

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic name: Abilene Commercial Historic District

Other name/site number: N/A

2. LOCATION

Street & number: Roughly bounded by Hickory, N. Third, and Pine streets and the south side of the railroad tracks

not for publication: N/A

City/town: Abilene

State: TX *County:* Taylor

code: 441 *zip code:* 79601

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property: Private; Public-Local

Category of Property: District

<i>Number of Resources within Property:</i>	<i>Contributing</i>	<i>Noncontributing</i>
	<u> 25 </u>	<u> 15 </u> <i>buildings</i>
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> <i>sites</i>
	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> <i>structures</i>
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> <i>objects</i>
	<u> 26 </u>	<u> 15 </u> <i>Total</i>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources in Abilene, Texas

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

 See continuation sheet.

Curtis J. Russell
Signature of certifying official

26 Oct. 1991
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

 See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

Anthony J. Lee

12/18/91

 determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the
National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain): _____

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

<i>Historic:</i> Commerce/trade	Sub: Business
Commerce/trade	Specialty store
Commerce/trade	Professional
Domestic	Hotel
<i>Current:</i> Commerce/trade	Sub: Business
Commerce/trade	Specialty store
Commerce/trade	Professional

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: Late 19th and early 20th century American movements; Art Deco

<i>Materials: foundation</i>	Concrete
walls	Asphalt
roof	Brick
other	Stone; terra cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance. x See continuation sheet.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Area(s) of Significance: Commerce and Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1890 to 1939

Significant Dates: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Castle, David S., and Company

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. x See continuation sheet.

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Abilene Commercial Historic District

The Abilene Commercial Historic District includes a cohesive collection of early 20th century commercial buildings and encompasses approximately seven blocks in Abilene's downtown. Most of the city's terrain, including the historic district, is relatively flat. The district is roughly bounded by North Third on the north, Pine on the east, the south side of the railroad tracks on the south, and Hickory on the west (see USGS map). The majority of buildings were built in the tradition of late 19th and early 20th century American Movements and the Modern Movement. Most of the buildings originally functioned as commercial entities. A total of 26 properties, comprising 63 percent of the district, are classified as Contributing elements. Fifteen properties are considered Noncontributing.

Abilene serves as county seat for Taylor County. The Callahan Divide, the topographic boundary between the Brazos and Colorado basins, crosses from east to west through this central west Texas county. The landscape surrounding the community features grassy prairies. Several small waterways flow within the community, although none are proximate to the district.

The tracks of the Texas and Pacific Railroad, now part of the Union Pacific system, bisect Abilene and its central business area. Abilene's commercial and business center is primarily north of the railroad tracks, and most of the oldest commercial buildings are in this part of the city. An area of mixed land use and zoning, which includes commercial building, churches, parking lots, and a few isolated residential buildings, surrounds the central business district.

The Abilene Commercial Historic District is the most concentrated and intact collection of commercial historic buildings in the downtown (see Continuation Sheet 7-3). Although the areas outside the district boundaries maintain somewhat cohesive streetscapes, they suffer from intrusive new construction, vacant lots, and less distinctive design.

As is typical for much of pre-1945 Abilene, a grid system of streets extends through the district and 2-part commercial block buildings prevail, they range in size from 1- to 7-stories, although 2- and 3-stories are most common. Almost all of the buildings are of masonry construction with brick storefronts that sometimes have stucco veneer. Stylistic influences are modest on most of the buildings in the district, but design elements and detailing do point to Prairie School and Art Deco with some classical references. The majority of buildings face east or west on primary north-south streets, although a small number of buildings face north or south on secondary east-west streets.

The majority of the buildings continue to operate as commercial entities, but the district also includes a section of the railroad tracks (and a concrete underpass and a retaining wall) that played such a vital role in the town's development.

Fifteen properties within the district boundaries are considered Noncontributing. Five buildings are of recent construction. The remaining Noncontributing buildings are historic buildings altered such that their integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and/or association has been extensively compromised. Those in the latter category could be

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reclassified as Contributing if sensitive restorations are successfully implemented.

As a collection, these buildings retain all aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. They have been well maintained and stand virtually unaltered since their original construction. Recent rehabilitation work on some properties has preserved significant interior and exterior features of these buildings.

Contributing and Noncontributing resources were determined based on the information provided in the Property Type discussion associated with the Historic Context "The Railroad and Abilene's Development into a Wholesale and Distribution Center in West Texas, 1881-1939" as well as the following criteria:

Contributing--Contributing buildings are those that contribute to or enhance the quality of the district's historic character. These properties were built before 1939 and retain much of their original historic fabric. Most of the buildings are 1-, 2- or 3-stories in height and are of masonry construction. With few exceptions, these buildings were intended for commercial or retail purposes, and most are still used as stores or are vacant. Common changes include the removal of original windows and the installation of new ones, such as on the Mims Building at 275-281 Cypress, the building at 290 Cypress (see Photograph 3), and the Alexander Building at 102-104 Pine (see Photograph 9). Although the replacement of these elements detracts from a building's historic character, these changes are not appraised as extreme. Other changes include the installation of new storefronts, the replacement of original display windows and doors with aluminum sash equivalents, and the covering of transoms. Examples include the Gorsuch Building at 270 Cypress (see Photograph 3) and the building at 216 Pine. Despite the negative effects these alterations have, they generally do not destroy the buildings' overall architectural and historic character and integrity.

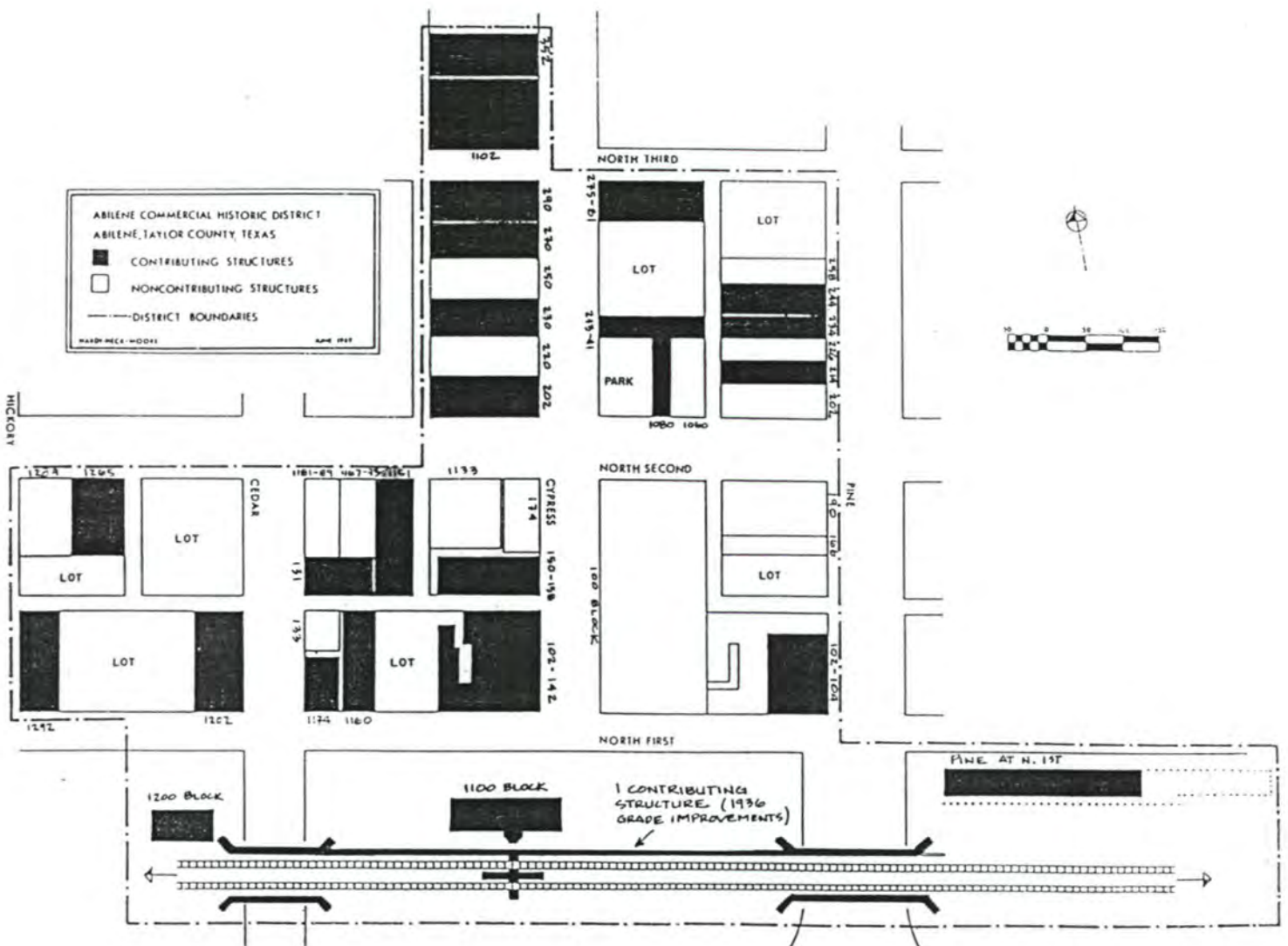
Noncontributing--Noncontributing buildings are those that detract from the historic character of the district; they include two groups of properties. Buildings that are less than 50 years old are classified Noncontributing because they do not meet minimum National Register criteria. They generally are not compatible with the scale and/or materials that are seen in Contributing buildings. Other properties not eligible include pre-1939 buildings so severely altered that their historic fabric is no longer visible. An extreme example is the Windsor Hotel at 174 Cypress with its aluminum false front. In all likelihood, the building's original architectural features remain intact, but are completely obscured. As it presently stands, the building bears little cohesiveness with other masonry buildings on Cypress. In other cases historic buildings have been "modernized" with materials incompatible with the original historic fabric. An example is the building at 226 Pine. If restored, however, buildings such as this one could be considered for reclassification as Contributing members of the district.

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Abilene Commercial Historic District

Photograph Log

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Scott's Service
151 Cedar
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking southeast
Photograph 1 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Grace Hotel
102-142 Cypress
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking northwest
Photograph 2 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Southwest corner of Cypress and North Third, 270 and 290 Cypress
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking southwest
Photograph 3 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Texas and Pacific Railroad Depot
1100 Block North First
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking southwest
Photograph 4 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Metzger Battery Company Building
1160 North First
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking north
Photograph 5 of 10

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Abilene Commercial Historic District
1100 Block North First (north side)
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking northeast
Photograph 6 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
1100 and 1200 Blocks North First (north and south sides)
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking northeast
Photograph 7 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
C.H. Boyd and Sons Tire Company Building
1292 North First
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking northeast
Photograph 8 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Alexander Building
102-104 Pine
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking northwest
Photograph 9 of 10

Abilene Commercial Historic District
Wooten Hotel
1102 North Third
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore of Hardy-Heck-Moore
Winter 1988-89
Negative with Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas
Camera looking northwest
Photograph 10 of 10

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Abilene Commercial Historic District

INVENTORY OF PROPERTIES

Address, Site Number, Category (Contributing or Noncontributing), Date of Construction (Estimated or Factual), Photograph Number (when applicable)

Description: Brief description of prominent physical and architectural features

Significance: Summary of architectural integrity and historical associations

133 Cedar, Site No. 1797, Noncontributing, c. 1934.

Description: 1-story brick retail store; 3-bay front elevation; new display windows and entrance.

Significance: Although a historic building, building is classified Noncontributing because of insensitive changes to front facade; historic character compromised; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

151 Cedar, Site No. 1796, Contributing, c. 1927, Photograph 1.

Description: 1-story brick retail store and garage with modest classical detailing on 3-bay front elevation and on portico of alley elevation; massive squared piers with elaborate brickwork; transoms with vertical lights; corbeled brickwork in parapet.

Significance: Adjoins 1149 North 2nd to form an L-shaped building; noteworthy local example of 1920s commercial architecture with classically inspired detailing on front.

100 Block Cypress; Site No. N/A, Noncontributing, c. 1970.

Description: Massive 2-story building; houses Abilene Reporter-News, local newspaper.

Significance: Classified Noncontributing because of its recent construction date.

102-142 Cypress, Site No. 1838, Contributing, 1909/1924, Photograph 2.

Description: 4-story brick hotel building; 2-part commercial block; ornate detailing on south and east elevations; fourth floor added in 1924; minor changes on first floor include partial enclosing of some openings with glass bricks; recently rehabilitated for use as cultural center.

Significance: Originally constructed in 1909 by Colonel W.L. Beckman who named Grace Hotel in honor of his daughter; for many years Abilene's premier hotel; prominent location near railroad tracks greeted visitors who arrived by train; several first floor rooms on Cedar Street facade designated as Taylor County Courthouse when county's facility was demolished in 1913 for a new one built in its place (completed in 1915); David S. Castle and Company designed fourth floor added in 1924 during boom; construction of other local hotels, such as the Hilton and Wooten in the 1920s, competed with the Grace and ultimately led to its decline; name later changed to Drake Hotel; Abilene Preservation League acquired the building and rehabilitated it into a local cultural and arts center.

150-158 Cypress, Site No. 1837, Contributing, c. 1925.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; vacant; modest classical detailing; 4-bay facade; plywood protect window and transoms openings; interior virtually unaltered with pressed tin ceiling tiles; offices on second floor.

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Significance: An outstanding local example of a commercial building with classically inspired detailing; indicative of Abilene's boom of the 1920s; downstairs used for retail purposes (for many years a cleaners) while second floor partitioned into offices.

174 Cypress, Site No. 1836, Noncontributing, 1890/c. 1960.

Description: 3-story brick hotel building; aluminum false front; little of historic fabric visible from the street; when originally built had round arched openings on second and third floors with elaborate corbeled brick parapet.

Significance: Built in 1890 and originally called the Windsor Hotel; name later changed to Palm Hotel; one of, if not, the oldest extant commercial building in Abilene; false front applied to building but most of original features believed to be intact underneath; builder was a Mr. White who completed building on November 1, 1890; a prominent early landmark in Abilene; classified Noncontributing because of insensitive changes to building's exterior; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

202 Cypress, Site No. 1835, Contributing, 1920.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; extensive alterations on ground floor of east elevation; south elevation and second floor of east elevation retain integrity; front (east) elevation has stucco panels on first floor and 3-bay second floor each bay has 3-part window configuration with double hung wood sash windows; cornice on parapet.

Significance: Extensive ground floor changes detract from building's historic character; however second floor is virtually intact; building provides a tangible link to Abilene's boom of the 1920s and retains enough integrity to be recognizable to that era.

220 Cypress, Site No. 1834, Noncontributing, c. 1940.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; 3-part composition on both floors; facade appears to be c. 1940 remodeling over an older facade; double door front entrance with fixed display window above.

Significance: Known locally as the old Grissom Department Store, a prominent business establishment of Abilene; present facade believed to be c. 1940s remodeling however changes reflect building's physical evolution; classified Noncontributing because of these changes that appear to be less than 50 years old and are not within the district's period of significance.

230 Cypress, Site No. 1833, Contributing, c. 1925.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; 3-bay front; recessed central entrance; transoms are covered; windows on second floor have been replaced with 3-part, fixed, tinted glass lights; slight recessed panel between floors.

Significance: Known locally as the Poplar Store; although tinted glass windows installed on second floor and other alterations completed on front, building retains enough historic character to be classified Contributing.

233-241 Cypress, Site No. 1876, Contributing, c. 1925.

Description: 1-story brick retail store; 2-part facade; terra cotta facing on front.

Significance: Use of terra cotta on building distinguishes it from others in downtown Abilene; relatively few local commercial buildings utilize this

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material; building bounded to north by parking lot and to the south by c. 1980 park that was erected on site of razed commercial building; therefore, this building, formerly a row building, appears somewhat out of context.

250 Cypress, Site No. N/A, Noncontributing, c. 1960.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; stucco exterior; concave front with tree placed in front of entrance.

Significance: Although scale in keeping with many buildings in district, its stucco front and exterior finish detract from historic character of district; not known if it is a new building or a severely altered historic building.

270 Cypress, Site No. 1832, Contributing, c. 1925, Photograph 3.

Description: 2-story brick retail store with two storefronts; modest classical influences include prominent cornice on parapet; ground floor with recessed entrance on both storefronts; storefronts are nonhistoric; wood shingle awning on north storefront; six bays on second floor; each with windows and vertical muntins and a single cross rail.

Significance: Moderate alterations to front detract from building's overall historic character, but building retains enough original architectural fabric and integrity to be classified Contributing.

275-281 Cypress (a.k.a. 1073 North Third), Site No. 1875, Contributing, 1927.

Description: 8-story office building; reinforced concrete construction; classical detailing; 3-part commercial block with rusticated masonry on ground level; offices in middle section and classically ornamented cornice as a crown; round arched ground floor openings; original windows replaced following c. 1980 rehabilitation.

Significance: Built in 1928 for W.G. Swenson, Horace O. Wooten and George Paxton and designed by David S. Castle and Company; one of two major office buildings erected locally during Abilene's boom of the 1920s (other is 1925 Alexander Building at 102 Pine, also in this historic district); Mims Building provided office space to many prominent professionals, businessmen and oil operators; rehabilitated c. 1980; work included removal of original windows and installation of tinted glass windows; despite this change, building retains enough of original architectural fabric to still convey its historic appearance and is a Contributing.

290 Cypress, Site No. 1831, Contributing, c. 1929, Photograph 3.

Description: 4-story brick retail store and office building; Art Deco detailing includes pointed arch motifs in parapet and on hardware (hinges, etc.); ornately detailed elevations on east and north exposures; 3-bay configuration on front (east) elevation with three window openings per bay; metal canopy suspended by metal rods over ground floor entrance bays; transoms covered and original windows replaced with tinted fixed glass lights.

Significance: originally occupied by W. G. Waldrop & Company's furniture store; references to Gothic Revival in Art Deco detailing; second floor mezzanine level of interior retains original architectural fabric; building designed by David S. Castle and Company; tinted glass windows installed on upper floors; despite this change, building retains enough integrity to be classified Contributing.

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352 Cypress, Site No. 1830, Contributing, 1929.

Description: 3-story theater with Spanish Colonial Revival features; reinforced concrete construction with brick and terra cotta veneer; Spanish Baroque interior detailing.

Significance: National Register 1982; built for Horace O. Wooten, who erected adjoining Wooten Hotel; designed by David S. Castle and Company.

1100-1200 Block North First, Site No. 779, Contributing (Structure), 1936.

Description: Connected concrete automobile underpasses, pedestrian underpass and retaining wall that extends from Pine to Cedar streets.

Significance: Austin Bridge Company of Dallas built underpasses and retaining wall as a WPA project; constructed to ease traffic flow near railroad; railroad grade raised and underpasses built on Pine and Cedar street crossings includes a pedestrian underpass beneath railroad that provides access to passenger depot from south; also built to boost local economy during the Depression.

1100 Block North First, Site No. 778, Contributing, 1910, Photograph 4.

Description: 1 1/2-story brick depot; hipped roof with red clay tile covering; broad roof overhangs and brackets; 2-story tower with 8-sided roof on south elevation; 1/1 wood windows; slightly tapered foundation wall covered with stucco; quoin-like effect at corners; gabled extension on north elevation; form references Prairie School design, detailing references classicism.

Significance: Old T&P Passenger Depot; one of Abilene's most outstanding landmarks; a locally important building, both architecturally and historically; built in 1910; completion culminated a long, arduous effort on part of local civic leaders who implored T&P officials to replace obsolete frame depot; Prairie School form, classically influenced detailing.

1160 North First, Site No. 776, Contributing, c. 1920, Photograph 5.

Description: 1-story brick retail store and garage; 3-part facade with broad opening in central bay and display windows in outer bays; massive brick piers divide bays; transoms with vertical muntins and broad cast stone lintels; cast stone coping on parapet with slight pediment above central bay opening; form and detailing resembles Prairie School design.

Significance: An outstanding and well preserved example of a commercial building erected during Abilene's boom of the 1920s; throughout 1920s and 1930s; the building housed auto-related businesses, the most important of which was Metzger Battery Company; form and detailing resembles Prairie School design.

1174 North First, Site No. 775, Contributing, 1913.

Description: 2-story brick lodge hall; outstanding masonry work; use of polychromatic brick gives the building greater distinction; most elaborate elevations on south and west walls that face onto streets; wood sash windows with multiple lights; round arched openings on second floor; brick work around these windows extends to ground floor and reinforces building's verticality; pent roof extends on parapet.

Significance: Erected in 1913 to house the local chapter of B.P.O.E. or the Elk's Club; building with its large round arched openings on second floor is one of Abilene's most unusual buildings and particularly noteworthy for the craftsmanship displayed in masonry work; later used as city hall annex; owned by city.

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1200 Block North First, Site No. 780, Contributing, c. 1915.

Description: 2-story brick depot; hipped roof with extended eaves and brackets; most openings covered with plywood.

Significance: Sanborn maps and city directories note that the building was built by 1915 and housed the Wells Fargo Express offices; directly linked to Abilene's development into a rail transportation and distribution center; one of several railroad-related buildings on T&P right-of-way.

1202 North First, Site No. 774, Contributing, c. 1920.

Description: 1-story brick commercial building with modest classically inspired detailing.

Significance: Noteworthy example of intact commercial building erected during Abilene's 1920s boom; despite placement of plywood over windows, building retains most of its original architectural fabric.

1292 North First, Site No. 773, Contributing, c. 1925, Photograph 8.

Description: 2-story brick service station; first floor with open service bay at southwest corner; island for gasoline pumps still remains although pumps have been removed; pressed tin ceiling tiles in service bay; angled storefront within service bay; second floor with paired windows; raised brick panels in parapet; modest Art Deco detailing.

Significance: One of Abilene's premier examples of an early service station; although building retains the basic form that typifies a 2-story retail store, inset service bay at corner represents a departure from conventional commercial design and incorporates modest Art Deco detailing.

Pine at North First, Site No. 1908, Contributing, c. 1920.

Description: 2-story brick freight depot building; elongated rectangular plan; concrete loading area extends to the south, parallel to railroad tracks.

Significance: Built by T&P Railroad to serve as Abilene's freight depot; one of several railroad-related buildings on T&P's right-of-way; representative of the importance of the railroad in Abilene's development; building anchors southeast corner of historic district; recent fire caused severe interior damage; however, the exterior remains structurally sound and the building retains a high degree of integrity.

102-104 Pine, Site No. 1896, Contributing, 1924-25, Photograph 9.

Description: 7-story brick veneer office building; reinforced concrete construction; Prairie School influenced form and classically inspired detailing; 3-part configuration with cast stone applied to base; regularly spaced windows in the middle section, and cast stone veneer on top floor; cast reliefs divide bays on top floor; molded cornice on parapet; original windows replaced with c. 1980 rehabilitation.

Significance: Built for Dr. James M. Alexander, prominent local physician who operated the Alexander Sanitarium (razed); Alexander Building housed offices that attracted many prominent physicians, attorneys, and other professionals; designed by David S. Castle and Company; Abilene's first "high rise" building and constructed in 1924-25; its construction dramatically changed Abilene's skyline and marked beginning of relatively intense "high rise" construction boom in downtown; exterior detailing reflects local popularity of Prairie School form with classically inspired detailing during the 1920s and one of several buildings in the historic district with such detailing; despite

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installation of tinted glass windows, remainder of exterior retains historic fabric and classified Contributing.

166 Pine, Site No. 1895, Noncontributing, c. 1900.

Description: 2-story retail store; stucco exterior; most noteworthy feature is sign painted on south wall; otherwise, severely altered.

Significance: Little of historic fabric discernible although possibly intact under false front; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

190 Pine, Site No. N/A, Noncontributing, c. 1950.

Description: 2-story retail store; stucco exterior; if historic building it has been severely altered.

Significance: Displays few architectural features that contribute to historic character of district; possibly a historic (pre-1941) building under stucco exterior; if historic, could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

202 Pine, Site No. 1894, Noncontributing, c. 1945.

Description: 3-story brick building; massive building with narrow band of aluminum sash windows across second and third floors of front facade.

Significance: Because of post-1941 construction date, classified Noncontributing; nevertheless, a good and intact local example of c. 1945 commercial architecture.

216 Pine, Site No. 1893, Contributing, c. 1925.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; 3-bay ground floor configuration with recessed entrance; modern display windows; second floor with 2-bay configuration paired double hung windows in each bay; slight pediment in parapet.

Significance: Good local example of period commercial building that retains most of its historic fabric.

226 Pine, Site No. 1892, Noncontributing, c. 1915.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; recessed entrance in central bay of front; corbeled detailing in parapet.

Significance: Because of post-1941 alterations, historic integrity of building is compromised; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

234 Pine, Site No. 1891, Contributing, c. 1925.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; ground floor altered and display windows replaced or covered with plywood; second floor is virtually unaltered and has a 2-bay configuration with paired double hung windows; cast stone sills; row of stretcher bonding above windows; parapet with brick panel and corbeled brick work.

Significance: Although ground floor changes detract from building's historic character, building retains enough integrity to be classified Contributing.

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244 Pine, Site No. 1890, Contributing, 1927.

Description: 2-story masonry retail store with Gothic detailing; pointed arch motif in spandrels and parapet; 5-part configuration on ground floor; outer and central bays with display windows; other bays provide access to interior; transoms have been filled in with concrete blocks; second floor is mostly unaltered retaining its 3-bay configuration with three windows per bay. Significance: Minter Dry Goods Store, one of Abilene's best known retail establishments, formerly occupied building; business records of firm at Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University; an outstanding example of a commercial building with Gothic Revival detailing; one of David S. Castle and Company's finest commercial designs in Abilene.

258 Pine, Site No. 1889, Noncontributing, (c. 1915?) c. 1940.

Description: 2-story brick retail store with aluminum false front; little historic fabric is discernible. Significance: Little historic fabric discernible; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

1060 North Second, Site No. N/A, Noncontributing, (c. 1925?) c. 1955.

Description: 1-story brick retail store with aluminum false front. Significance: Although exterior appears to date to 1950s, building possibly is much older; nevertheless, building in current condition displays little physical similarities with intact historic buildings in district.

1080 North Second, Site No. 745, Contributing, c. 1925.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; one part commercial block; row of fixed glass display windows on second floor; most noteworthy features are terra cotta cartouches on parapet. Significance: Terra cotta detailing on front distinguishes this building from most others in the district.

1133 North Second, Site No. 763, Noncontributing, c. 1920/1960.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; aluminum false front; little historic fabric visible from street. Significance: Aluminum false front covers original and historic fabric; therefore, integrity is compromised; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

1151 North Second, Site No. 762, Contributing, c. 1920.

Description: 1-story brick retail store and garage; modest classical detailing; 3-bay facade with cornice and squared pilasters that divide bays; pressed tin ceiling tiles on inside; open space. Significance: Similar details and attached to building at 151 Cedar; noteworthy for classical detailing on front.

1167-1175 North Second, Site No. 761, Noncontributing, ca 1929.

Description: 1-story retail store with two storefronts; brick construction; storefronts altered with installation of modern aluminum sash display windows and aluminum framed doors.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 7/8 Page 8

Abilene Commercial Historic District

Significance: Little historic fabric survives; classified Noncontributing; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

1181-89 North Second (a.k.a. 153 Cedar), Site No. 760, Noncontributing, c. 1900/1980.

Description: 2-story brick retail store; stucco veneer covers most of historic fabric; cast iron columns still visible on front; otherwise severely altered. Significance: Severely altered; could be reclassified if sensitive restoration efforts are completed in compliance with Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

1265 North Second, Site No. 759, Contributing, 1925.

Description: 3-story lodge hall and retail store; ground floor fenestration intact with vertical light transoms although new entrance and display windows installed; windows on second and third floors enclosed with brick; classical stylistic influence of dentiled cornice on parapet. Significance: Built in 1925 for local Masonic Lodge; ground floor used for retail purposes; designed by David S. Castle and Company; nonhistoric changes, windows enclosed with brick, detract from overall historic character, building retains enough integrity to be classified Contributing.

1289 North Second, Site No. N/A, Noncontributing, c. 1950.

Description: 2-story steel frame retail store. Significance: Less than 50 years old and not within district's period of significance.

1102 North Third, Site No. N/A, Contributing, 1930, Photograph 10.

Description: 10-story building with reinforced concrete construction; Art Deco design and detailing. Significance: Built for wholesale grocery merchant Horace O. Wooten and designed by David S. Castle; Wooten paid for construction with cash from oil profits; a prominent architectural landmark in Abilene with Art Deco design and detailing; relatively few alterations detract from integrity.

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Abilene Commercial Historic District

The Abilene Commercial Historic District is a remarkably intact historic area of downtown that includes a high concentration of commercial buildings. The district reflects Abilene's dominance as a regional trade center based upon rail transportation and includes several of Abilene's most important commercial buildings. This nomination is associated with the historic context "The Railroad and Abilene's Development into a Wholesale and Distribution Center in West Texas, 1881-1939." Significant at the local level between 1890-1939, the district meets National Register Criterion A in the area Commerce for its associations with the railroad and the community's development. It also meets Criterion C in the area of Architecture as the community's best collection of commercial buildings, which illustrate architectural styles typical of the late 19th and early 20th century American Movements and the Modern Movement.

Abilene's designation as a major stop on the Texas and Pacific Railroad and its early billing as the "Future Great City of West Texas" spurred early economic activity in the community. As a consequence, Abilene soon became the dominant commercial center in the region and attracted large numbers of businessmen, merchants and other entrepreneurs.

Original surveyors of Abilene, realizing that the city would be an important trade center, laid out long narrow lots on central blocks facing the railroad and on selected streets on both sides of the tracks. Merchants subsequently opened stores along these thoroughfares that included the 800 to 1600 blocks of North and South First streets and the 100 to 300 blocks of Pine, Oak and Walnut streets. This area became the Abilene's commercial heart and expanded as the city grew.

In many ways, Abilene's downtown was typical of those in cities throughout the state but, unlike most, it had a railroad that divided the central business district into roughly equal halves. A friendly rivalry ensued between the north and south "sides," each claiming to have more stores, greater selection and better prices. The south side had the Taylor County Courthouse following an 1883 vote that moved the county seat from Buffalo Gap to Abilene. The north side had both the passenger and freight depots of the Texas and Pacific Railroad. Although the courthouse was an important node of activity, the depots attracted greater attention as the railroad ensured a constant flow of people and goods to and from Abilene.

By the 1890s the north side prevailed as the primary retail and commercial center, and brick buildings replaced temporary wood frame stores initially erected in the downtown. These brick buildings stood as symbols of permanence and stability for both the merchants that occupied them and the community at large. One of the first and most significant buildings was the Windsor Hotel (174 Cypress) erected in 1890 at the southwest corner of Cypress and North Second streets. It survives today but is hardly recognizable due to the application of nonhistoric fabric over the exterior.

Following completion of the Windsor Hotel and other 1890s-era buildings, relatively little new construction occurred in the central business district until the 1920s when Abilene once again experienced rapid growth and development. Much of this expansion can be attributed to the discovery of oil in nearby areas. Abilene's strategic location and efficient transportation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

Abilene Commercial Historic District

services attracted still more people and business to the community. With the growth and the influx of oil-related revenues, local businessmen embarked on an aggressive building campaign that reflected Abilene's most intense period of prosperity and physical development resulting in the construction of many new buildings and the remodeling of others. "High rise" office buildings and hotels, such as the Alexander Building (102-104 Pine, see Photograph 9), the Wooten Hotel (1102 North Third, see Photograph 10), and the Mims Building (275-281 Cypress), changed the skyline. Smaller, yet architecturally significant buildings like the Minter Store (244 Pine) and Masonic Temple (1265 North Second) complimented the taller buildings that stood nearby. Virtually every block in the downtown had continuous rows of commercial buildings that utilized all available street frontage property.

The buildings within the district reflect the work of numerous individuals (Horace O. Wooten, George Paxton, James M. Alexander among others) over a relatively long period of time. However, one individual, David S. Castle, had a significant influence on the district's architectural character. A native of Michigan, Castle began his firm in 1914, one year after moving to Abilene. Initially he received several commissions, most of which were residential. The firm's work is prominent in the Abilene Commercial Historic District.

He and his firm are credited with the design of many of the district's most important 1920s buildings including: the 4th floor addition to the Grace Hotel (102-142 Cypress, see Photograph 2), the Mims Building (275-281 Cypress), the Waldrop Building (290 Cypress, see Photograph 3), the Paramount Theater (352 Cypress), the Masonic Building (1265 North Second), the Wooten Hotel (1102 North Third, see Photograph 10), the Alexander Building (102-104 Pine, see Photograph 9), and the Minter Store (244 Pine). The company's local success here to commissions elsewhere. By the 1920s and 1930s, David S. Castle and Company completed projects throughout West Texas and eventually expanded into New Mexico, Louisiana and Kansas.

The 2-part commercial block is the most common type of composition seen on commercial buildings in the district. A horizontal division into two definite zones distinguishes this prototype; although the zones may be alike, they are clearly separate and usually reflect interior functions. The lower zone acts as public space exposed to the street level with large display windows, while the upper zone includes more private space, like offices or hotel rooms, hidden behind rhythmic fenestration. In spite of their similar configuration, a steadily growing array of available materials, like various colored and textured bricks, terra cotta, and stucco, gave the buildings diverse design expressions.

Most of the buildings features stylistic influences of the late 19th and early 20th century American Movements and the Modern Movement. Although the buildings are commercial, many do enunciate form that alludes to Prairie School influences. The Metzger Battery Company Building (1160 North First, see Photograph 4) follows typical Prairie School design with its horizontal emphasis as evidenced by its "squatty" shape, brick pattern, and geometric window motif. The Texas and Pacific Railroad Depot (1100 block North First, see Photograph 4), and the Alexander Building (102-104 Pine, see Photograph 9) reference Prairie School form, but also feature classically influenced

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Abilene Commercial Historic District

detailing, such as quoins, more elaborate cornices, and an emphasis on symmetry. More commonly seen are the influences of Art Deco: smooth exterior wall surfaces, stylized and geometric decorative motifs, and a vertical emphasis. The Waldrop Building (290 Cypress, see Photograph 3), the C.H. Boyd and Sons Tire Company Building (1292 North First, see Photograph 8), and the Wooten Hotel (1102 North Third, see Photograph 10) are examples of Art Deco design in the district.

A reduction in the local and national economies during the 1930s stifled further commercial expansion. Still, Abilene remained the largest and most important retail center in the region. The only major building project of the decade was a WPA-funded improvement of the railroad crossings in the downtown area. Dallas based Austin Bridge Company completed the project that included the construction of automobile underpasses at Pine and Cedar streets, a pedestrian underpass to the passenger depot, and a retaining wall along the tracks. The completion of this project eased automobile-related congestion at the railroad crossings and marked a turning point in the history of the downtown and the entire city. The automobile began to supplant the railroad as the primary means of transportation profoundly impacting Abilene's subsequent physical development and on the financial viability of downtown.

Following World War II, Abilene and the rest of the nation experienced renewed economic expansion. Increased popularity of the automobile contributed to suburbanization that resulted in commercial decentralization. Abilene's downtown, as a consequence, began to decline. Many downtown merchants during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s vacated their buildings and moved to new stores in suburban settings that were more accessible to automobile drivers. To counter this trend, some downtown merchants razed vacated, unused or unwanted buildings and replaced them with parking lots in hope of attracting increasingly car-dependent consumers downtown. This practice was largely unsuccessful and left the downtown with many empty or vacant lots thereby destroying some of the area's unique historic and architectural character.

Nevertheless, efforts during the last decade have had a positive affect on the district's integrity and should continue to result in restoration projects. Examples include the Mims Building (275-281 Cypress), the Alexander Building (102-104 Pine, see Photograph 9), the Paramount Theater (National Register 1982), and the Grace Hotel (102-142 Cypress, see Photograph 2). Overall the district retains its architectural and historic integrity to a high degree.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

x See bibliography for associated historic context.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.*
- x previously listed in the National Register (352 Cypress)*
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register*
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark*
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #*
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #*

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- x State historic preservation office (Texas Historical Commission)*
- _ Other state agency*
- _ Federal agency*
- x Local government-City of Abilene Planning Department*
- _ University*
- x Other -- Specify Repository: Abilene Preservation League*

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Approximately 25 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 14 430800 3590620 B 14 431300 3590200
C 14 431320 3590580 D 14 430780 3590240

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:

See Continuation Sheet 10-1.

Boundary Justification:

See Continuation Sheet 10-1.

11. FORM PREPARED BY (assisted by Amy E. Dase, Historian, THC staff)

Name/Title: David Moore, Historian
Organization: Hardy Heck Moore
Street & Number: 2112 Rio Grande
City or town: Austin

Date: June 1989; July 1990
Telephone: 512/478-8014
State: TX *Zip:* 78705

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Abilene Commercial Historic District

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the northwest corner of Lot 18, Block 25, Original Townsite, thence east along North Second Street until reaching the alley on the northwest corner of Lot 1, Block 10, Original Townsite. Thence north through alley to the northwest corner of Lot 1, Block 9, Original Townsite and continuing north until reaching the northwest corner of Lot 4, Block 22, Original Townsite. Thence east along said Lot to the northeast corner of said Lot. Thence south along Cypress Street and continuing across North Third Street to the northeast corner of Lot 1, Block 9, Original Townsite. Thence east along North Third Street to the northeast corner of Lot 1, Block 8, Original Townsite. Thence south along Pine Street continuing past the southeast corner of Lot 7, Block 2, Original Townsite to a point that is in line with the south right-of-way of North First Street. Thence east along North First Street extending 675 feet to include the loading dock of the freight depot. Thence south 213 feet along the east side of the depot crossing the two railroad tracks. Thence west along the south right-of-way crossing Pine Street and Cedar Street and extending to a point 150 feet west from Cedar Street. Thence north 325 feet along the west side of the depot to the north side of North First Street. Thence west 150 feet to the southwest corner of Lot 15, Block 25, Original Townsite. Thence north along said Block continuing to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the historic district includes much of the historic commercial center of Abilene that retains its historic and architectural integrity. The historic district possesses a strong, cohesive character; areas adjacent to the historic district boundaries are altered to the extent that their integrity is highly compromised.

2/19/92

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Abilene MPS
TEXAS

COVER	Date Listed
Substantive Review	12/18/91
92000225 1915 Taylor County Courthouse	3/23/92
92000193 Abilene Christian College Administration Building	3/23/92
91001811 Abilene Commercial Historic District	12/18/91
92000200 Abilene Fire Station No. 2	3/23/92
92000205 Abilene Street Railway Company Barn	3/23/92
92000191 Abilene and Northern Railway Company Depot <i>owned by</i>	3/23/92
92000214 Ackers, William and Mary, House	3/23/92
92000234 Blanton, Thomas L., House <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000229 Boyd--Hall House	3/23/92
92000206 Caldwell Hall <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000195 Cash, W. A. V., House <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000218 Castle, David S., House <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000211 Chambers, Samuel A., House	3/23/92
92000237 Davis, George R., House	3/23/92
92000199 Dillingham, O. D. and Ada, House	3/23/92
92000222 Dodd--Harkrider House <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000204 Evans, J. W., House	3/23/92
92000228 Federal Building (<i>now returned</i>)	Ret.
92000210 Finley, Eugene L., House	3/23/92
92000226 First Presbyterian Church <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000215 Fritz, David C. and Docia, House	3/23/92
92000192 Fulwiler, William J., House <i>owned by</i> <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000232 Goodloe, Albert S. and Ruth, House	3/23/92
92000207 Green, Roland A. D., House	3/23/92
92000236 Higginbotham, J. G., House	3/23/92
92000196 House at 1127 Ash Street	3/23/92
92000224 Hughes, Ed S., Company Warehouse	3/23/92
92000212 Jones, A. T., House	3/23/92
92000221 Lanius, C. A., House <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000194 Luce Hall <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000220 Magee, J. D., House	3/23/92
92000201 McDaniel, George W. and Lavina, House	3/23/92
92000219 McDonald Hall	3/23/92
92000209 McMurry College Administration Building <u>Substantive Review</u>	3/23/92
92000198 Minter, William A., House	3/23/92
92000216 Motz, Charles, House	3/23/92
92000230 Parramore, D. D., House	3/23/92
92000223 Radford, James M., Grocery Company Warehouse	3/23/92
92000231 Reading, Jhules, House	3/23/92
92000235 Roberts, Nathan J. and Nancy, House	3/23/92
92000233 Sacred Heart Catholic Church	3/23/92

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Abilene Commercial Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME: Abilene MPS

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Taylor

DATE RECEIVED: 11/07/91 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/25/91
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/11/91 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/22/91
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91001811

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: Y SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 12/18/91 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Abilene Commercial Historic District is significant for its role as the dominant commercial center in this region of West Texas and for its representation of the commercial ^{building} property type as defined in the Abilene MPS.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept 1A+C
REVIEWER Antoinette Lee
DISCIPLINE History
DATE 12/18/91

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SIR Y (N)

CLASSIFICATION

count resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

historic current

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification
 materials
 descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph
 completeness
 clarity
 applicable criteria
 justification of areas checked
 relating significance to the resource
 context
 relationship of integrity to significance
 justification of exception
 other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage verbal boundary description
 UTM's boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps USGS maps photographs presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

SCOTT'S SERVICE

151 CEDAR

ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 10

1 of 10

Scott's Service

Abilene Comm HD

151 Cedar

Abilene, Taylor County

Photo 50 of 70 Texas



HOTEL
DRAKE

30

DE LORETTA C. ...

ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

GRACE HOTEL

102-142 CYPRESS

ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 10

2

Grace Hotel
Abilene Commercial Historic District
102¹⁴² Cypress
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photo 51 of 70



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
SOUTHWEST CORNER of CYPRESS & NORTH THIRD, 270 & 290 CYPRESS
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 10

3

Abilene Commercial Historic
District
SW corner Cypress and N Third
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas

Photo 52 of 70



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
TEXAS & PACIFIC RAILROAD DEPOT
1100 BLOCK NORTH FIRST
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 10

4
Texas and Pacific Railroad Depot
Abilene Comm HD
1100 Block N First
Abilene, Taylor County
Photo 53 of 70 Texas



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
METZGER BATTERY COMPANY BUILDING
1160 NORTH FIRST
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 10

5
Metzger Battery Company
Abilene Comm HD
1160 N First
Abilene, Taylor County

photo 54 of 70 Texas



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
1100 BLOCK NORTH FIRST (NORTH SIDE)
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 10

6

Abilene Comm H.D.
1100 Block N 1st
(North Side)
Abilene, Taylor County
Texas
Photo 55 of 70



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
1100 & 1200 BLOCKS NORTH FIRST (NORTH & SOUTH SIDES)
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 7 of 10

Abilene Comm HD
1100 Block N First (North Side)
Abilene Taylor County
Photo 56 of 70 Texas



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
C.H. BOYD & SONS TIRE COMPANY BUILDING
1292 NORTH FIRST
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 8 of 10

Boyd, C.H. and Sons Tire Co.
Abilene Comm HD
1292 N. First
Abilene, Taylor County
Texas

Photo 57 of 70



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
ALEXANDER BUILDING
102-104 PINE
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

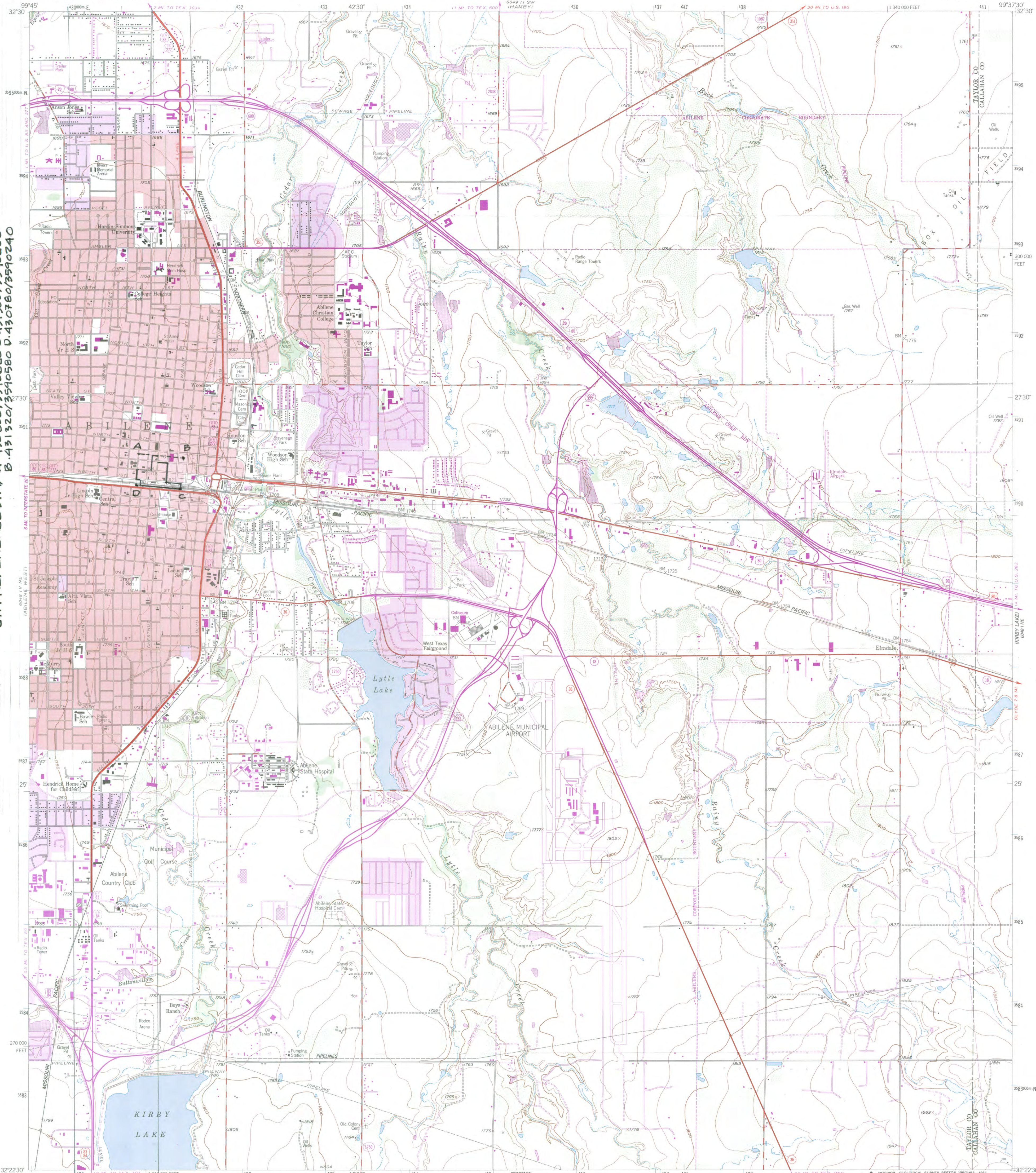
PHOTOGRAPH 9 of 10



ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
WOOTEN HOTEL
1102 NORTH THIRD
ABILENE, TAYLOR COUNTY, TEXAS

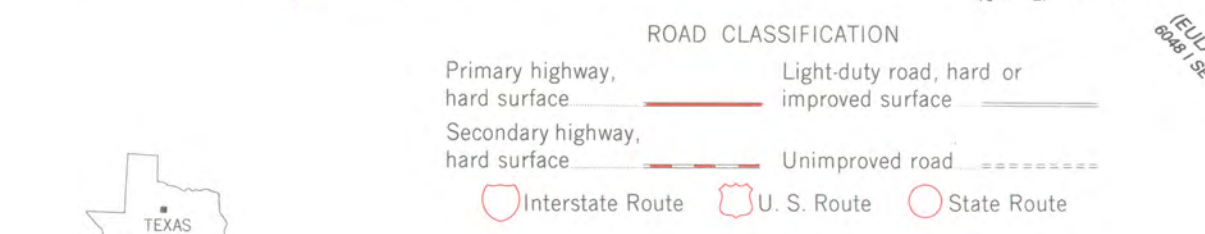
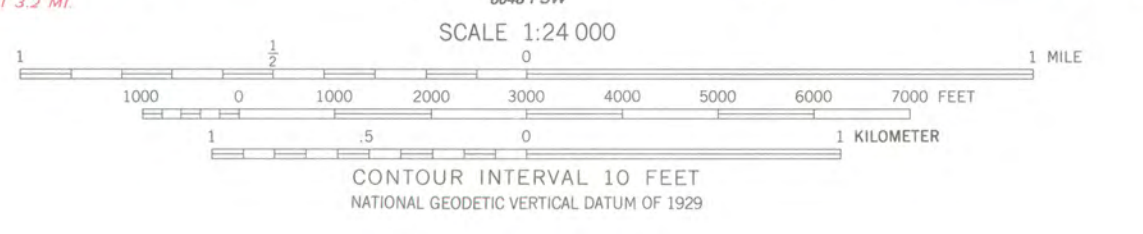
PHOTOGRAPH 10 of 10

ABILENE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
ABILENE TAYLOR CO. TEXAS
UTM REFERENCES: 14/ A-430800/3590620 C-431300/3590200
B-431320/3590580 D-430700/3590240



Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA
Topography from aerial photographs by ER-55 plotter
Aerial photographs taken 1954. Field check 1957
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
north central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,
move the projection lines 10 meters south and
34 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial
photographs taken 1984 and other sources
This information not field checked. Map edited 1987
Purple tint indicates extension of urban area



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

3299-243
1957
PHOTOREVISED 1987
DMA 6048 1 NW - SERIES V882

RECEIVED

JAN 29 1990

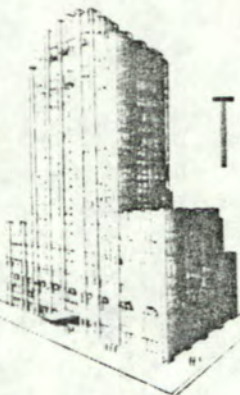
The ABILENE TOWERS

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

North Third and Cypress

Abilene, Texas

79601



Telephone

AC 915 673- 1112

January 25, 1990

Mr. Curtis Tunnell
State Historic Preservation Officer
Texas Historical "Commission
P. O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: The Wooten Hotel
1102 N. Third St.
Abilene, Taylor County
Texas

Dear Mr. Tunnell:

We are in receipt of your letter of December 28, 1989, with respect to the above, in which you advise us that the above mentioned property is once again being considered by the State Board of Review to the National Register of Historic Places.

As your records will indicate, the State Board of Review, in the latter part of 1980, had the identical proposal before it for consideration and rejected the proposal.

We are enclosing a copy of our letter dated October 30, 1980, in which we reflected our reasons why the above property does not qualify for such registration. We call your attention to items designated 1 thru 5 inclusive appearing on page 2 of our letter of October 30, 1980.

Nothing has changed since then which would warrant either your Commission to reconsider, or to change its previous decision.

The position of the owners(both undersigned) has not changed either, and we reiterate our objections to the proposal for nomination.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Paul Oman

PAUL OMAN (Owner)

Helen Oman

HELEN OMAN (Owner)

(mailing address)
P. O. Box 49757
Los Angeles, Ca. 90049
Tel. 213-476-9555

Enc.

(Individual)

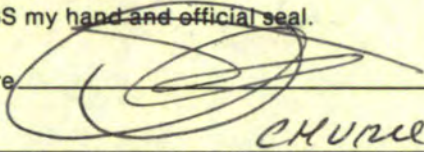
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF Los Angeles } SS.

On 1-26-90 before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said State, personally appeared Paul and Helen Omar

 personally known to me (or proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence) to be the person 5 whose name Paul and Helen subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged that they executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Signature 

Churee Russell
Name (Typed or Printed)



(This area for official notarial seal)

Paul Oman
P. O. Box 49757
Los Angeles, California 90049

October 30, 1980

Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Att: Mr. Truett Latimer,
Executive Director.

Re: Your File - The Wooten Hotel
1102 N. Third St.
Abilene, Taylor County
Texas.

Gentlemen:

I am in receipt of a copy of the Nomination Form, which has designated the above Wooten Hotel and the Paramount Theatre to The National Register of Historic Places. I would like to reflect my reasons why the Wooten Hotel does not qualify for such registration.

In order to clarify what appears to be some confusion, reference is made in the Nomination Form to both structures as being known as "The Wooten Complex". Such is not the fact, as both buildings are independently operated and I daresay, if one should ask where the Wooten Complex is - nobody would really know. Also, I would like to make it clear that I have no interest in the Paramount Theatre. This is an independent structure and I completely fail to understand the tying in of both structures together for the purpose of nomination. The following comments and remarks are directed solely to the apartment house, which evidently was known at one time, many years ago, as The Wooten Hotel.

The apartment house is of recent origin, having been built some time during the early 1930's. There is no historical significance attached to the building and the construction of the building is such which is neither unique, nor containing any great artistic architectural pattern or design. The Nomination Form describes the building, but yet contains no reason for justifying the designation of the building as an historical landmark. Much comment is made with respect to the Paramount Theatre. I am not in a position to either deny or confirm the references made to such theatre. In any event, all of the reasons justifying the inclusion of the Paramount Theatre, as an historical landmark, are not equally applicable to the present apartment house. In fact, it does appear that the

Nomination Form attempts to envelop the apartment house with the characteristics of the Paramount Theatre. This obviously is not a true presentation. Also, by putting the two together and calling it "The Wooten Complex" further indicates an attempt being made to merge the two (2) structures. This likewise is an unfair presentation.

In reviewing the criteria set up by the U. S. Department of the Interior as to the reasons which would justify the inclusion of a structure in the National Register of Historic Places, we find that the apartment house just does not meet the established criteria for the following reasons:

1. The building does not have significance in American history or architecture and does not contain special or important significant design, workmanship, feeling and association.

2. The building is not associated with any particular great events of the past, and has in no way made any significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history, Texas history or Abilene history.

3. The building has not been associated with the lives of any people which have been significant in the past. In this regard, I call your attention to the bottom of the sheet added to the Nomination Form, which refers to the builder as being a well-to-do Abilene grocery man. Obviously, this does not meet the criteria.

4. There are no distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents a significant entity. In this regard, I call your attention to the description of the building contained in the Nomination Form. While the description identifies the building, it completely fails to establish such unique characteristics which would warrant the inclusion of the building as an historical place.

5. The building fails to yield any information which is important in history. In this regard, attention is directed to the fact that the building is of recent vintage and has truly no historical significance.

To attempt to fudge the apartment house with the theatre, as was done in the Nomination Form, merely clothes the apartment house with an identity or significance which is not true or accurate. Nothing is contained in the Nomination Form which in

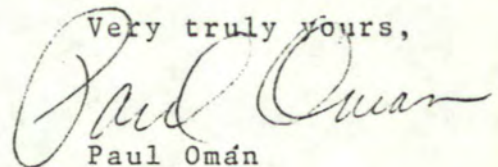
October 30, 1980

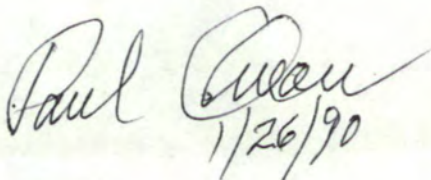
any manner shows how the apartment house is either significant to Abilene or has any special importance because of its builder, designer or architectural interest. For that matter, nothing is even indicated to show why the apartment house is important to the local citizens of Abilene.

By innuendo, in the merging of the two (2) structures and the use of the words "The Wooten Complex", the implication is that together the buildings have some special significance. Yet, nothing in the Nomination Form shows such significance or really justifies the merging of the two (2) buildings.

In view of the foregoing, and the fact that the apartment house fails to meet the standards or the criteria issued by the United States Department of the Interior, in order to include the building in the National Register of Historic Places, I respectfully request that the Application for such inclusion be denied.

Very truly yours,


Paul Omán


1/26/90

(Individual)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF Los Angeles } SS.

On 1-26-1990 before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said State, personally appeared Paul Omar

_____ personally known to me (or proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence) to be the person _____ whose name B subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged that _____ he executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Signature [Handwritten Signature]
_____ Churee Russell

Name (Typed or Printed)



(This area for official notarial seal)