

Site Inventory Form
State Historical Society of Iowa
 (November 2005)

State Inventory No. 50-01700

New Supplemental

Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 50-01703

Relationship: Contributing Noncontributing

Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries

National Register Status:(any that apply) Listed De-listed NHL DOE

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number _____

Non-Extant (enter year) _____

1. Name of Property

historic name Wert's Cafe

other names/site number State Farm Insurance

2. Location

street & number 312 1st Ave. W

city or town Newton

vicinity, county _____

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name _____

Township No. _____

Range No. _____

Section _____

Quarter of Quarter _____

(If Urban) Subdivision Original Town

Block(s) 17

Lot(s) 7 - w 50'

3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]

4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]

5. Classification

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

1 buildings
 _____ sites
 _____ structures
 _____ objects
1 Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing Noncontributing

_____ buildings
 _____ sites
 _____ structures
 _____ objects
 _____ Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title

Downtown Newton, Iowa

Historical Architectural Data Base Number

50-010

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

02G01 COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant/café

70 VACANT/NOT IN USE

11D03 HEALTH CARE/Medical Office/doctor or dentist office _____

02B04COMMMERCE/TRADE/Professional/insurance office _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

walls (visible material) _____

roof _____

other _____

Narrative Description (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County _____
City Newton

Address 312 1st Ave. W

Site Number 50-01700
District Number 50-01703

Criteria Considerations

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or grave.
- D A cemetery.
- E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F A commemorative property.
- G Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Significant Dates
Construction date
1949 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates, including renovation

Significant Person
(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder
Architect

Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

10. Geographic Data

UTM References (OPTIONAL)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathy Jones, Mary Jo Niskin, Rita Reinheimer
organization Newton Historic Preservation Commission
street & number 101 W. 4th St. S.
city or town Newton state IA date 06-08-2012
telephone 641-792-2787 zip code 50208

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)

FOR ALL PROPERTIES

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
 - Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
 - Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
 Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or noncontributing status)
- Barn:**
 - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
 - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
 - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility: Yes No More Research Recommended
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

Evaluated by (name/title): _____ Date: _____

Page 1

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

5. Classification, cont'd.

Wert's Cafe is considered a building and is counted as a non-contributing resource to the Newton Downtown Historic District.

7. Description

Site Description

The former Wert's Café building is located on the north side of 1st Ave. W. near the middle of the 100 block; its façade faces south. It is adjoined on the east by a two-story commercial building with which it forms a visual unit. An alley separates it from the two-story commercial building to the west. A public sidewalk runs flush with the building on the south, providing access to the primary entrance. A private parking lot at the back of the building provides space for staff and clients.

Property Description

The building is a one-story, rectangular structure that stretches 35 feet to the north from its 36-foot frontage on 1st Ave. W. The building was updated in 1984 with the installation of a mansard roof and the application of weathered cedar paneling on both the primary and alley façades. Since that time the mansard has been altered twice, most recently in 2011 with the installation of hunter green ribbed metal.

A centered panel of cedar for signage adjoined by two symmetrically placed wood framed plate glass windows gives textured contrast to the façade. An asymmetrically-placed, recessed primary entrance of unbroken wood, plus adjoining smaller, wood framed windows with dark underpanels also lends a sobering note to the façade, suggesting the serious intent of the building within. Relieving the dark surfaces is a band of welcome red that edges the roof and provides a strong opportunity for signage.

The building's west (alley) façade echoes the style and fenestration of the primary façade.

Integrity Considerations

When constructed this resource was clad in brick, with a centrally located entrance. Because the alteration to the present appearance occurred less than fifty years ago, the alteration is considered non-historic and a significant breach of the building's historic integrity as it relates to design, workmanship, and materials. This loss cannot be overcome by the retention of integrity as it relates to location, association, and setting. As a result, the building does not bear sufficient historic integrity to be considered a contributing resource to the historic district.

Page 2

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

8. Statement of Significance

Due to a significant loss of historic integrity (particularly as it relates to design, materials, and workmanship) the building is considered a non-contributing resource to the Newton Historic Downtown District. Should the façade be rehabilitated the building's ability to contribute to the district should be re-evaluated.

Historical Background

Newton was platted as the Jasper County seat in 1847. The commercial district grew up around the courthouse square with the earliest buildings, which commonly housed both commerce and dwellings, constructed of wood. The development of the downtown from its platting in 1846 to c.1890 is tied to its status as the county seat and the 1867 arrival of the Mississippi-Missouri Railroad. The character of the commercial downtown is recorded in images of the contiguous brick commercial Italianate buildings surrounding the courthouse square.

Beginning in the 1890s, it was industry, specifically the washing machine industry, that drove Newton's economy and the commercial success of its downtown. Due to the success and longevity of the Maytag Company, its history presents the greatest impact on Newton's downtown commercial district. From 1890-1920, a period in Maytag history marked by the company's incorporation and the development of the first electrically powered washing machine, a number of significant buildings were constructed in the Newton Downtown District. The addition of these buildings (and others) introduced a 20th century architectural sensibility to the district; moving the visual character away from the Late Victorian era Italianate style that had previously dominated the streetscapes.

During the decade of 1920 to 1930, Newton's population nearly doubled. The period is marked by the Maytag Company's ascension to the nation's leading manufacturer of washing machines. The economic prosperity brought by the company's success is reflected in the Newton Downtown Historic District with the construction of some of its most important buildings including the First Newton National Bank (1920) and the Maytag Hotel (1926). Both buildings lend a sense of importance to the downtown district.

The visual character and composition of the downtown district remained generally constant through the Depression era and war years – a period when industry and commerce (including the Maytag Company) were focused on surviving and on supporting the war effort. The boom that came in the wake of Maytag's 1946 introduction of the automatic washing machine was apparent in the Newton Downtown Historic District by the mid-1950s. Between about 1954 and 1963 the downtown buildings underwent dramatic alteration, a nearly wholesale removal of the Italianate façades and replacement with those reflecting a mid-20th century Modern aesthetic. Buildings altered during that period line the streetscapes of the district. In addition to the Victorian era buildings that were re-faced during this time, a number of new buildings were constructed, their stylistic character reflective of the era.

Although the washing machine industry in Newton is now a thing of the past, its mark on the Newton Downtown Historic District is undeniable.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
**Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number **50-01700**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 3

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

8. Statement of Significance, cont'd.

Property History

The current building at 312 1 Avenue West was built in identified on the 1949 Sanborn. In 1927 the property has a dwelling and business.

Everett and Ila Wert had opened the Wert's Café before May 1948 in this building, that continued until the 1960s. From the mid-1960s to mid-1990s, the building was a professional office for Edward McMurray, MD. Dr. Walter Copeland's orthodontic-dental practice was in this building circa 1972-1983.

City permits showed that a request was made May 15, 1984, to "install Mansard 16" and install cedar siding." From 1984 to the 1990s, Dr. C. Loucks had an orthodontic office in the building. For a brief period in the 1990s Doug Carpenter's Bristol Windows and Siding was at this building. State Farm Insurance office opened and maintained an office from 2000 to 2011.

The building is now vacant.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
**Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet**

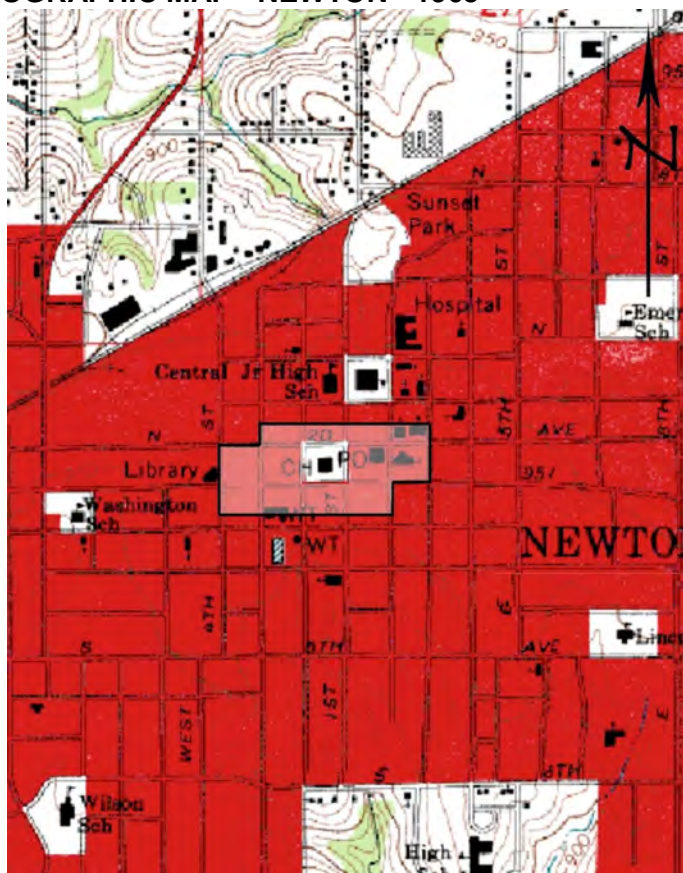
Site Number **50-01700**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 4

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional Documentation - Maps

USGS 7.5 MINUTE TOPOGRAPHIC MAP - NEWTON - 1965



(MAP SOURCE: <http://www.trails.com>. Accessed 06/21/2011.)

The Newton Downtown Historic District, to which Wert's Café is considered a non-contributing resource, is indicated.

Page 5

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional Documentation - Maps

PARCEL MAP - AERIAL VIEW - 2011



(SOURCE: <http://beaconschneidercorp.com>. Accessed June 2011.)

The location of the building is marked with an arrow.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
**Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number **50-01700**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 6

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd

PHOTOGRAPHS



View of the north side of the 300 block of 1st Ave. W., looking northwest. The location of the building is indicated.

(All images by Sue Smith, June 30, 2011)

Page 7

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd

PHOTOGRAPHS



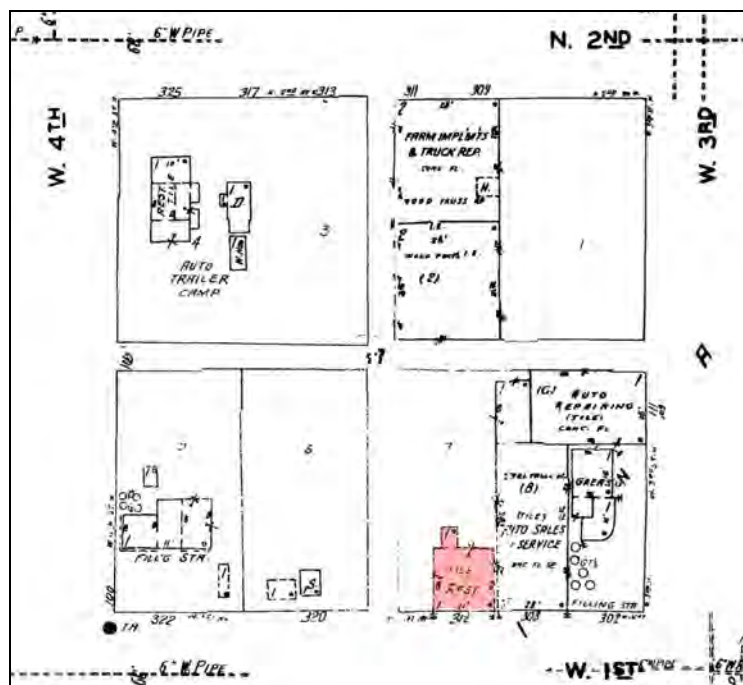
View of the resource, looking north across 1st Ave. W.

Page 8

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd

FIRE INSURANCE MAP - 1949



(SOURCE: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1949 Revision of the 1927 map)

The location of the resource is indicated.

Page 9

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd

HISTORIC IMAGES - 1952



(SOURCE: Newton Daily News, Goodyear ad, May 2, 1952, showing 306-312 1 Ave W.)

The photo looks north across 1st Ave. W. Wert's Café is noted under arrow.

Page 10

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

11. Additional documentation, cont'd

HISTORIC IMAGES - 2011



(Photo by Bob Sawyer, May 28, 2011)

Shortly after this photo was taken the steel gray panels on the mansard were replaced with panels of dark green.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historical Society of Iowa
**Iowa Site Inventory Form
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number **50-01700**
Related District Number 50-01703

Page 11

Wert's Cafe	
Name of Property	County
312 1st Ave. W	Newton
Address	City

9. Bibliographic References

Building permits on file at Newton Public Works office.

Jasper Co. Assessor's records. <http://beaconschneidercorp.com>.

Newton Daily News.

Newton Public Library. City Directories and Phonebooks

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. <http://www.cbpl.lib.ia.us>