



816

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Clarksville Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by McConnell Street on the south, Cherry Street on the north, Johnson Street on the west and Spadra Creek on the east not for publication

city or town Clarksville vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Johnson code 071 Zip code 72830

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

6/19/08
Date

United States Postal Service
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

6/10/08
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 - determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Property Name: Clarksville Commercial Historic District, Johnson County, AR
Reference Number: 08000816

Section 7 lacks a description of the district. The second, third, and fifth paragraphs in the "Elaboration" section on page 7-1 and 7-2 provide a historical background, but are not descriptive. The nomination lacks a summary description that places the district in a setting and that provides an overview of the character of the district. Please refer to pages 29-33 in the National Register Bulletin "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form" for guidance.

On page 7-5, in describing the post office, a "1939 WPA mural" is mentioned. It is more likely that this artwork was commissioned by the Treasury Department Section of Fine Art (the Section). The WPA rarely provided art for post offices.

The UTM coordinates as depicted on the map are inadequate. If all of the UTM points are connected, creating a polygon, a portion of the nominated district will lie outside of the polygon's boundaries. An additional point, located at the apex of the angle between coordinates 2 and 3 will correct this error. Please provide an additional point and a corrected topo map.

No acreage of the property is provided in Section 10. Please calculate the acreage of the district when the final boundaries are chosen.

Page 3 of the nomination has "Argenta Historic District Pulaski County" in the header. Please change this to reflect the property being nominated.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this nomination and hope that you find these comments useful. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (202) 354-2275 or email at <James_Gabbert@nps.gov>.

Sincerely,



Jim Gabbert, Historian
National Register of Historic Places
8/27/08

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Clarksville Commercial Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Johnson

DATE RECEIVED: 7/16/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/04/08
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/19/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/29/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000816

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: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 8/27/2008 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

See Attached Comments

RECOM./CRITERIA

Return - Patrick Andrews

REVIEWER

J. Gilbert

DISCIPLINE

Historia

TELEPHONE

DATE

8/27/2008

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name: Clarksville Commercial Historic District, Johnson County,
AR

Reference Number: 08000816

Reason for Return

This nomination is being returned for technical and substantive revision.

The district is nominated under Criteria A and C with areas of significance in Architecture, Commerce, Community Development/Planning, Politics/Government, and Social History. The summary paragraph of Section 8 addresses only Community Development/Planning and Architecture while the narrative history includes information addressing Commerce, Community Development/Planning, and Politics/Government without, however, making a case for the significance of the district in any of these areas. There is no context provided for either Architecture or Social History. Please provide a more explicit statement of significance for any of the chosen areas of significance and provide a more discrete explanation of the significance of the district as it relates to the area(s) of significance.

There are problems with reconciling the Verbal Boundary Description (VBD) and the site map. As written, the VBD includes the entirety of Blocks 1-10 of the Original Town and Block 3 of Rose's Addition, using Sprada Creek, Sevier Street, the railroad ROW, and Cherry Street as the boundaries. A check of satellite images shows a number of buildings that are located on Cherry Street are not accounted for in either the site map or the inventory of resources. It is also unclear, according to the VBD, as to whether properties west of South College, between Main and Sevier would be included. Please clarify the boundaries as stated in the VBD and the site map. If the VBD is to remain as stated, please account for all resources located within the boundaries.



The Department of
**Arkansas
Heritage**

June 12, 2008

Mike Beebe
Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

*

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

*

Delta Cultural Center

*

Historic Arkansas Museum

*

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

*

Old State House Museum

Mr. Dallan C. Wordekemper
Federal Preservation Officer
United States Postal Service
4301 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22203-1861

Dear Mr. Wordekemper:

Enclosed is the National Register nomination for the Clarksville Commercial Historic District in Clarksville, Arkansas. The district includes the Clarksville Post Office. The nomination has been signed by our SHPO, Cathie Matthews, and needs your signature as well. Also, please forward the nomination to:

Mr. Jim Gabbert
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

If you have any additional questions, or need any additional information, feel free to give me a call at (501) 324-9880 or E-mail me at Ralph@arkansasheritage.org.

Sincerely,

Ralph S. Wilcox
National Register and Survey Coordinator
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

RSW:rsw

Enclosure



Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program

1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 324-9880
fax: (501) 324-9184
tdd: (501) 324-9811

e-mail:

info@arkansaspreservation.org

website:

www.arkansaspreservation.org

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

08000816



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Cathie Maestas 3/19/09
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper Janet Fulbert Date of Action 3/30/2009

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
45	22	buildings
	3 (vacant lots)	sites
		structures
		objects
45	25	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

2

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE- Specialty Store; Financial Institution; Department Store; Professional; Restaurant

RECREATION/CULTURE- Theater

GOVERNMENT- Post Office; County Courthouse

TRANSPORTATION- Train Depot

INDUSTRY- Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE- Specialty Store; Restaurant; Financial Institution; Professional

GOVERNMENT- Post Office; County Courthouse

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER- Late 19th Century Vernacular Commercial20th Century Vernacular Commercial20th CENTURY REVIVALS- Classical Revival; Mediterranean Revival

MODERN MOVEMENT- Modernistic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick; Concrete; Stone

walls Brick; Stucco; Metal; Cast Concrete

roof Asphalt; Metal

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

Located in Clarksville, Arkansas, in Johnson County, the Clarksville Commercial Historic District contains 69 buildings. The district is located along six blocks of the city's W. Main Street (U.S. Highway 64) and portions of one block on either side. The Johnson County Courthouse and U.S. Post Office Building, both constructed in 1935, occupy a city block fronting Main Street in the center of the district. Two of the buildings in the district are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Johnson County Courthouse (NR listed 06-14-91) and the Missouri-Pacific Railroad Depot (listed 06-11-92). Excluding the two National Register listed properties, the number of buildings that contribute to the historic significance of the district is 45 (67%). The period of significance for this district covers the years between 1883 and 1958. The architectural character of the buildings in the district clearly represents the period from 1900 to 1958 when 83% of all of the buildings in the district were constructed. All of the contributing buildings retain their overall massing and setback and remain visual representations of their twentieth century design. The 69 buildings contained in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District substantiate the growth and development of the town as the commercial and governmental center of Johnson County while displaying vernacular versions of popular American commercial architectural design.

Elaboration

Johnson County, Arkansas, lies in the northwest region of the state and covers 662.2 square miles. Johnson County was created in 1833 and is bounded on the north by Madison and Newton counties, Pope County on the east, Logan County on the south, and Franklin County on the west. Clarksville, the Johnson County seat, lies in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains with an elevation of 379 feet. Clarksville is situated on Spadra Creek and is four miles north of the Arkansas River. U.S. Interstate 40 runs to the south of Clarksville, providing easy accessibility to the town.

In 1836, Clarksville was made the county seat of Johnson County. Clarksville was platted in a grid pattern around a public square. The first building in the town was the courthouse, completed in 1837. The courthouse was erected on the public square out of logs from trees cut down on the site. The blocks around the square did not develop until

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the 1840s when frame business buildings, churches, and homes began being constructed on lots facing the courthouse. The 1837 courthouse was damaged by fire in 1872 and Little Rock architect John D. Edwards was chosen to design the new building. The courthouse was completed in the same location as the original in 1874.

When a railroad line was constructed through the northwest corner of town in 1873, Clarksville's status as a regional commercial and governmental center was solidified. Many new buildings were erected in Clarksville during the last decades of the nineteenth century: new, substantial brick buildings in the first three decades of the twentieth century were replaced most.

The area that comprises the Clarksville Commercial Historic District lies within the original 1837 plat of the town. The streets in the historic district are laid out in a grid pattern on level land. The historic downtown commercial area of Clarksville is located on the west side of Spadra Creek. After crossing Spadra Creek, Clarksville's Main Street, after crossing Spadra Creek, becomes W. Main, which is the historic commercial district of the city. Also U.S. Highway 64, W. Main remains a busy local thoroughfare despite the fact that Interstate 40, just west of downtown Clarksville now bypasses the city's core. The general physical character of the Clarksville Commercial Historic District is derived from the groupings of historic commercial buildings along six blocks of W. Main Street (Highway 64) and one block on either side. The Johnson County Courthouse and Federal Post Office occupy an entire city block south of W. Main Street. Constructed by the WPA in 1935, these buildings are a focal point and a busy center of downtown Clarksville's role as the seat of county government. All of the historic fabric in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District dates to the twentieth century, with the exception of two buildings on S. Fulton Street, facing the courthouse, which were built c.1883. The majority of the buildings in the district are two-stories and of brick and/or stone construction. The largest period of construction is from 1910 to 1940, when 60% of all the buildings that comprise the Clarksville Commercial Historic District were constructed.

1880-1899

The oldest remaining buildings in Clarksville's Commercial Historic District date to the

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early 1880s. Located at 100 and 102-104 S. Fulton Street, both were constructed c.1883. The Hunt Building at 100-102 S. Fulton is a narrow two-story brick building with a tall stepped parapet. Although windows have been infilled in the larger McKennon Building at 100 S. Fulton, it features similar decorative parapet. Both buildings were “refronted” in 1922, but the parapets remain intact, particularly on the McKennon Building.

1900-1919

Seventeen buildings in the district were constructed in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Earlier, mostly frame, buildings were replaced with “modern” brick and stone buildings. The Morgan Building at 310-312 W. Main, for example, was built in 1901. The building at 138 W. Main was constructed c.1904 and retains much of its original appearance, including the original wood storefronts with recessed paneled kick plates, fluted cast iron pilasters and recessed centered double doors in each of the three storefronts. A simple brick cornice is denoted with brick detail on the building. The J.T. White Building at 200 W. Main Street was built c.1902 and is a two-story brick building with entrance in a beveled front corner. Although remodeled in 1935, this building retains its original large round arched windows flanking the beveled corner.

The Missouri Pacific Railroad constructed a depot northwest of the courthouse square at 101 W. Johnson Street in 1910. Individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 06-11-92, this building is typical of Missouri Pacific depot design in the early years of the twentieth century in its one-story brick construction with hip roof and broad, overhanging eaves supported by wood brackets.

Characteristics of the buildings in the district constructed in the first two decades of the twentieth century include brick construction and minimal ornamentation except for the use of brick patterns. Several of the earliest buildings in the proposed district feature cast iron columns on their fronts.

1920s

The prosperous years of the 1920s brought a spurt of new building in Clarksville’s downtown. Seventeen (25%) of the buildings in the district were constructed in the 1920s. The buildings constructed in Clarksville during this decade reflect the stability

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and prosperity of the town. The majority of the construction during this period was on W. Main Street, with the largest concentration in the 100, 400, and 500 blocks.

Buildings constructed in the 1920s were generally simple brick buildings, one or two story. Varied use of brick colors and patterns provide decorative interest on the upper levels of the buildings.

Six buildings in the 400 block of W. Main (412, 414, 416, 418, 420, 424 W. Main) that were constructed in the 1920s feature simple brick walls above the storefronts with a contrasting color brick laid to form wide diamond shape patterns. This same diamond brick pattern also appears on the building at 518 W. Main.

Other buildings constructed in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District during the 1920s were on N. Fulton Street where cast concrete banding and insets provide detail in contrast to the dark brick walls as seen on the buildings at 121-123 N. Fulton and 111 N. Fulton.

One of the more distinctive buildings constructed in Clarksville's commercial district in the 1920s is the Riddell Theater Building at 516 W. Main. This brick building features a pronounced center rise in the front parapet with a round arched window with keystones.

1930s

Likely spurred by the construction of a new courthouse on the square in 1935, in the years after the announcement of its proposed construction and in the period after its completion, a surprisingly large number of buildings were constructed in Clarksville's downtown during the 1930s, particularly given the fact that the entire nation was in an economic depression. Thirteen buildings in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District were built in this decade.

Five buildings were constructed in first years of the 1930s. Most of these buildings are simple, one-story brick vernacular commercial construction. The Morgan Building at 300 W. Main, constructed in 1932, is a two-story brick structure with beveled corner entrance. Bands of Craftsman style double-hung wood windows on the second story of

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the east and south elevations feature four vertical panes over a single light. Transom windows also feature four panes. Buildings at 118 W. Main and 306 W. Main have simple brick cornices and multi-pane transom windows above the storefront provide decorative interest to the fronts of these buildings.

The year 1935 was a significant milestone for Clarksville as a new federal post office and new county courthouse were both constructed along with a flurry of other new construction. There are five buildings in the historic district that were built in that one year. Construction of a new Johnson County Courthouse in the town square was a highly anticipated improvement to the appearance of the downtown. It is a three story, brick and concrete masonry building designed in the Classical Revival style with some Colonial Revival influences. The building was constructed through Franklin Roosevelt's Depression era federal funding as part of the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works.

Also in 1935 a new Federal Post Office was constructed at 200 W. Sevier in a subdued Classical Revival style featuring three round arch openings with keystones centered on the front. A mural commissioned by the U.S. Treasury Department Section of Fine Art in 1939 entitled "How Happy Was the Occasion" is located inside the Clarksville Post Office.

The only example of the type of use of fieldstone and brick known as "Mixed Masonry" is located at 311 W. Cherry Street. Originally constructed as a service station in 1939, the building's walls are sheathed in fieldstone with brick surrounding window and door openings.

1940s & 1950s

Only three buildings in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District date from the 1940s. Two were constructed in 1940: the King Building at 107 Main Street was built for a car dealership. The one-story brick and stone building is set back from the street and is notable in its brick parapet that rises to a peak in the center. The Taylor Building at 131 W. Main is a simple one-story brick commercial building and was built in 1949.

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The 1950s were a period when larger, industrial type buildings were constructed on the edges of Clarksville's business district. Five buildings in the historic district were constructed between 1950 and 1955. The Whitney Johnson Building at 105 S. Cravens is a one story brick building featuring narrow cut stone on the front (west) wall, a popular used in American architectural design in the 1950s. The only example of mid twentieth century Moderne design is the building at 116 N. College Street. A striking curved wall on the front lends a Moderne influence to this one story brick building.

A building at 401 Cherry was constructed for the Kroger Grocery Company in 1955. The brick building is one-story with plate glass storefront. Other buildings constructed in the 1950s were industrial in use, including the Peden Central Foundry building at 101 McConnell. Constructed in 1951, this large two-story building is of cast concrete and is punctuated by large metal multi-pane awning windows.

1960 to Present

Since 1960 twelve buildings have been constructed in the area comprising the Clarksville Commercial Historic District. Most of these buildings feature deep setbacks from the street and open space on all four sides.

Integrity

The Clarksville Commercial Historic District is a cohesive group of buildings that maintain the integrity necessary to convey their architectural significance as well as their historic importance to the region. With 67% of the total of 69 buildings contributing to the district is a strong visual representation of the designs, materials, and workmanship used in their construction. Of the twenty-two buildings considered non-contributing to the historic significance of the historic district, twelve have been constructed after the period of significance. The remaining ten buildings considered non-contributing are historic, but have been altered to the extent they do not convey their original historic appearance. This collection of 69 buildings expresses the growth and development of Clarksville while staying true to the town's original design around the courthouse square.

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CLARKSVILLE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTY LIST

<u>C/NC</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CONSTRUCTION DATE</u>
NC	311 Cherry	1939
C	401 Cherry	1955
C	400 Blk.Cherry	1940
NC	400 Blk.Cherry	1985
NC	400 Blk.Cherry	1994
C	105 Cravens	1955
NC	115 Cravens	1967
C	116 College	1950
NC	100 Fulton	1883
C	102-104 Fulton	1883
C	106 Fulton	1913
C	108 Fulton	1920
C	110 Fulton	1913
C	112 Fulton	1913
C	114 Fulton	1919
C	116-122 Fulton	1912
C	111 Fulton	1929
C	113-115 Fulton	1911
C	117-119 Fulton	1919
C	121-123 Fulton	1924
NC	100 Johnson	1980
NR	101 Johnson	1910
NC	100 Main	1920
NC	105 Main	1926
C	107 Main	1940
NC	117 Main	1935
NC	118 Main	1938

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CLARKSVILLE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTY LIST

<u>C/NC</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CONSTRUCTION DATE</u>
NC	119 Main	1935
C	120 Main	1920
NC	122 Main	1914
NC	123 Main	1930
C	131 Main	1949
C	133 Main	1936
NC	134 Main	1926
NC	137 Main	1980
C	138 Main	1904
C	142 Main	1904
C	146 Main	1904
C	148 Main	1932
C	150 Main	1928
C	152 Main	1904
C	200 Main	1902
NC	210 Main	1961
NC	214 Main	2005
NR	215 Main	1935
C	300 Main	1932
C	302 Main	1931
NC	304 Main	1931
C	306 Main	1937
C	310-312 Main	1901
NC	400 Main	2000
C	412 Main	1921
C	414 Main	1921
C	416 Main	1925

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Section number 7 Page 9

CLARKSVILLE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTY LIST

<u>C/NC</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>CONSTRUCTION DATE</u>
C	418 Main	1921
NC	422 Main	1982
C	424 Main	1928
C	420 Main	1925
C	504 Main	1924
C	508 Main	1926
C	514 Main	1952
C	516 Main	1923
C	518 Main	1917
C	520 Main	1917
C	101 McConnell	1951
NC	126 Sevier	1973
C	100 Blk.Sevier	1965
NC	100 Blk.Sevier	1965
C	200 Sevier	1935

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture, Commerce, Community Planning & Development, Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1883-1958

Significant Dates

1935- Construction of County Courthouse; Federal Post Office

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Louis A. Simon
Harralson & Nelson

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Summary

The Clarksville Commercial Historic District contains sixty-nine buildings in the historic downtown of Clarksville, Arkansas, Johnson County. Located in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains and just north of the Ouachita Mountain range, Clarksville's history began when it was established as the seat of government in Johnson County, Arkansas, in 1836. The district is being nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion A for the role that it played as the commercial and governmental center of Johnson County, while exhibiting a good example of community planning and development. The district is also being nominated under Criterion C for its examples of early to mid-twentieth-century commercial architectural styles. Two buildings in the district are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Johnson County Courthouse (NR 06-14-91) and the Missouri-Pacific Railroad Depot (listed 06-11-92). Of the remaining 67 buildings in the district, 45 (67%) contribute to the significance of the district, and 22 are considered non-contributing. The period of significance of the Clarksville Commercial Historic District spans the period from 1883 to 1958.

Elaboration

Clarksville, Arkansas, the County Seat of Johnson County, straddles Spadra Creek and is located four miles north of the Arkansas River in the rolling foothills of the Ozark Mountains. Johnson County was formed in 1833 with land appropriated from neighboring Pope County and named in honor of Judge Benjamin Johnson, first Territorial Judge of Arkansas.

The Arkansas River served as a major avenue of transportation and commerce long before the first white settler reached Arkansas. As it flows through Johnson County, it is flanked by the foothills of the Ozark Mountains to the north and the Ouachita Mountain range to south. The intersection of two mountain ranges and a river offered a unique setting. The area is rich in scenic vistas with access to the river yet protected from floods so common further downriver. Clean water springs from many of the valleys. Timber (oak, hickory, ash, cottonwood, pecan, and walnut) is abundant and the soil fertile.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Attesting to the region's favorable conditions is the great number of artifacts found in the area from Native American settlements stretching back over a thousand years. Near Clarksville, under a bluff called Rock House, ancient pictographs exist of various reptiles and turtles.

As early as 1828 settlers of Johnson County were arriving by river boat. At that time three river landings existed in the area: Morrison Bluff and Pittsburg situated on the south bank of the river, and Spadra a short distance between the two and on the north bank. Each of these communities had a post office and postmaster. When Johnson County was established on November 16, 1833, the home of Bettis Alston at Spadra, the largest town in the new county, was chosen as the temporary seat of justice.

A committee of three elected commissioners was chosen to select a permanent location for the county seat. Bettis Alston, the most influential member of the committee, strongly believed that the county seat should remain in Spadra. It was the oldest, largest, and best-situated town in Johnson County and he was already the postmaster. The second committee member, Lorenza N. Clark, hoped to bring the county seat to Morrison's Bluff, his home town. Abraham Laster, the swing vote, favored neither town. He envisioned a new town in the thickly timbered, relatively flat Spadra Creek Valley four miles up stream from the Arkansas River. This land held several pure water springs, unlike Spadra where the water was tainted by the underlying layer of coal.

James Cravens, who owned the proposed new town site land, and Abraham Laster offered a compromise to Mr. Clark. If Clark would vote for removal of the county seat from Spadra to a new site, Mr. Cravens would donate a quarter of a square mile of land for the town. In addition Laster offered to arrange for the town to be named in honor of Lorenza N. Clarks. The scheme worked and in 1836, Clarksville became the county seat for Johnson County in name only because there was no courthouse or town, for that matter.

A year after Clarksville's conception not one structure had been built. It was decided that construction on the Courthouse should begin to spur other development. By June 1837

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Section number 8 Page 3

the plat of Clarksville was complete and the Courthouse almost finished. The post office of record was moved to the Johnson County Courthouse in July, 1838. As anticipated, others came to build in the new town. Moreau Rose built the first store on the south corner of Main and Hullum (later changed to Fulton) Streets. "Dad" Smith built a small log building that housed the Smith Saloon. All of Clarksville's early structures including the Courthouse were built of rough logs using the abundant timber on site.

Acceptance and growth came slow for Clarksville. During the early period of the town's development, most all commerce and trade was done by riverboat. Towns located on the river, Spadra, Morrison's Bluff, and Pittsburg, experienced a steady increase in population and business. Every new settler off-loaded in one of these thriving river towns. If they wanted to continue to Clarksville, they had to travel several miles to reach the isolated hamlet of just a few log buildings. If they landed at Spadra they had to pay to cross the river. Clarksville was forced to rely on the river town for all of its transportation of people and goods until the Little Rock- Springfield stage line extended a route from Little Rock to Clarksville in the early 1870s.

In the 1840s lots around the Courthouse Square began to fill with houses and business. The new log buildings were larger and some were two-stories with milled lumber. Two doctors, Dr. William Gray and Dr. McConnell moved to town and opened offices; one included a drug store. A law office was established. The Methodist congregation built their first church on the same site as the existing church building to the south of the courthouse square. A sawmill was operated across the block from the courthouse. One of the first homes in Clarksville was constructed by George Scott, who built a house on the west side of the square. Other business started during this early period of growth included Clarksville's second saloon, a tailor shop, general store, hotel and a printing press building for the Clarksville Sun newspaper. The first school for the blind in the state and the school for the deaf-mute were constructed in Clarksville around 1850.

Spadra Creek had to be crossed to enter Clarksville from the east. The first bridge over the creek was a covered bridge, completed 1852. Its original piers were still in use in 1921 and supported later bridges. On December 21, 1848, Clarksville became an

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incorporated town.

Coal was discovered in 1840 under the east bank of Spadra Creek. The first coal mining operation opened in Spadra in 1844. Spadra coal was of the highest quality and only added to the wealth and growth of Clarksville's ongoing rival. During the Civil War years, Spadra found an ever-growing demand for their coal production.

While Spadra bustled, Clarksville stagnated during the Civil War and for five or six years after. Most of the men that did not die in the first skirmish in the area at Oak Hill were away fighting on other fronts. Soon bushwhackers prowled the county almost unchecked. Women were tortured, a minister shot, homes and business burned before a Federal regiment established a post at Clarksville. In 1862 a new telegraph line connected the Clarksville Courthouse with Little Rock. But the years during and immediately after the Civil War saw little growth in Clarksville.

By the end of the Civil War, Spadra was positioning itself for another attempt to become the county seat. This attempt was spurred by Johnson County farmers and businessmen on the south side of the Arkansas River who had pay to cross the river when needing to do any governmental business. Petitions were circulated in 1871 to return the seat of Johnson County to Spadra. Almost everyone in Johnson County south of the river signed the petition in support of the change. The petitions were sent to the then Republican dominated Arkansas legislature which was in session.

Clarksville leaders knew that removal of the Courthouse would devastate their town. Several came together to devise a variation of the plan that had originally secured the county seat. It required quickly raising \$1,000.00 in the Democrat leaning community. Bud McConnell was dispatched to Little Rock to meet with State Senator J.N. Sarber. McConnell explained that the best course for all Johnson County citizens would be to create a new county south of the river from Johnson County land on that side combined with land taken from neighboring Yell, Scott and Franklin counties. In a familiar twist McConnell suggested the new county could be called Sarber County. The \$1,000.00 offered by Clarksville, McConnell insisted, was only to help defer the cost involved in

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negotiating such a plan.

Monday, January 23, 1871, during the afternoon session of the General Assembly, Senator Sarber presented a bill forming a new county south of the Arkansas River. It was called Clayton County, named after the governor at the time, Powell Clayton. The bill passed and in a matter of weeks, the chairman of the Committee on Counties introduced a bill that changed the name of the newly created county from Clayton to Sarber County. The second bill passed. Once again Clarksville had triumphed over Spadra. Four years later in 1875 when the Democrats regained control of the Arkansas Legislature, the name of Sarber County was changed to Logan County in honor of Colonel James Logan.

Clarksville received more good news later in 1871 when they learned that the extension of the Little Rock to Fort Smith Railroad was coming through their town. But with the tracks almost finished, the contractor filed for bankruptcy. After a period of uncertainty for Clarksville, Jay Gould acquired the railroad contract. But in the interim, a new route had been surveyed taking the railroad south through Spadra with its healthy riverboat trade. As soon as the citizens of Spadra found out the railroad was proposed to come through their town, they again petitioned the State General Assembly to have the county seat removed from Clarksville to their soon-to-be railroad town.

Faced with the decline of their town if the railroad passed them by, Clarksville's leading citizens formulated a new version of the old plan that brought and kept the county seat in Clarksville. An agent of Clarksville was sent out with cash (said to have been \$1,000.00) to meet with whom they had determined could most likely change the location of the proposed rail line. The money was offered to the railroad's on-site chief-engineer if he would change the direction of the railroad from Spadra to Clarksville. And if he did, the town of Clarksville agreed to provide five acres of land for a depot and machine shop and \$50,000.00 in bonds. The deal was accepted and the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad arrived in Clarksville in 1873.

Clarksville had started showing signs of recovery from the Civil War by 1867. With a new telegraph and railroad line Clarksville was positioned for a boom in the 1870s and

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Section number 8 Page 6

1880s. In 1872 civic leaders announced that a new Courthouse would be built on the same grounds as the first Courthouse that had burned the year before. Clarksville's second courthouse was completed in 1874 at a cost \$30,875.00. In comparison to the log courthouse, the new courthouse was considered elaborate with interiors of polished granite, rich stained wood, decorative metal balustrades and heavy paneled doors. Its construction reflected the renewed confidence of the community and solidified Clarksville's position as a regional governmental and commercial center.

Businesses and professionals moved to Clarksville to build and in some cases rebuild around the courthouse square. The 1873 directory of business and professionals in Clarksville listed nine businesses on the public square, two physicians, an attorney-at-law, two general merchants, a family grocery, a clothing store, a druggist and a watchmaker. In addition to those around the square, ten businesses were listed on Main Street, three on Fulton Street as well as a Blacksmith and Wagon Shop near the railroad. Some of these businesses in nearby blocks included a gristmill, a confectionary, a boot and shoemaker, another physician, a stove and tin shop, a tenpin alley and saloon, and a photographer.

Clarksville became the center of trade for Johnson County and beyond. Since 1866, Clarksville had a series of newspapers as many as three publishing at the same time. The Clarksville Democrat began in 1867, the Clarksville Enterprise in 1872, the Vanguard in 1875, the Clarksville Herald in 1876, the McConnell's Medical Monitor in 1880, the Arkansas in 1883, the Clarksville Register in 1884, The Fool Killer in 1886, and the Western Journal in 1886 all confirmed to the growth Clarksville in the 1870s and 1880s.

Clarksville experienced its second building boom in the early 1900s. At the beginning of the twentieth century Johnson County had minerals mines, a strong timber industry, productive soil growing cotton, corn, wheat and oats, and abundant pure water supporting livestock. Most all of this commerce traveled through Clarksville. Coal mining increased with the opening of new mines including the nearby Monkey Run Mine in 1903. Eight hundred to a thousand men were employed in these enterprises. However, Clarksville's most famous export came with the development of the peach industry. The Elberta peach

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Section number 8 Page 7

was found to grow extremely well in Johnson County. In 1912, 1,000 carloads of Elberta peaches were shipped from Clarksville. The importance of Clarksville was demonstrated when Theodore Roosevelt stopped to make a brief appearance on his way to the 1912 Republican Convention which nominated him for president.

In 1926 Clarksville had a population of 3,500, three banks, and its own Light, Water Works, and Sewerage System. The peach crop had increased to 1,500 cars a years, coal shipments were up to \$200,000.00 annually. Clarksville was producing 20,000 bushels of dried sweet potatoes and marketed a million dollars of cotton a year. To add to the regions growing resources, natural gas was tapped near Clarksville in 1929 and eventually piped to cities in Arkansas and adjoining states. During the 1920s a building boom continued as new brick structures were built, replacing the wooden business buildings.

Even through the Great Depression, Clarksville maintained a strong business community and showed growth. Almost 20% of all of the buildings in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District were constructed in the 1930s. A new three-story county courthouse was constructed in 1935, on the courthouse square. A federal post office was also built on the square that year. Construction of modest business buildings continued on in the town in the 1930s with almost as much new construction as seen in the 1920s building boom.

Clarksville's historic downtown remained stable during the post World War II years and was not effected by the rapid suburban growth of the town. Construction of U.S. Interstate 40 just south of the town, in the early 1960s provides easy access to the downtown and although much growth has occurred on the roads leading to the interstate highway, the historic downtown, centered around the courthouse square remains a bustling commercial and governmental center.

The physical character of the Clarksville Commercial Historic District is largely derived from its collection of late 19th early 20th Century commercial buildings. The majority of the buildings in the district are one or two-story brick vernacular versions of popular

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

American commercial design. The earliest buildings feature some Italianate style characteristics seen in arched tops of windows and cornice patterns. Classical Revival style influences is notable in the designs of Johnson County Courthouse and the Federal Post Office, both constructed by the WPA in 1935. The Missouri-Pacific Railroad Depot is the district's only example of Mediterranean Revival design. Anchoring the western edge of the historic district boundary, the depot is a prominent visual landmark. The buildings in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District, while not high-style examples of architecture, reflect the growth and development of the city's downtown and are good examples of their type and era of construction.

The types of buildings and their pattern of development around the courthouse square and along the city's Main Street reflect the planned layout and development of Clarksville. The resources contained in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District represent and validate the city's development as the center of Johnson County government and commerce.

Statement of Significance

The Clarksville Commercial Historic District is being nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion A for its significance in the growth and development of the community. It is also being nominated under Criterion C for its architectural diversity, representing the period from 1883 to 1958. The buildings in the Clarksville Commercial Historic District retain their architectural integrity and reflect distinct examples of vernacular forms of popular American commercial building design.

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Section number 9 Page 1

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Section number 9 Page 2

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Clarksville Commercial Historic
District

Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

UTM REFERENCES

1	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>457436E</u> Easting	<u>3925526N</u> Northing
2	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>457990E</u> Easting	<u>3925483N</u> Northing
3	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>458038E</u> Easting	<u>3925393N</u> Northing
4	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>458038E</u> Easting	<u>3925300N</u> Northing
5	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>457680E</u> Easting	<u>3925295N</u> Northing
6	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>457683E</u> Easting	<u>3925392N</u> Northing
7	<u>15</u> Zone	<u>457439E</u> Easting	<u>3925407N</u> Northing

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Part NE 1/4 Section 5, Township 9N, Range 23 W

Containing Blocks 1-10 of the Original Town of Clarksville, Block 3 of Rose's Addition to the City of Clarksville

The boundary of the Clarksville Commercial Historic District begins at a point at the intersection of the northeast corner of the property line of 100 W. Main and Street. The boundary then runs south along the west bank of Spadra Creek to its intersection with W. Main Street and Legion (Spadra) Street to its intersection with W. Sevier Street where it runs west along the center line of W. Sevier Street to the intersection of S. College Street. At this intersection, the boundary turns and runs due north along the centerline of S. College Street to its intersection with W. Main Street. At W. Main and S. College Streets, the boundary turns and runs west along the centerline of W. Main Street to the western edge of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad Depot property at Johnson and W. Main Streets. The boundary runs north along the western edge of the depot property to the intersection with W. Cherry Street. At this point, the boundary turns and runs east along the centerline of W. Cherry to its intersection with N. Fulton Street. At this point the boundary turns and runs south along N. Fulton Street to the northwest corner of lot line of 214 W. Main Street. The boundary then turns to run due east along the rear or west property lines of buildings on the north side of W. Main Street in the 100 and 200 block to the point of origin at the northeast corner of the lot line of the property at 100 W. Main.

Clarksville Commercial Historic
District

Name of Property

Johnson County, Arkansas

County and State

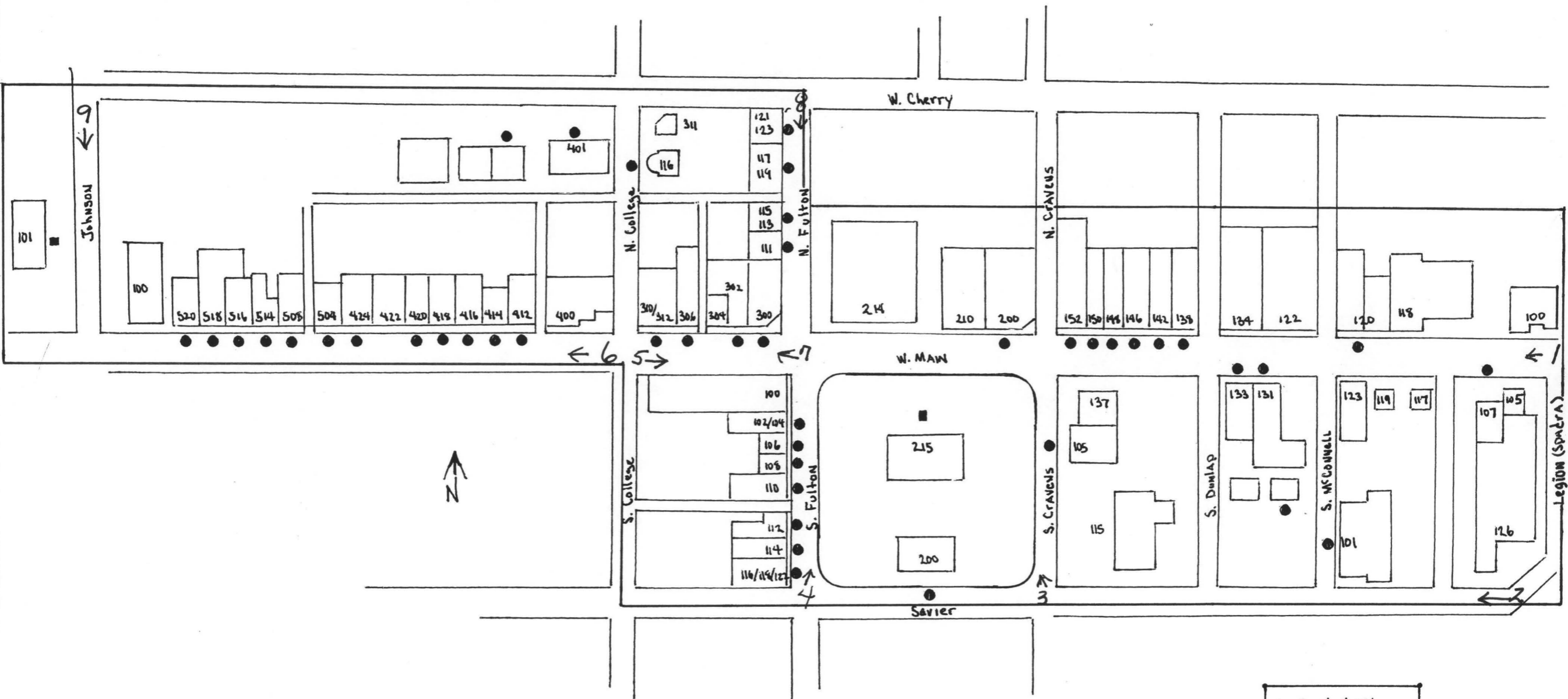
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 3

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Clarksville Commercial Historic District includes contiguous and intact resources at the center of Clarksville's commercial area whose original function was commercial, governmental, and transportation in nature. The collection of buildings in the boundaries of this district documents the commercial and governmental development of Clarksville from 1883 through 1958. These resources, which run east and west of the courthouse square, in conjunction with the streets and lots upon which they are located provide an excellent picture of the development of Clarksville during the period 1883-1958. The boundaries chosen for the district are determined by the concentration of historic resources in the area that has always been Clarksville's commercial center and includes the buildings that portray Clarksville's development.



Clarksville Commercial Historic District

Clarksville, Arkansas
Johnson County

- Contributing
- Individually NR Listed

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Clarksville Commercial Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Johnson

DATE RECEIVED: 3/26/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/09/09
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08000816

DETAILED EVALUATION:

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 3/30/2009 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Comments from Return Adequately Addressed.

County Seat Commercial District, Center of trade for West Central Arkansas
County. Good examples of early 20th Century Commercial Arch.
Significant locality

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A+C

REVIEWER J. Hubbard

DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE 3/30/09

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/ see attached SLR Y/



The Department of
**Arkansas
Heritage**

Mike Beebe
Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

*

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

*

Delta Cultural Center

*

Historic Arkansas Museum

*

Mosaic Templars
Cultural Center

*

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic
Preservation Program

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March 23, 2009

08000816

Dr. Janet Matthews
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005



RE: Clarksville Commercial Historic District – Clarksville,
Johnson County, Arkansas

Dear Dr. Matthews:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced revised nomination. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw

Enclosure



Starbucks
BANK BUILDING

shindaiwa
POWER EQUIPMENT

GRISSOM
HARDWARE
& SUPPLY

TEMPLE
STREET

1. Right-northside 100 Block W. MAIN
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson City, AR
3. photo by DIANNA WILSON
4. 3-14-07
5. NEGATIVE # AHPP
6. view looking S northwest from Locust + W. MAIN STREETS
- n. photo #1



1. 101 Sevier (left) 126 Sevier
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson Cty., AR
3. Photo by DIANNA WILSON
4. 31407
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. View looking Northwest from Legion + Sevier Streets
7. photo # 2



1. Johnson Cty. Courthouse - 215 W. MAIN - LEFT
Background - 200 Block of W. MAIN
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson Cty., AR
3. Photo By DIANNA WILSON
4. 3-14-07
5. NEGATIVES AT AHP
6. View Looking northwest from Sevier & CRAVENS STREETS
7. photo #3



1. Left-100 Blk. S. Fulton. Johnson County Courthouse-right
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson Cty., AR
3. Photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 3-14-07
5. Negative at AHPP
6. View looking north from Sevier & S. Fulton sts.
7. Photo #4



Fashion Boutique
Women's & Children's Apparel

Phil's
JEWELRY

EMILY SHOES

NO
PARKING
HERE TO
CORNER

1. Left - 300 & 200 BLKS. West MAIN St.
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson Cty., AR
3. photo by DIANNA Wilson
4. 3-14-07
5. negative at AHP
6. view looking northeast from college & W. Main Sts.
7. photo #5



1. 400-500 BLK. W. MAIN - NORTH SIDE
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson City, AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 3-14-07
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. view looking northwest from W. MAIN & COLLEGE STS
7. photo #6



1. 300 Block W. MAIN
CLARKSVILLE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
2. Johnson City, AR
3. photo by DIANNA WILSON
4. 3-14-07
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. view looking northwest from FULTON + W. MAIN STREETS
7. photo #7

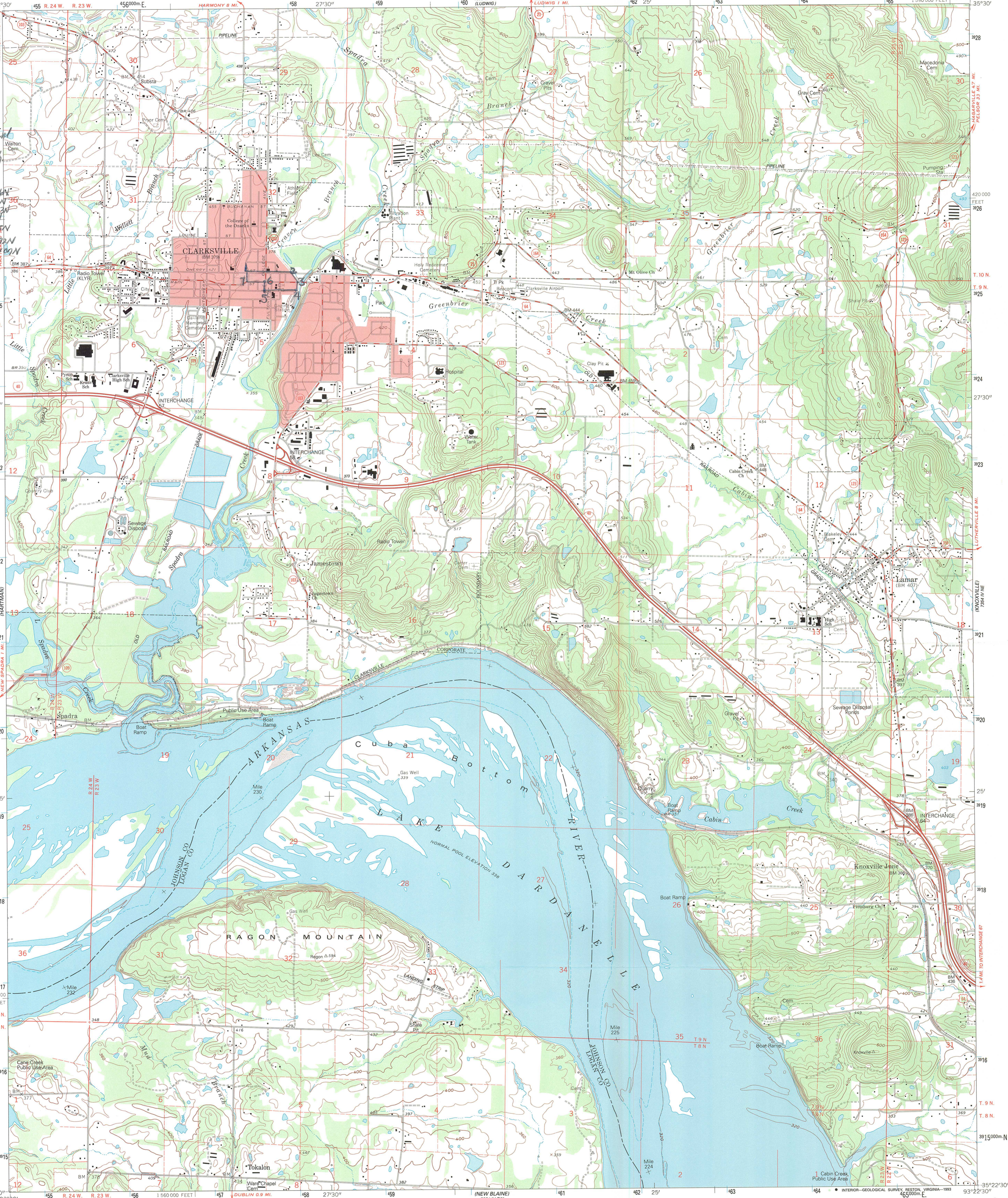


1. 100 BLK. N. Fulton STREET (111-121 N. Fulton)
CLARKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. Johnson City, AR
3. photo by DIANNA Wilson
4. 3-14-07
5. negative at AHPP
6. view looking south from W. Cherry + Fulton Sts.
7. photo # 8

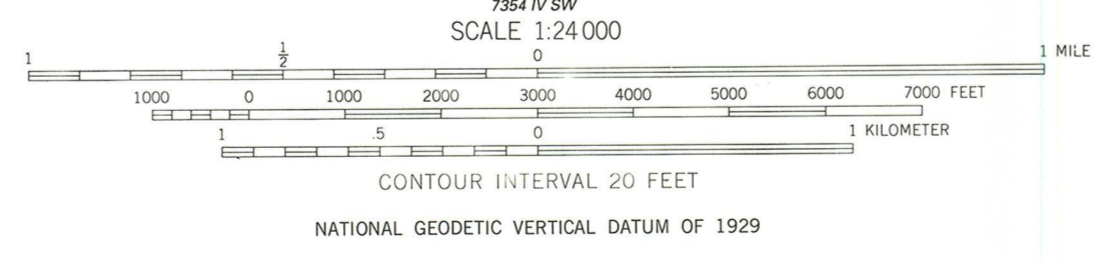
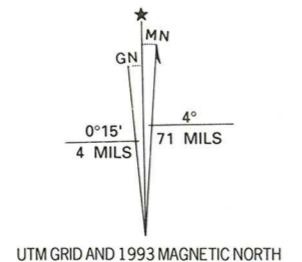


1. 100 Block JOHNSON STREET
CLANKSVILLE Commercial Historic District
2. JOHNSON CT., AR
3. photo By STANRA TAYLOR SMITH
4. 3-14-07
5. NEGATIVE # A1100
6. view Looking south from JOHNSON + Cherry sts.
7. photo # 9

CLARKSVILLE COMMERCIAL
HISTORIC DISTRICT
CLARKSVILLE, JOHNSON
CO. ARK.
UTM REFERENCES
1. 15457496E/3925380N
2. 15457496E/3925483N
3. 15458088E/3925586N
4. 15458088E/3925689N
5. 15457496E/3925792N
6. 15457496E/3925895N
7. 15457496E/3925998N



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1958. Field checked 1962. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1989. Field checked 1992. Map edited 1993
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Arkansas coordinate system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)
Blue 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator ticks, zone 15 1927 North American Datum (NAD 27)
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks
The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are given in USGS Bulletin 1875
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Unlabeled wells are gas wells



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

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1993
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