (1971), the (former) Wilkes County Courthouse (1979), and, as part of the 1982 Wilkesboro Multiple Resource Area, the Brown-Cowles House and Cowles Law Office, the Federal Building, the J. T. Ferguson Store, the Thomas B. Finley Law Office, the Johnson-Hubbard House, the Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, and the Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel.

The locally significant Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District meets National Register Criterion A in the areas of politics/government and commerce. With the 1902 (former) Wilkes County Courthouse, the 1859 Old Wilkes County Jail, the 1930s (former) Wilkesboro Municipal

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Building, and the 1915 (former) Federal Building all located within the district, the historic district clearly conveys its – and Wilkesboro’s – significant role as the center of governmental activities in the county. The commercial buildings that line two blocks of Main Street and span the years from the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century attest to the district’s historic commercial role in Wilkesboro.

The district also meets Criterion C in the area of architecture. Its significant collection of buildings includes good to excellent examples of the Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Commercial, Beaux Arts, Colonial Revival, Federal Revival, Craftsman Bungalow, Period Cottage, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch architectural styles that reflect the architectural evolution of the town.

The district’s period of significance spans the years from ca. 1835 to 1959. Ca. 1835 was the date of the first phase of construction of the oldest building in the district, the Brown-Cowles House. The two-story, four-bay-wide, single-pile, center block with its side-gable roof and gable-end brick chimneys along with some of its interior detailing still clearly conveys the vernacular Federal-style origin of the house. The district’s historic time period runs through 1959, when Wilkesboro was still a vibrant community that continued to prosper through the post-World War II years and thereafter. Although the historic district continued in its role as the local center of government and commerce after 1959, events and buildings constructed after that year are not of exceptional significance.

Historical Background and Politics/Government and Commerce Contexts

Prior to its establishment, Wilkes County was part of Surry County in North Carolina’s Western Piedmont. In 1777, during the midst of the Revolutionary War, the North Carolina General Assembly passed an act creating Wilkes County to become effective February 15, 1778. The new county was named in honor of Englishman John Wilkes, Lord Mayor of London and a Member of Parliament, who was a strong critic of the Tory Party and the monarchical system and a promoter of parliamentary reform (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 1).

Initially, Wilkes County was considerably larger than at present, but from the late eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century, land was repeatedly removed from the county to help create or enlarge several surrounding counties. Nevertheless, Wilkes County today retains just over 757 square miles, making it twelfth in area among North Carolina’s 100 counties (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 1; Wilkes County Facts; *Journal-Patriot*, October 15, 1956).

When Wilkes County was established, the area on either side of the Yadkin River where present-day Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro stand was known as Mulberry Fields, named for the Baptist Mulberry Fields Meeting House that stood on the south side of the river. Wilkes County’s first session of court, at which the county government was formed, was held in March

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1778 at the home of John Brown on the north side of the Yadkin. The court met again at Brown's house on June 1, 1778, but the following day, the court met in the Mulberry Fields Meeting House. On June 3, the commissioners empowered to select a permanent site for the county seat reported, "We. . . adjudge and appoint the place where the Mulbury [sic] Meeting House stands as the most central, suitable and proper place whereon to locate public buildings." Soon thereafter, a building was erected that housed the court at its next session in September 1778 (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 1; Wilkes County Facts).

The new county seat was named Wilkesborough. Although by the early nineteenth century the "ugh" was frequently replaced by an apostrophe after the final "o," the post office did not officially change the spelling to the present "Wilkesboro" until 1893 (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 1).

In 1795 an act was passed naming new commissioners to select a site for the erection of a courthouse, pillory, and stocks and to purchase fifty acres on which to lay out a town and erect public buildings. It was not until 1800, however, that William Lenoir surveyed and laid out a grid pattern of streets, thirty-six rectangular lots, and a public square near the center that was reserved for the courthouse. The public square became the heart of the new town, and it remains so today, even though a new county courthouse was built in recent years outside the historic district. Although a building had been erected in 1778 to temporarily house court sessions, a more permanent courthouse was not built until 1825, when the North Carolina General Assembly directed the county commissioners to erect a new courthouse on the public square. This courthouse was a brick structure measuring thirty-five by forty-five feet with a stone foundation. It remained in use until 1902, when a new courthouse was built on the site. The first jail, a frame building, was located on the southwest corner of the courthouse square. Around 1828, that jail was demolished and a new one was erected nearby. It served as the county jail until 1859, when a brick building, now known as the Old Wilkes County Jail (NR, 1971), was completed on North Bridge Street northwest of the courthouse square. One of the best preserved examples of nineteenth-century penal architecture in North Carolina, the 1859 jail, now a museum, exhibits the original jailor's quarters on the south side of the building and the jail cells on the north side. It was used as the county jail until 1917 (Lenoir Plat; Wilkes County Facts; Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 1-2; Anderson, 28; Crouch).

While Wilkesboro's primary role has always been as the county seat of Wilkes County, throughout much of the nineteenth century it also served as the county's center of commerce and trade. However, because of the poor state of transportation not only in Wilkes County but in Western North Carolina as a whole, the growth of Wilkesboro's commerce was slow, and industry—beyond the level of cottage industries—was largely nonexistent. In 1820, when Wilkes County's population was 9,963, businesses in the county included three blacksmiths, three house carpenters, two saddlers, two cabinet makers, one tailor, one painter, one tanner, and

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one hatter. Most of these doubtless were located in Wilkesboro (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 2; Anderson, 29).

In 1828 state geologist Elisha Mitchell visited Wilkes County. His description of Wilkesboro in a letter stated, "It contains 19 dwelling houses; a new Courthouse and gaol." Although no buildings erected prior to the 1830s survive in Wilkesboro, two historic sites within the historic district do date from the town's early years. One of these is the original 1800 town plan, which provided order to the physical development of the town and which still defines Wilkesboro's historic central core. The other is the Presbyterian Cemetery, which forms a shady square with a variety of funerary markers at the southeast corner of the district. Dating from at least 1811 – the date of the first marked stone – the cemetery has been used for the burial of many Wilkesboro citizens from that time until the twenty-first century. More than half of the cemetery's 175 gravestones pre-date 1910, marking the graves of many who were prominent during the town's first century of development, such as the Calloway, Cowles, Cranor, Finley, Greene, Gwyn, Lenderman, Peden, Pharr, Somers, Staley, and Vannoy families (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 2; Anderson, 29-30; McNeil and McNeil).

The oldest building in the district dates from ca. 1835 and survives as the first phase of construction of the Brown-Cowles House at 200 East Main Street. Although additions to the house came ca. 1880 and during the early twentieth century, the two-story center block clearly conveys the vernacular Federal-style origin of the house. Physical details of the smaller Wallace House at 101 East South Street suggest that it, too, was built in the 1830s or soon thereafter.

Although its growth remained slow, nineteenth-century Wilkesboro supported various religious groups and educational facilities. Initially, religious services for small groups of people were held in private homes and even at the courthouse. During the 1830s, congregations were established for both the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, and by the end of the 1840s, brick churches had been, or were in the process of being, built for both of them. The Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, one of those churches, is located within the historic district at 205 East Main Street. Listed individually in the National Register in 1982, it is the oldest Presbyterian congregation in twenty-one western North Carolina counties (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 2; Phillips, Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, Section 8).

In addition to religion, education was a concern of Wilkesboro residents from the town's early years. Public schools were not available in the county until 1841, but the Wilkesboro Academy, a private school, was chartered in 1810. The Wilkesboro Seminary, which had both male and female departments, began operating in 1837 and continued until the Civil War. These early school buildings do not survive, although the much later (former) Wilkesboro Elementary School, built in 1937, is extant in the district (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 2; Anderson, 103; Crouch).

As in the mountainous areas of Western North Carolina in general, sympathies were divided during the Civil War in Wilkes County and Wilkesboro. The town escaped without

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heavy property damage. According to Calvin J. Cowles's diary, "March 29, 1865 Stoneman's entrance into Wilkesboro. Saw him and made appeal for protection of public and private property which were heeded" (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 2).

While physical damage to Wilkesboro's properties was minimal during the Civil War, new construction during those years may have paused, as no buildings survive from the 1860s. Construction picked up again during the 1870s and 1880s, and several buildings from those two decades survive in the historic district. Of particular significance are two law offices.

The practice of law was a crucial profession in any county seat town, and Wilkesboro had its share of attorneys, some of whom were prominent outside the confines of the county. It was important for lawyers to have their offices as close to the courthouse as possible, and two of these offices from the second half of the nineteenth century survive. According to local tradition, the older of these two buildings was erected by W. H. H. Cowles (1840-1901) soon after he purchased Hamilton Brown's house on East Main Street in 1871. While the house stood far back on its lot, Cowles built his law office on the southwest corner of the lot next to the street (now 106 East Main Street) so that it would be easily accessible to clients. During his career, Cowles was elected Reading Clerk of the State Senate, Solicitor of the Tenth Judicial District, and Congressman from the Eighth Congressional District for four terms beginning in 1884. Other lawyers known to have occupied the little building include William W. Barber and John A. Holbrook (Phillips, Brown-Cowles House and Cowles Law Office, Section 8).

The other surviving law office is the diminutive, ca. 1880, Gothic Revival building located at 104 Broad Street directly across the street from the east side of the courthouse. A succession of Wilkes County lawyers occupied the building for at least a century. Attorney Isaac "Ike" Welborn is believed to have built the building. The most prominent nineteenth-century attorney to occupy it, however, was Thomas B. Finley (1862-1942), the son-in-law of attorney W. H. H. Cowles. Finley's family was heavily involved in the development of North Wilkesboro and, after marrying Caroline Elizabeth Cowles, he built a large home (NR, 2008) there in 1893. Nevertheless, he maintained his law practice in Wilkesboro from 1885 until 1919, when he was elected Superior Court Judge for the Seventeenth District. During Finley's early years of practice, he was joined by Herbert L. Greene, but after Greene was elected to the State Legislature in 1900, Finley became partners with Frank B. Hendren. After Finley became a judge, Hendren continued to occupy the building, taking on J. Floyd Jordan as a partner in 1922. Jordan, who served as mayor of Wilkesboro between 1937 and 1941, continued to practice law from the little office until at least 1980. Both the W. H. H. Cowles Law Office and the Thomas B. Finley Law Office were added to the National Register in 1982 (Phillips, Thomas B. Finley Law Office, Section 8)

Wilkesboro continued its pattern of slow growth during the late nineteenth century. Lack of good transportation still hindered significant expansion in both commerce and industry, but toward the end of the century, the town developed high expectations for change due to the

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anticipated arrival of the North Western North Carolina Railroad. These hopes, however, were largely dashed.

In the 1880s, Winston entrepreneur George W. Hinshaw persuaded the railroad to extend a line west from Winston along the Yadkin River to the center of Wilkes County. Such a line would enable Winston to access the vast timber and agricultural resources of the upper Yadkin River Valley. At the same time, the presence of the railroad would provide new opportunities for commerce and industry in the town at its terminus by offering a faster and more reliable means of transporting manufactured goods and agricultural products to distant markets. The railroad would make it feasible to produce such goods beyond the level of those needed locally (Phillips, Southern Railway Depot, Section 8, pp. 4-6).

Eager to gain the benefits of rail service, the Wilkes County Commissioners, on October 10, 1888, entered into a contract with the North Western North Carolina Railroad in which the commissioners agreed to subscribe \$100,000 toward the building of the railroad from Winston on condition that it would come within one mile of the Wilkes County Courthouse. Likely in anticipation of the upcoming changes expected in Wilkesboro, the town finally incorporated in 1889. Although it was known that the rail line would run along the north side of the Yadkin River, the commissioners hoped that it would cross the river, via a new bridge, to the south side at Wilkesboro. However, this proved infeasible and, instead, the railroad reached its terminus on the north side of the river on August 30, 1890 (Phillips, Southern Railway Depot, Section 8, p. 6; Anderson, 30).

Meanwhile, the Finley family, who owned large farms on the north side of the river, began building stores at the site they named Gordon. Soon, however, they thought better of trying to develop the land themselves and sold their property to the Winston Land and Improvement Company, a group of entrepreneurs formed specifically for the purpose of building a new town at the terminus of the railroad. The speculative development of the town of North Wilkesboro, as it was renamed, was a phenomenal success, and the new town grew from around fifteen inhabitants in 1890 to 918 by 1900, continuing at a fast pace so that by 1920, the population had reached nearly 4,000 (Phillips, Southern Railway Depot, Section 8, p. 6).

North Wilkesboro rapidly overshadowed Wilkesboro as the area's commercial and industrial center. The much older Wilkesboro was left to continue its main role as the county seat while also providing commercial facilities primarily for its own residents. This turn in Wilkesboro's fortunes understandably engendered some animosity among its citizens toward North Wilkesboro. The two towns, with different reasons for being, developed different characters that have continued to the present. Still, there remain strong ties, particularly family ties, between the two towns (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, pp. 2-3).

Wilkesboro was not totally without benefit from the arrival of the railroad and the rapid development of North Wilkesboro. The flurry of building activity that took place around the turn of the twentieth century in Wilkesboro likely was due, at least partially, to overflow prosperity

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from North Wilkesboro's success. Additionally, the establishment in North Wilkesboro of twenty wholesale lumber yards, which in 1902 carried a combined stock of more than five million feet of lumber, and two sash, door, and blind factories and planing mills that also produced decorative woodwork, undoubtedly spurred new construction in Wilkesboro (Phillips, Wilkesboro, Section 8, p. 3; Phillips, Southern Railway Depot, Section 8, p. 7).

From Wilkesboro's earliest days, commercial buildings were erected as close to the courthouse square as possible and then spread out along the south side of Main Street. This pattern continued well into the mid-twentieth century. Two of Wilkesboro's most significant historic commercial buildings, both erected around the time of the railroad's arrival in Wilkes County, faced the square. Merchant Jesse T. Ferguson built a substantial two-story brick store at 111 East Main Street ca. 1890 that added a strong vote of commercial confidence to the town. In 1891 the Wilkesboro Hotel Company built a three-story brick hotel at 102 East Main Street that provided first-class accommodations to those who came to Wilkesboro on prolonged court or commercial business. In 1906 N. B. Smithey purchased the building and changed its name to the Smithey Hotel. Smithey and his wife lived in the hotel that became a local institution until his death in 1953. In addition to operating the hotel, Smithey opened his first dry goods store on the first floor. That was the start of the multi-million-dollar chain of seventeen Smithey's stores in northwestern North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee. Both the Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel and the Jesse T. Ferguson Store were added to the National Register in 1982 (Phillips, Jesse T. Ferguson Store, Section 8; Phillips, Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel, Section 8).

Other commercial buildings were also erected on Main Street toward the end of the nineteenth century. Among these were the Morrison Hardware Store at 111 West Main Street and the Prevette-Lenderman Building across the street at 104 West Main Street. Originally the hardware store of F. C. Morrison, by the mid-twentieth century the building was operated by Lester Gambill, one of Morrison's former employees. Local tradition claims that attorneys John G. and Joseph M. Prevette built the structure across the street from Morrison Hardware, and they may have used it as their law office. However, Mrs. Prevette also ran a popular millinery shop in the building. During the next several decades, the building was used at various times as the post office, a drug store, a print shop, and a piano store. From the 1930s to the early 1990s, it was owned by the Lenderman family, who used it for their Lenderman Shoe Shop (Phillips, Wilkesboro Historic Inventory; Porter Interview).

Houses were also added to the Wilkesboro building stock during the late nineteenth century and the very early years of the twentieth century. Although some of these have been lost, others in the district remain good representatives of the period.

Immediately after the turn of the twentieth century, one of the most historic and architecturally significant buildings in Wilkesboro, and the one most symbolic of the town's primary historic role, was erected. The former Wilkes County Courthouse, the third in the county's history, was built in 1902 according to plans drawn by Wheeler, McMichael, and

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Company, a Charlotte architectural firm who designed six courthouses of the same, or nearly the same, design in North Carolina, particularly in Western North Carolina. Located on the town square, the former courthouse is a monumental Beaux Arts-style brick building that was added to the National Register in 1979. For three quarters of a century it was the center of all county-related business, housing not only the county court but also a range of county offices – from the Register of Deeds to the County Tax office to the meeting rooms of the Wilkes County Commission. Because of the important governmental activities housed in the building, it played a pivotal role not only in Wilkesboro but in the county as a whole. The 1902 Wilkes County Courthouse served as such until 1998, when a new courthouse was erected outside the district (“Wilkes County Courthouse”).

Few buildings in the historic district appear to date from the first decade of the twentieth century. Whether this is because not much was built then or because some buildings from the decade were later destroyed is not known. However, as the century moved forward through the 1910s and 1920s, building activity increased. Significantly, in 1910 Congress appropriated \$60,000 for the construction of a Federal Building in Wilkesboro. Erected in 1915 at 201 West Main Street according to the design of Federal architect James A. Wetmore, the outstanding Federal Revival-style building housed both the United States Courthouse and the Post Office. The presence in Wilkesboro of the Federal Building, in addition to the county courthouse, brought more prestige to the town and resulted in even more people coming to town to conduct official business. The Federal building continued to serve in this capacity for just over half a century. It was added to the National Register in 1982 (Hayes, 312; Phillips, Federal Building, Section 8).

July 15, 1916, brought a calamitous event to Wilkes County. Severe flooding throughout Western North Carolina wreaked widespread damage to low-lying areas. Wilkes County suffered the greatest flooding in its recorded history, and damage was significant. The Yadkin River, flowing between Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro, reached its highest stage at thirty-two feet above normal. The lower-lying commercial and industrial areas of North Wilkesboro and nine miles of railroad tracks paralleling the river were devastated. Fortunately Wilkesboro, located on a high plateau above the south bank of the river, was spared. This proved the wisdom of the commissioners who, in 1778, had selected the site for the county seat. Of course, while Wilkesboro was not directly damaged by the flood, the damage to many of North Wilkesboro’s industries and to some of its commercial establishments as well as to the railroad had a secondary impact on Wilkesboro through disruption of service. Amazingly, with the help of 600 men—both railroad employees and local citizens—the railroad resumed operation on July 25 (Phillips, Southern Railway Depot, Section 8, pp. 8-9).

As the automobile gained in popularity during the first quarter of the twentieth century, service stations became necessary to refuel and maintain them. The 1920 and 1926 Sanborn maps for Wilkesboro indicate that between those years two automobile service stations were

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erected on prominent corners in the historic district—one at the northwest corner of West Main and North Bridge streets and the other at the southeast corner of West Main and South West streets. Both of these were replaced by more modern gas stations in 1964, indicating the continued need for this type of business in the center of town.

Based on surviving buildings, the decade of the 1930s—the period of the Great Depression—was, curiously, a brisk time for construction in the historic district. Why this was the case is not known. Nevertheless, houses, commercial buildings, the Wilkesboro Municipal Building, and the (former) Wilkesboro Elementary School were erected then. These last two are among the most prominent buildings in the district. Unlike the houses and commercial buildings, their construction during the 1930s is more understandable, as both were built with assistance from the Depression-era government program, the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The Wilkesboro Municipal Building at the northwest corner of North Bridge and West North streets housed the police and fire departments, meeting rooms for the mayor and the town council, and other town offices. It added another government building to the historic district, in addition to the Wilkes County Courthouse, the Old Wilkes County Jail, and the Federal Building. With the Municipal Building, the historic district became home to three levels of important government offices – town, county, and Federal. Except for the Federal Building, all the historic government buildings in Wilkesboro are on or next to the courthouse square. In addition, the Municipal Building introduced Modernism to the otherwise conservative Wilkesboro (*Wilkes Journal-Patriot*, November 15, 2006).

Located at the southeast corner of West South Street and Woodland Boulevard at the west end of the historic district, the former Wilkesboro Elementary School provided a larger and better-equipped building for lower-grade school students in town. When it was erected in 1937, the brick Colonial Revival-style school stood just south of the 1908 Wilkesboro High School, which was demolished in the early 1960s to make way for the Johnson J. Hayes Federal Building. The elementary school operated as such until 1964, when the current Wilkesboro Elementary School was built at another location. Thereafter, the older school continued to serve the Wilkes County Board of Education in other capacities until 2006 (Walsh Interview; *Lest We Forget*, 163).

In August of 1940, a terrible flood—worse than the Flood of 1916—ravaged the Yadkin River Valley. Again, Wilkesboro, on the uphill side of the river, suffered little direct damage (Anderson, 114). Construction activity in the district remained steady during the 1940s, but only in the years preceding and after the United States' involvement in World War II. Residential construction, in particular, was busy.

The 1940s also saw the addition of several commercial buildings on Main Street, as Wilkesboro continued to serve the retail needs not only of its own residents but also of others in the county who came to town for court or other governmental business. Among the commercial buildings that took their place on Main Street during the decade were Warren Miller's Grocery

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Store at 117 West Main Street, built ca. 1945, and on the west side of a parking lot from it, the Gray Brothers Furniture Company at 125 West Main Street, built in 1946. The two brick buildings demonstrate the range in size of the commercial buildings along Main Street, the grocery store being a small, one-story building and the furniture store being a large two-story structure. They also suggest the diversity of retail uses always found in Wilkesboro's historic center (Porter Interview; Hubbard, 32; *Journal-Patriot*, October 15, 1956).

Near the east end of Main Street stands the lone surviving building from what was originally the busy Blue Ridge Hatchery Company. Chickens, turkeys, and eggs were always a staple in Wilkes County agriculture, but hatching eggs with incubators and growing chickens on a commercial scale began only in the late 1910s. From this grew one of the county's major industries, that of poultry growing and processing. On June 27, 1940, J. F. Allen, T. M. Foster, Rosa B. Foster, and Edith Foster Brown organized the Blue Ridge Hatchery on the steep, downward sloping hillside behind Thomas and Rosa Foster's house at 210 East Main Street. The surviving building from this business is a one-story-with-basement frame structure. Operating until at least the late 1950s, Blue Ridge Hatchery's specialty was the production of white broiler-type baby chicks. In the mid-1950s, its annual production was in excess of 1.5 million chicks (*Journal-Patriot*, October 15, 1956; Hayes, 331-332).

Probably the largest and best known of the poultry businesses that provided major support to the local economy from the mid-twentieth century forward was the Holly Farms Poultry Company, organized in 1947. By the mid-1950s, Holly Farms was producing more than 375,000 chicks each week. Located on West Main-River Street, but well outside the historic district, Holly Farms later became part of Tyson Foods, today Wilkesboro's largest private employer (*Journal-Patriot*, October 15, 1956 and March 28, 1997).

Construction began to slow within the historic district during the 1950s. However, commercial buildings continued to be erected during the decade, and some of the older buildings were remodeled. Shortly before his death in 1953, N. B. Smithey built Smithey's Discount Grocery – a one-story brick building – at 104 East Main Street on what had been the garden behind the Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel. In 1956, a two-story commercial building was constructed at 101 West Main Street, the southwest corner of Main and Bridge streets. It was built in place of the Dodge House, later known as Calloway Corner, which had occupied the site from the nineteenth century until it was razed around 1940. The construction of a large commercial building at the town's central intersection in the 1950s attested to the continued health of the commercial scene in Wilkesboro (Woodruff Interview; Hubbard, 29).

The 1950s also brought the construction of several Ranch houses in the district. A particularly good example is the Edsel and Mary (Dula) Whittington House at 203 South West Street, built in 1956. It replaced the nineteenth-century home of her grandparents, Confederate Colonel Thomas J. Dula and Mary Emma Dula (Hubbard, 33).

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The commercial building at 101 West Main Street and the Whittington House, both erected in 1956, are the last contributing buildings erected in the historic district during the 1950s. The 1960s brought the construction of two gas stations, two brick-veneer houses, and a small, brick-veneer dentist office within the district. Although past the district's period of significance, one of the gas stations, located at 127 West Main Street, is a well-preserved Modernist station of the period. The last building erected in the district was the one-story frame house built for Thomas Rudy and Lillie (Dean) Bryan at 210 East Cowles Street in 1985 (Bell Interview).

For decades prior to 1960, Wilkesboro's acreage had changed little. After 1960, however, the town grew significantly in both land size and population. Expanding primarily to the west, and even across the river starting in 1977, Wilkesboro grew through more than forty annexations from 1963 to 1997. During those years, the town's acreage increased from 1,936 to 5,078. Correspondingly, Wilkesboro's population grew from 1,568 in 1960 to 3,159 in 2000 (*Journal-Patriot*, August 2, 1984; March 28, 1997).

Several events encouraged the town's western expansion. In 1960 construction on a flood control dam west of town started, and in 1962 the Wilkes (later W. Kerr Scott) Dam and Reservoir was dedicated. Not only did the dam help protect low-lying areas from floods such as those of 1916 and 1940, but it also opened up new recreational opportunities with the reservoir. In 1965 Wilkes Community College was established, and in 1969 its new facilities on a seventy-five-acre campus west of town were first used. Finally, the completion of the Highway 421 Bypass in 1969 further encouraged westward growth in Wilkesboro. New industries and shopping centers were particularly attracted to the western areas of Wilkesboro (Anderson, 116; *Journal-Patriot*, August 2, 1984).

Meanwhile, changes also were occurring within and in the immediate vicinity of the historic district. In 1969 the new Federal Building (now the Johnson J. Hayes Federal Building) was dedicated. It was located at the west end of the 200 block of West Main Street, outside the district and a bookend to the 1915 Federal Building at the east end of the block. Subsequently, the old Federal Building was used as the offices of the Wilkes County Board of Education and currently is used by a private business. In 1970, the offices of the Wilkesboro Town Hall moved from the 1930s Municipal Building on North Bridge Street to a new building at the northeast corner of West Main and North West streets just outside the district. In recent years, the Town Hall has moved again, this time to a modern former bank building between the old and new Federal buildings. The 1930s Municipal Building is now used as a law office. In 1976 the Wilkes County offices expanded from the courthouse to a new building constructed nearby, but outside the historic district, on the north side of West North Street. With the county's needs for space continuing to grow, a new courthouse was built south of Cub Creek, opening on October 27, 1998 (Anderson, 116-117).

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While Wilkesboro changed during the second half of the twentieth century and into the early twenty-first century, the old town center encompassed by the historic district has remained largely intact. It continues to visually convey the story of this county seat town that was historically significant not only as the location of government offices with a wide range of government activities, but also as the center of local commerce that served both the citizens of the town and others who came to Wilkesboro to conduct business at the Wilkes County Courthouse or at the Federal Building. The overarching architectural significance of the district reflects, through the forms and styles of its buildings, the town's evolution from the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century.

Historic preservation has had a positive impact on the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District. Although a few buildings have been insensitively remodeled through the years, many others have remained largely intact and well-preserved by their private property owners. In addition, there have been numerous public efforts. Beginning in the 1960s, the members of the Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church not only restored their church building but then continued their important stewardship of it through preservation maintenance. In 1971 the Old Wilkes Jail was restored and now serves as a museum. Since the county's move to its new courthouse in 1998, the Old Wilkes County Courthouse has maintained a pivotal position in its new role as the Wilkes County Heritage Museum. The Wilkesboro Historic Properties Commission was established in the 1970s. In 1979 it sponsored the Wilkesboro Historic Inventory, which identified fifty-four properties of significance in the town at that time. Based on the inventory, the commission sponsored the preparation of the Wilkesboro Multiple Resource Area National Register nomination, which in 1982 listed nine individual properties, seven of which are located in the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District. The Wilkes County Courthouse and the Old Wilkes County Jail had been added previously to the National Register. When the Wilkesboro Multiple Resource Area was prepared, a district was not considered feasible. However, with the passage of a quarter century, a new evaluation of Wilkesboro's historic center has resulted in this nomination.

Architecture Context

The Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District is architecturally significant in the town of Wilkesboro, because for more than a century – from ca. 1835 to 1959 – distinctive buildings in a wide range of architectural styles have been built in the historic central core of this county seat town. The remainder of Wilkesboro is not devoid of buildings of architectural significance, including the Gothic Revival-style St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Queen Anne-style J. L. Hemphill House, both added to the National Register in 1982. However, the historic district encompasses the most cohesive concentration of historic buildings that, together, help to visually convey the history of the town through its architecture.

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The oldest buildings in Wilkesboro – two houses – date from the 1830s or soon thereafter. Both reflect simple vernacular interpretations of the Federal style, which was popular from the American Revolution through the early nineteenth century – in North Carolina extending through the 1830s – and which made use of more delicate classical ornamentation than had the Georgian style that preceded it. The original portion of the Brown-Cowles House (NR, 1982) at 200 East Main Street was built ca. 1835, soon after Wilkes County Sheriff Hamilton Brown (1786-1870) purchased the property from John T. Finley in 1834. It is the central two-story, four-bay-wide core of the frame house with its side-gable roof and gable-end chimneys, along with some interior detailing, that convey the Federal style (Phillips, Brown-Cowles House and Cowles Law Office, Section 8).

Based on its original architectural features, the Wallace House at 101 East South Street also appears to have been built during the 1830s or soon thereafter. The core of this small, three-bay-wide, one-and-a-half-story frame house has heavy-timber frame construction and a fieldstone foundation. Each end of its side-gable roof has a wide frieze and rake boards. Sheltered by the shed-roofed front porch, the façade is flush-sheathed. The most telling features indicating a Federal-period date of construction for the house, however, are on the interior and include the hall-and-parlor plan, the transitional Federal-Greek Revival style mantel, an enclosed corner stair with refined balustrade and newel in the loft, and a batten loft door with beaded-edged casing and H-and-L hinges (Phillips, Wilkesboro Historic Inventory, 7).

The next oldest buildings that survive in the district were erected in the 1850s. Built in 1850, the Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church (NR, 1982) at 205 East Main Street is the best example in Wilkesboro of the Greek Revival style. Especially popular in America during the mid-nineteenth century, this style emulated the classical forms and ornamentation of the architecture of ancient Greece, particularly the Greek temple, considered at the time to be the perfect style for representing the ideals of American democracy. The brick Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church has a temple-front portico with four heavy, stuccoed-brick Doric columns and a flush-sheathed pediment. The design of the interior is as chaste as the exterior.

The other district buildings erected during the 1850s include two houses and a jail. For a vernacular two-story frame house with a five-bay façade, a triple-A-gable roof, and a pair of gable-end chimneys, the original two-over-two front section of the Johnson-Hubbard House (NR, 1982) is unusually refined. Special features of the exterior include the center entrance bay with its double-leaf door, sidelights, and thirty-light transom, all set against a flush-sheathed wall. The hip-roofed porch that shelters the entrance has lattice posts and a classical sheaf-of-wheat balustrade. High points of the Greek Revival-style interior include the graceful center-hall, open-string stair with slender balustrade and newel, scrolled stair brackets, and paneled skirt, and the colorful painted marbling found on the baseboards, stair risers, and post-and-lintel mantels along with decorative smoked painting on the second-floor ceiling. Located at 113 East Main Street just east of the courthouse square, the original portion of the house was probably

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built shortly after Stephen Johnson purchased the property in 1854. Johnson was a merchant who operated a store just west of his house where the Jesse T. Ferguson Store now stands (Phillips, Johnson-Hubbard House, Section 8).

The earliest portion – the first story – of the Lassiter-Greene House, located at 101 South West Street, is said by local tradition to have been erected ca. 1850 by Josiah Lassiter. The first story of the center-hall, double-pile, weatherboarded frame house exhibits Greek Revival-style two-panel doors and post-and-lintel mantels consistent with a mid-nineteenth-century construction date. Within the stone-lined cellar is a kitchen fireplace, the sole surviving example in Wilkesboro. After William Columbus Greene (1842-1908) purchased the house in 1874, he added the German-sided second story and most of the features that give the house its present overall appearance (*Journal-Patriot*, January 6, 1992).

In 1859, on the eve of the Civil War, the county built its third jail northwest of the courthouse square at what is now 202 North Bridge Street. It survives as the oldest public building in the county seat. The Old Wilkes County Jail (NR 1971), one of the best preserved examples of nineteenth-century penal architecture in North Carolina, is a sturdy two-story brick building with a low hipped roof, widely overhanging boxed eaves, interior end chimneys, and two-panel doors, all consistent with its mid-nineteenth-century construction date. Divided on the interior into the jailor's quarters and the jail cells, the building retains many features that clearly reflect its original use (Wells and Penney, *Old Wilkes County Jail*).

Romanticism in architecture continued past the Greek Revival style in Wilkesboro to include the Gothic Revival, the nineteenth-century style that played to the forms and ornamentation of medieval Gothic architecture in Europe. The primary example in the historic district is the diminutive, weatherboarded frame Thomas B. Finley Law Office (NR, 1982). The one-bay-wide and two-room-deep building is distinguished by its ornamental sawnwork bargeboards and finials that embellish the front and rear gables of the steep roof. Such sawnwork decoration came to be known as Carpenter Gothic, because a local carpenter could achieve a decorative Gothic effect through the use of a jigsaw.

Only two houses in the district represent domestic construction from the 1870s. The 1873 Calloway-Hubbard House at 211 East Main Street and the 1877 Jesse T. Ferguson House at 108 West Main Street are both two-story frame structures, but otherwise they vary in appearance. The relatively simple Calloway-Hubbard House has a triple-A gable roof and a one-story porch with turned posts, sawnwork brackets, and pedimented entrance bays that wraps across the front and down the east side rear ell of the house. The house remained in the interrelated Calloway and Hubbard families for well over a century. The form and detailing of the Jesse T. Ferguson House fit squarely within nineteenth-century architectural romanticism. The front gable of its projecting second-story center bay is decorated with a curvilinear, pierced bargeboard, whose central pendant carries the cut-out inscription "77." Beneath this, the one-story porch that wraps across the façade and around the east corner of the house is ornamented with lattice posts and

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lacy sawnwork brackets. Prominent Wilkesboro merchant and county sheriff Jesse T. Ferguson was the original owner (Phillips, Wilkesboro Historic Inventory, 5, 8).

Houses built in the district during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century were influenced by the Queen Anne style popular at the time. This normally ebullient style was characterized by irregularity of plan and massing along with the use of a variety of materials and textures in ornamentation. Among the best examples in the historic district are the ca. 1890 John Cranor House at 208 East Cowles Street, the ca. 1892 W. Carter Winkler House at 100 South Bridge Street, and the ca. 1900 Prevette-Lenderman House at 106 West Main Street. All simple vernacular examples of the Queen Anne style, they are two-story frame dwellings of irregular configuration, multi-gable roofs, and porches with simple turned and/or sawnwork ornamentation.

Commercial buildings have always been a staple of the historic district's architecture. The oldest to survive in the district were erected from ca. 1890 to ca. 1900. Two of the most architecturally significant are prominently located across from the south and east sides of the courthouse square. The Jesse T. Ferguson Store, built ca. 1890 at 111 East Main Street is a two-story brick building that boasts an ornate cast iron and pressed metal façade manufactured by Mesker Brothers Front Builders of St. Louis. Erected in 1891 at 102 East Main Street, the Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel is a large, three-story, brick building with a nine-bay principal façade along Broad Street and a six-bay elevation along East Main Street. The façade storefronts retain large windows with paneled dados, recessed entrances, and Mesker Brothers' cast iron pilasters. An impressive two-tier gallery wraps around the upper two levels of the west façade and the south elevation, segmental-arched windows pierce the upper two floors, and a deeply corbelled, parapeted brick cornice crowns the Broad Street façade. Both buildings were added to the National Register in 1982.

Other commercial buildings erected along Main Street at the end of the nineteenth century were the ca. 1890 Morrison Hardware Store at 111 West Main Street and the ca. 1900 Prevette-Lenderman Building across the street at 104 West Main Street. Typical of late-nineteenth-century commercial buildings, the former hardware store is a two-story brick building with second-story two-over-two sash windows set within segmental-arched openings. The Prevette-Lenderman Building is also two stories but is frame and is unusual in having a front-gable roof. The façade has a recessed central entrance with a double-leaf door and flanking shop windows – typical turn-of-the-twentieth-century commercial features. Both buildings were stuccoed in the mid-twentieth century.

The year 1902 brought the construction of one of the largest, most historically significant, and architecturally impressive buildings in the district. The former Wilkes County Courthouse (NR, 1979) was designed by Oliver Wheeler's prominent Charlotte architectural firm, which designed nine courthouses of the same, or nearly the same, appearance in North Carolina. The design of the courthouse reflects Beaux Arts classicism, the style of many well-known public

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buildings erected in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century. Generally more decorative than other classical styles, the Beaux Arts is typified, in part, by symmetrical massing, clearly articulated parts, and a five-bay façade with a climactic central mass that dominates the rest of the building. The stylistic focal point of courthouse is the central, two-story, tetrastyle, Ionic portico. Rising from the center three bays is a three-story, hip-roofed section crowned by an oblong mansard cupola with bull's eye windows at the base.

Few buildings in the historic district appear to date from the first decade of the twentieth century, but as the century moved forward through the 1910s and 1920s, building activity increased. The architecturally significant Federal Building (NR, 1982), erected in 1915 at 201 West Main Street, was designed by Federal architect James A. Wetmore. An outstanding example of the Federal Revival style – a phase of the Colonial Revival style that focused on the forms and details of the late eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Federal style – the one-story yellow-brick building has a symmetrical five-part façade with a raised center section. Both the exterior and the interior exhibit a wide array of elegant classical detailing and a high-quality use of terra cotta, brick, wood, marble, plaster, and ironwork. The last of the district's government buildings was erected two decades after the Federal Building, but like the Federal Building, the Wilkes County Courthouse, and the Old Wilkes County Jail before it, the Wilkesboro Municipal Building was architecturally distinctive. Built with the help of the Works Progress Administration during the 1930s at the northwest corner of North Bridge Street and West North Street, the one-story brick building was unlike any other in central Wilkesboro with its decidedly modern inclinations. Of particular note are the modern sawtooth-fluted pilasters with concrete caps that rise on the east and south facades and the raised parapets above the entrance bays on these two sides. Concrete panels above the two entrances are inscribed with "Municipal Building" on the east elevation and "WFD" on the south elevation in modern lettering.

The 1920s brought new trends to Wilkesboro's domestic architecture. As elsewhere in North Carolina, Craftsman bungalows and Colonial Revival-style houses both became popular. The Craftsman style, ubiquitous in America during the first four decades of the twentieth century, was influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement and was promoted in this country by Gustav Stickley, whose magazine *The Craftsman*, helped to popularize the style. Craftsman characteristics include simplicity, informality of plan, and an emphasis on the natural qualities of building materials. Bungalows are the one or one-and-a-half-story version of the style. Two good examples of Wilkesboro's 1920s bungalows, displaying two common forms of the style, are the 1920 Roy and Virginia Foster House at 204 East Cowles Street and the ca. 1927 Bumgarner-Bullis House at 203 East Main Street. The one-story, weatherboarded frame Foster House features an asymmetrical configuration with multiple broad gables with overhanging braced eaves and a wraparound, partial front and east-side porch with paired posts set on brick plinths. By contrast, the Bumgarner-Bullis House is a one-and-a-half-story, symmetrical, frame dwelling with a broad side-gable roof with overhanging, braced eaves and front and rear shed

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dormers. The front roof slope flares outward to shelter a façade porch with tapered wood posts set on brick plinths, while the flared rear roof slope covers shed rooms.

Bungalows continued to be built in the historic district in the 1930s. Three were erected in 1932 alone. At the east end of the district, building contractor T. M. Foster constructed a pair of rental bungalows. Each has a gable-front roof with braced eaves and an off-center gabled front porch with tapered wood posts set on brick plinths. Fidell Frazier, a plumber who served as mayor of Wilkesboro for more than twenty years, and his wife, Sally, built a bungalow for their family at 101 West South Street. The one-and-a-half-story, weatherboarded frame dwelling has a side-gable roof, braced eaves, front and rear shed dormers, and a shed-roofed front porch with tapered wood posts on brick plinths that extends west of the house to form a porte-cochere.

The Colonial Revival style, which was especially popular in America during the first half of the twentieth century, interpreted in a variety of ways the architectural forms of America's colonial period. A good 1920s example in the historic district is the Julius Cicero Jr. and Nellie (White) Hubbard House, built in 1925 at 115 East Main Street. The one-and-a-half-story frame house has a side-gable roof with overhanging eaves, cornice returns, and gabled dormers. Typically, the focus of the three-bay façade is the center entrance with its sidelights and fanlight transom, all sheltered beneath a gabled entrance porch with classical posts and pronounced cornice returns.

Simple versions of the Colonial Revival style also appeared in the 1940s. A frame example stands at 107 East North Street. Built ca. 1940, it has beveled weatherboard siding, a side-gable roof, two front dormers with cornice returns, and a center-bay entrance sheltered by projecting walls on either side of the door that support a gabled roof. Near the east end of the district stand a pair of similar brick examples of the style. The Ruby Pearson House at 300 East Main Street was built ca. 1941, while the second Joe and Laura Pearson House at 302 East Main Street was constructed ca. 1940. Both feature side-gable roofs, gabled dormers across the front, and an asymmetrical façade with a classical surround framing the entrance.

The historic district contains several examples of the Period Cottage style. Related to the English revival styles, the Period Cottage was popular from the late 1920s through the 1940s. Typical characteristics of the style include brick, stone, or wood siding, a steep gabled roof with an off-center front gable, a hooded or sheltered entrance, a picturesque front chimney, and often porches with arched openings. In 1932 Dr. Gurney Talmadge Mitchell and his wife, Julia, built a Period Cottage at 204 East Main Street. The one-and-a-half-story brick house features multiple clipped gables with cornice returns, a medieval style front door sheltered by an entrance porch with segmental-arched openings, and a side porch with segmental-arched openings (now enclosed). The best example of the Period Cottage in the district is the 1940 Worth Morrison House at 104 South West Street. Defining features of the one-and-a-half-story brick-veneer house include a steep front-gable roof that swoops downward in a curve toward the north, ending with an engaged porch with segmental-arched openings, and a slightly projecting entrance bay at

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the south end of the façade with a round door and a swooping roofline that echoes that of the main roof. The ca. 1945 DeBerry House at 200 South West Street is another example of the style. Signal features of this one-and-a-half-story brick-veneer and frame house are the round-arched front door with granite-block surround and the adjacent front chimney with decorative granite blocks. A simpler version of the style is found in the one-and-a-half-story frame house at 105 East North Street. Built ca. 1940, it has an asymmetrical façade with a shaped brick chimney that rises just east of the front gable peak.

At the end of the 1940s, several Minimal Traditional-style houses were built in the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District. As the name suggests, these were simple one- or one-and-a-half-story dwellings with a side-gable roof and often a small front gable. Although stylistically stripped down, these houses often exhibited a hint of the Colonial Revival. Many included a front entrance stoop and/or a side porch. With the advent of the GI Bill in the post-World War II years, Minimal Traditional-style houses became very popular. Three examples in the district are all on South Street: the ca. 1949 George and Mildred Childress House at 103 East South Street, the ca. 1945 Zachary and Norabelle Yates Ferguson House at 111 West South Street and the ca. 1950 house at 113 West South Street. Although each has its own particular details, these simplest of houses are all one-story, boxy, frame dwellings with a side-gable roof and a three-bay, symmetrical façade with a center entrance sheltered by a small gabled porch.

The last phase of domestic building in the district, beginning in the 1950s, consisted of the construction of several Ranch houses. Although the Ranch style was eclectic and individual houses could incorporate elements from a range of preceding styles, there were certain common features that most shared. The typical Ranch house is a long, one-story dwelling of asymmetrical design with a low profile, a hipped or gabled roof with widely overhanging eaves, and often an attached garage and a large picture window. A very simple version is found in the Henry and Edith Smithey House at 200 South Bridge Street. Built in 1955, the frame house has a broad gable roof with wide, overhanging eaves along east and west sides and a brick chimney rising from the rear, east, elevation (Bell Interview). Edsel and Mary (Dula) Whittington built a larger Ranch house at 203 South West Street in 1956. It replaced the nineteenth-century home of her grandparents, Confederate Colonel Thomas J. Dula and Mary Emma Dula (Hubbard, 33). A typical Ranch-style house, the Whittington House is a long, one-story dwelling with running bond brick veneer siding, a low, side-gable roof, a recessed front entrance, a picture window immediately north of the entrance, and attached garage bays that open from the rear of the house.

Meanwhile, commercial buildings continued to be erected during roughly the second quarter of the twentieth century. One of the most architecturally notable commercial buildings in Wilkesboro was erected ca. 1935 across from the courthouse at 101 North Bridge Street. The two-story Lowe Building is distinguished by its rough and irregularly cut granite stone sheathing with thick grapevine mortar joints and its irregular and exaggerated flat arches with keystones above all the doors and windows.

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Two buildings erected on West Main Street in the mid-1940s provide an interesting comparison of the appearance of commercial buildings being erected at that time. Like almost all of the other commercial buildings on the street, the ca. 1945 Warren Miller's Grocery Store at 117 West Main Street and the 1946 Gray Brothers Furniture Company at 125 West Main Street are both of brick construction. Otherwise the two buildings differ considerably. Typical of many small commercial buildings, the original main block of the grocery store is a one-story building with a deeply recessed central entrance with a two-light transom, large, flanking shop windows with a low, stuccoed skirt, a three-light transom frieze above the entire store front, and an upper façade with three corbelled, recessed panels. Stylistically, it is a continuation of the commercial buildings that had been erected in Wilkesboro since the early twentieth century. By contrast, the furniture store is a large building with a two-story façade and a four-story rear due to the sloping topography. Although the storefront was remodeled in the Colonial Revival style in recent years, the rest of the building retains its overall spare appearance and metal tilt windows typical of the modern-leaning commercial buildings erected after World War II.

Commercial construction began to slow within the historic district during the 1950s. Nevertheless, commercial buildings continued to be erected during the decade, and some of the older buildings were remodeled. Shortly before his death in 1953, N. B. Smithey built Smithey's Discount Grocery at 104 East Main Street on what had been the garden of the Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel. Exhibiting the simple vernacular modernism of many mid-twentieth-century commercial buildings, the one-story brick building with a row of plate-glass windows across the front, blank sides, and a flat roof remains unaltered except that the original flat metal canopy across the façade has been replaced in the last quarter century with a hip-roofed canopy.

In 1956, a two-story brick commercial building was constructed at 101 West Main Street – the southwest corner of Main and Bridge streets – where a nineteenth-century building had been demolished two decades earlier. Another example of mid-twentieth-century vernacular commercial modernism, the spare building is three bays wide and six bays deep and has a flat, parapeted roof. The recessed storefront that carries across the east three-fifths of the façade has a square, fluted-wood corner post and aluminum-edged door and windows. Metal casement windows line the second story.

The commercial building at 101 West Main Street and the Edsel and Mary (Dula) Whittington House, both erected in 1956, are the last buildings erected in the historic district before the 1959 end of its period of significance. Although several buildings were erected in the district after 1960, they are not of exceptional architectural significance.

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Absher, Ann Lowe (owner of 101 North Bridge Street), January 18, 2008.

Bell, Helen Bumgarner (current resident of North Wilkesboro, whose family home from ca. 1913 to 1967 was the house at 206 East Main Street in Wilkesboro), October 12, 16, and 23, 2007.

Cantor, John (owner of 100 West Main Street), September 18, 2007.

Chambers, Harvey (owner of 209 and 211 East Main Street), February 24, 2008.

Forester, Ike (great-great-great-great grandson of William Lenoir), December 18, 2008.

Henderson, Fred C. (former owner of 108 West Main Street), January 1980.

Hubbard, Dottie (local historian), ca. 1980.

Porter, Charlotte Lenderman (owner/occupant of 106 West Main Street), October 19, 2007.

Walsh, Judith (associated with Wilkes County Retired School Personnel), October 29, 2008.

Woodruff, W. Randall (owner of 104 East Main Street), September 18, 2007.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References, cont'd.

5. 17 486020 4000020

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District is shown by the heavy black line on the accompanying district map, drawn to a scale of 1" = 175'.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District is drawn to encompass the historically and visually cohesive collection of 127 resources—115 buildings, two sites, three structures, and seven objects—located primarily within Wilkesboro's original 1800 layout and reflecting the evolution of the historic central core of the town. The Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District is distinguished from its surroundings due to a combination of manmade and natural factors. North of the district are found more recent construction, vacant land and, in some places, a steep topographical drop-off. The area east of the district includes a heavily remodeled building adjacent to 306 East Main Street and, otherwise, steep drop-offs and vacant land. The area south of the district boundary and east of South Bridge Street consists primarily of a combination of vacant lots and newer residential construction. South of 300 South West Street and 201 West Henderson Drive the land drops off sharply to Cub Creek Park in the flood plain of Cub Creek. Newer residential construction borders the south boundary of the district between South West Street and Woodland Boulevard. West and northwest of the district boundary, from the former Wilkesboro Elementary School at the southeast corner of West South Street and Woodland Boulevard to the Old Wilkes County Jail at 202 North Bridge Street, is a combination of more recent government and commercial buildings and parking lots.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information for #1-5 applies to all nomination photographs, except as noted:

- 1) Downtown Wilkesboro Historic District
- 2) Wilkesboro, Wilkes County, North Carolina
- 3) Laura A. W. Phillips
- 4) 9 and 11-12 were photographed August 2007
6-8 and 13-14 were photographed September 2007
1-5 and 10 were photographed October 2007
- 5) CD: NCHPO, Raleigh
- 6-7)
 - 1: Courthouse and Wilkesboro-Smithey Hotel across courthouse square, view to NE
 - 2: Old Wilkes County Jail, former Wilkesboro Municipal Building, and Lowe Building, west side N. Bridge Street, view to S
 - 3: Johnson-Hubbard House, J. T. Ferguson Store, and other commercial buildings, south side 100 block E. Main Street, view to SW
 - 4: Streetscape, 204-210 E. Main Street, view to NE
 - 5: Streetscape, 301-305 E. Main Street, view to SE
 - 6: Roy and Virginia Foster House, 204 E. Cowles Street, view to W
 - 7: John Cranor House, 208 E. Cowles Street, view to SE
 - 8: Brown-Cowles House, 200 E. Main Street, view to NW
 - 9: Calloway-Hubbard House, 211 E. Main Street, view to SW
 - 10: Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, 205 E. Main Street, view to S
 - 11: Presbyterian Cemetery, southwest corner E. South and Corporation streets, view to SE
 - 12: Gas Station, 127 W. Main Street, view to SE (noncontributing)
 - 13: Lassiter-Greene House, 101 S. West Street, view to SW
 - 14: Former Wilkesboro Elementary School, 215 W. South Street, view to NE