

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Smith, James J. and Anna J. (Linean), House #1

other names/site number Lanning House; Ford House; Sinclair House

Name of Multiple Property Listing Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa

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

2. Location

street & number 316 3rd Avenue SW

☐

not for publication

city or town Mount Vernon

☐

vicinity

state Iowa

county Linn

zip code 52314

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE/Limestone

walls: BRICK

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

This two-story brick house occupies a large corner lot at the northeast corner of 3rd Avenue SW and 4th Street SW in the southwest part of Mount Vernon, Iowa. The house is built of reddish-orange soft mud bricks manufactured locally on a foundation made of limestone quarried locally. The brick walls are laid in a 7:1 common bond, which has seven courses of stretchers for every single course of headers. The house is a vernacular side-gable that shows some influence from Mid-19th Century styles. Significant features include: the slight effect of cornice returns formed by the wrapping of the frieze board around the corners of the gabled ends; the slight eave overhang of the roofline; a wide frieze board under the eaves; and the symmetrical three-rank fenestration on the façade. This fenestration consists of three equally-spaced double-hung windows across the second story and a centered door flanked by single double-hung windows on the first story. The centered door is sheltered by a projecting front-gabled brick vestibule that features paired, scroll-cut brackets under the eave overhang. A three-sided bay window on the south side of the house also has paired brackets under the eaves. The windows on the house have flat brick soldier-course lintels and wooden-plank sills. There are two additions on the rear that are late 19th century in construction, were built using the same type of locally-manufactured soft mud bricks, and have foundations made of locally-quarried limestone. At least one of these additions had a commercial use in the late 19th century, with a former outbuilding on the property serving as a carpenter shop. The property includes a noncontributing detached garage, which is on the site of the nonextant shop. The house retains good integrity.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the property in a **Statement of Integrity**, and any future plans for the property under the subheading **Future Plans**.)

This property is located in the southwest quadrant of the City of Mount Vernon, Iowa. It sits at the base of the hill to the north. This two-story brick house occupies a large corner lot at the northeast corner of 3rd Avenue SW and 4th Street SW. The house fronts 3rd Avenue SW, which connects to the commercial area on the hill to the north. It is alongside 4th Street SW, which connects to the Military Road (modern Highway 1) to the east and Cornell College to the west. The house sits to the north side of the level lot with a large side and rear yard to the south and east of the house. There is a wooden picket fence painted white that borders the side and rear yards. A concrete sidewalk leads from the centered front door of the house to the west where it intersects the concrete sidewalk parallel to 3rd Avenue. There is no sidewalk along the south side of the lot, with the grassy lawn extending to the street curb. The property abuts an alley along the east side and the neighboring house yard to the north. A large shade tree is in the rear yard, with other shade trees along the west side of the lot. A detached garage is located in the southeast corner of the lot and is noncontributing to the property because it was built after the period of significance.

The house is built of locally-manufactured, reddish-orange, soft mud bricks on a foundation made of locally-quarried limestone. The house has a side-gabled orientation and has a slight effect of cornice returns formed by the wrapping of the frieze board around the corners of the gabled ends. The roofline has a slight eave overhang and a wide frieze board under the eaves. The brick walls are laid in a 7:1 common bond. The windows have flat brick soldier-course lintels and wooden-plank sills. There are two additions on the rear that are late 19th century in construction and were built using the same type of locally-manufactured soft mud bricks and have foundations made of locally-quarried limestone. The majority of the windows on the house are modern vinyl replacement windows that have faux 6/6 muntins; however, several historic-age, if not original, windows remain. The historic-age windows include: one 2/2 double-hung, wooden-sash window on the first

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story on the north side of the house; two 4/4 double-hung, wooden-sash windows on each side of the brick entry vestibule structure; and two 1/1 double-hung, wooden-sash windows on each side of the bay window.

Façade (West Side)ⁱ

The façade has symmetrical three-rank fenestration with three evenly spaced windows across the second story and a centered door flanked by single windows on the first story (Figure 1). The windows are modern vinyl replacement windows that have faux 6/6 muntins and are flanked by non-functional shutters made of pickets spaced slightly apart and joined by “Z” bracing. These shutters are a late 20th century addition to the windows. The front door is within a portico entry vestibule that is covered with brick and has a front-gabled roof that has paired scroll-cut wooden brackets under the eaves. The brick is laid in a running bond (all laid in stretcher courses) on the portico structure except for one course of brick headers in the gable peak. The 1906 Sanborn fire insurance map showed a projecting front porch, in this same place and footprint, as frame construction; therefore, the brick is probably a veneer over a frame wall. However, the 1921 and 1941 Sanborn maps both color-coded this porch as brick. While it is possible that the brick porch replaced an older frame porch sometime between 1906 and 1921, the bricks used in its construction match the color and construction of the house to the point that it seems more likely that this porch is either original or was added in the late 19th century closer to the construction date of this house and at a time when this type of early brick would still be available in town.



Figure 1. Façade of Smith House looking SE. Photograph taken May 4, 2018.

The front door has a modern storm door over a historic-age wooden door that has two panels below an upper nine-pane glass window. There is a narrow 4/4 double-hung, wooden-sash window on each side of the vestibule that are historic. The door and window lintels on the façade are all made of flat brick soldier courses. A notable feature on the façade is an alarm bell that is attached to the frieze board under the eaves near the center of the façade (Figure 2). This alarm bell is reportedly from a historic use of this dwelling as a commercial building.

ⁱ In this area of Mount Vernon, the streets are oriented on a southwest to northeast angle. Therefore, in this narrative, “east” is actually southeasterly, “north” is northeasterly, “west” is northwesterly, and “south” is southwesterly.”

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Figure 2. Detail of alarm bell under eaves on façade of Smith House.

South Side

The south side of the original two-story section of the house has a single vinyl window on the left side of both the second and first stories, with the lower window having the same type non-functional shutters as on the façade (Figure 3). There is a shed-roofed brick addition to the rear of this section of the house, the wall of the addition being flush with the original south gable end. This addition has a single vinyl window on the left side of the second story, with a three-sided bay window centered on the first story of the addition. This bay window has a low-pitched hipped roof that has a slight eave overhang and paired scroll-cut brackets like those on the front portico just under the eaves. The center window is vinyl window, with the side windows of the bay wing being historic-age 1/1 double-hung, wooden-sash windows. The reddish-orange soft mud brick walls of this addition are laid in 7:1 common bond. The window on the second story of the addition has a flat brick soldier-course lintel and wooden-plank sill. The brick courses around this window dropped lower at some point, a problem that was repaired and hopefully is corrected. There is an abrupt boundary in the brick walls of the original section and this addition, with the courses of the addition close to but not exactly matching the courses of the original section, thus identifying this as an addition.

The south side of the second rear addition is set back from the south wall of the first addition and the original section of the house. There is a one-story, shed-roofed porch on the south side of the second addition. This porch is enclosed with rows of glass windows to the right of an entry door. Centered above the porch on the second story of this addition is a single vinyl replacement window with the frieze board under the eaves serving as the lintel.

There is an exterior cellar entrance off the south side of the original house section that is covered with a plywood sheet and has concrete side walls. There is a cast iron pump off the southeast corner of the house that is probably above a cistern.

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Figure 3. South side of Smith House looking NE. Photograph taken May 4, 2018.

Rear (East Side)

There are no openings on the second story of the rear wall of the southeast corner addition above the enclosed porch (Figure 4). However, the front-gabled addition on the northeast corner of the house has several openings on the east gable end. This addition is full masonry construction with brick laid in an 8:1 common bond; wherein, there are eight stretcher courses for every single header course, thus differing from the original section of the house that shows a 7:1 common bond. The bricks used in this addition are the same reddish-orange soft mud bricks as used in the rest of the house construction. A portion of the rough-cut limestone slab foundation is exposed above ground on the southeast corner, which is banked into a slight slope. The east gable end has a single window on the left side of the second story above a squat casement window on the first story and a squat window to the right of that window on the first story. All three windows have vinyl replacement windows. The window opening on the second story has a flat brick soldier-course lintel and wooden-plank sill. To the right of this window is a second opening that is wider and longer and now infilled with reddish-orange soft mud bricks. This opening has a flat brick soldier-course lintel and appears to have been a second-level door that reportedly was a loft entry door from the building's commercial use as either a grist mill and/or livery stable in the 19th century (Figure 5). Other ascribed functions for this property included use a farm house for a 40-acre farm, as a store, and "perhaps [as a] brick factory" (Iowa Site Inventory Form compiled by the Mt. Vernon Historic Preservation Commission in the early 1980s). Others have thought that it once functioned as a stage stop, which would be compatible with the livery stable operation.

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Figure 4. Rear (east) side of Smith House looking NW. Photographs above and below taken May 4, 2018.

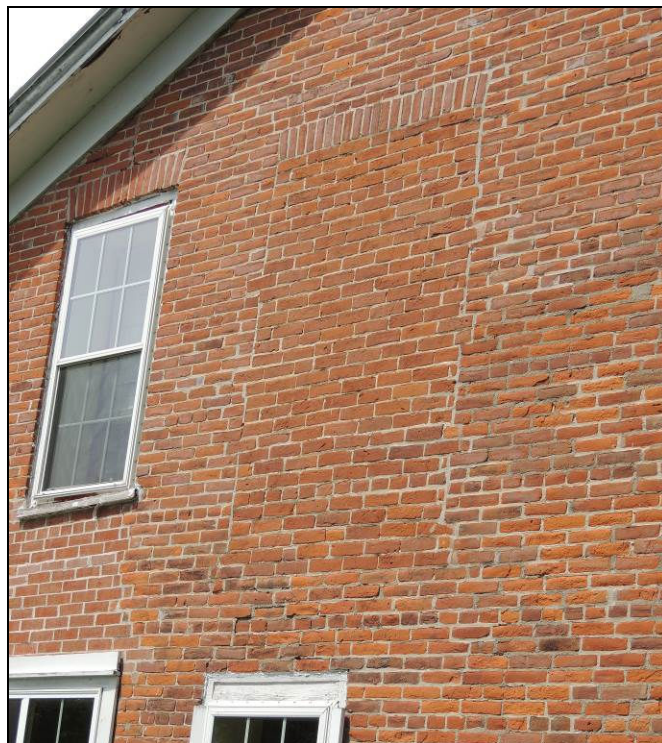


Figure 5. Detail of brick-filled loft doorway on rear (east side) of Smith House.

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Directly above this former opening is the hardware for a block and tackle that is affixed under the eaves at the very peak of the roof (Figure 6). This eye hook was probably used for lowering and raising hay or other items to the loft door, or it may have been used to raise and lower a door covering the loft opening. The windows on the first floor both appear to have been later additions, with the window on the left in an opening that has been reduced and infilled with brick at a later date. This window is in the current kitchen above the sink. The window to the right has a metal-covered lintel and may not be original to this addition. A window directly below a loft-type door would not have been an ideal configuration while the loft was in use; therefore, it was likely added in the early 20th century when the function of this addition changed to that of a dwelling. There are no openings, current or infilled, on the north half of the east gable end of this addition.



**Figure 6. Hardware for block and tackle at gable peak on rear (east side) of Smith House.
Photograph taken May 4, 2018.**

The 1906 Sanborn map showed a detached building in the southeast corner of the lot where the garage now stands (Figure 7). The building in 1906 was labeled as a carpenter's office and was color-coded as a stone or cinder block construction suggesting that this outbuilding may have had a much older date if made of stone. It was depicted as a two-story building with a one-story shed that wrapped around the north and west sides. A frame building with an internal wall divider was shown in the yard between the house and the carpenter shop and probably housed a shed and a privy in 1906. That building was still standing in 1921 but the carpenter shop had been removed by that time (Sanborn 1906, 1921). By 1941, there were no outbuildings depicted in the yard.

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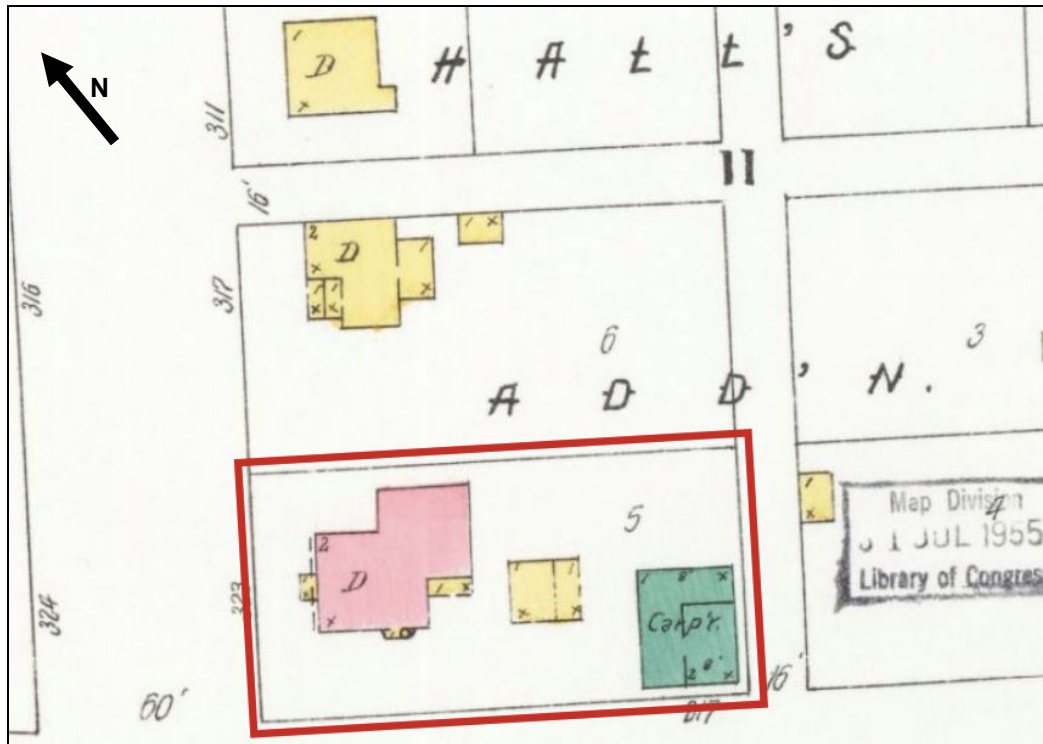


Figure 7. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing Smith House and property in 1906, when owned by Rebecca Sinclair. The Carpenter shop on the property was that of her late husband, Isaac Sinclair, who was a carpenter.

Source: Library of Congress website

North Side

The north side of the two-story section of the house has a single window to the right side of the wall on both the first and second stories (Figure 8). These windows are both vinyl replacement windows. The window on the first story has the same type of non-functional shutters as present on the façade windows; however, this window is a historic-age 2/2 double-hung, wooden-sash window. There are two single windows of two different sizes set at lower levels on the upper and lower story of the north gable end that abut the west wall of the addition off the northeast corner of the dwelling. That wall of the addition has two single windows on the upper and lower stories as well but slightly off the plane of the windows that abut this addition. All of these windows are vinyl replacements. The section with the abutting windows on the north gable end is actually part of an addition to the rear of the original section of the house as evidenced by the abrupt division line of the brick wall containing these windows. The brick courses in this addition also do not exactly align with the brick courses of the original section of the house.

The north wall of the northeast corner addition is built of reddish-orange soft mud bricks laid in 7:1 common bond, with some of the window lintels the same type of flat brick soldier courses as on the original section of the house. The window sills appear to be wooden planks. The north wall has a single window on the left side of the second story that has no lintel other than the frieze board under the eaves. The window directly below has a flat brick soldier-course lintel but is a smaller size than the second story window. A third window is to the right on the first story and has no lintel but does have a wooden-plank sill. This window is set two brick courses higher on the wall than the window to the left. All of these windows are the same type of vinyl replacement windows as elsewhere on the house.

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Figure 8. North and west (façade) sides of Smith House looking SSE. Photograph taken May 4, 2018.

Interior

The interior has been updated in many of the rooms; however, some original woodwork and door hardware remains (Figures 9-10). The door and window surrounds in the original section of the house are generally plain boards painted white with plain base boards with quarter-round shoe molding. Other areas of the house have had the woodwork replaced in the modern era. Carpeting likely covers original hardwood flooring. The stairs to the second floor are covered with carpet and the stairs do not have an open railing but rather have walls on either side. There are several areas between the original section and the additions where the floors are not on the same level and are reached by short steps or a single step.

Most notable on the interior is the integrity of the original floor plan of the original house, which features a center hall with staircase flanked by a single room to either side on both the first and second floors. This type of floor plan is typical of early houses in the mid-to-late 19th century. The floor plan of the first addition to the rear of the original house shows a large open living room spanning the width of the house and has the bay window to the left on the south wall. There is an entry into a small modern bathroom off the living room that is in the addition that bumps-out to the north from the wall of the original house. From the living room, one can then enter the second addition on the rear of the house, which now has a kitchen on the ground floor that has access to the south-side enclosed porch and has a staircase to the second floor in the northeast corner of this rear addition. A modern laundry room is now on the northwest corner of this addition. The second floor above the rear addition has a closet at the top of the stairs to the north a hall that connects into the addition on the rear of the original house. There is a single bedroom in the rear addition, with two bedrooms (one now a playroom) and a modern bathroom in the addition on the rear of the original house. The second floor of the original section is accessed via a centered short hall from which two more bedrooms are accessed on either side of the stairs from the ground floor.

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Therefore, the original section of the house retains its original floorplan with two rooms on each floor on either side of the centered staircase. The function of the rear additions has evolved through the years, thus what may now be bedrooms reportedly had a commercial function historically. The additions to the rear are late 19th century in their construction, with the first addition having been to the rear (east side) of the original house. The second addition was then made to the northeast corner of the first addition but was probably built not long after the first addition. Both additions may reflect the evolving functions of the house in the 19th century. The last commercial function of this property appears to have been the carpenter shop shown in 1906 in the back yard of the home as a detached building (Sanborn 1906).



Figure 9. View of Interior of Smith House: top row, left to right - front entry vestibule, stairs to second floor, and historic door latch hardware; bottom row - views of different levels in house. Photographs taken July 26, 2018.

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**Figure 10. Interior of bay window (left) and second-floor window (right).
Photographs taken July 26, 2018.**

Garage (Noncontributing Building)

This detached building in the southeast corner of the lot abutting the rear alley is modern in construction and noncontributing to the property (Figure 11). It is one story in height and has a moderate-pitched, side-gabled roof. The exterior is covered with vertical board siding painted white in the gable ends and red on the body of the building. The west gable end has an entry door to the left and a small rectangular 2-pane window to the right of the door. There is a modern double-wide overhead garage door on the south side, with a short concrete driveway extending south to 4th Street. The east wall of the garage has no openings.



Figure 11. Modern garage behind the Smith House looking North. Photograph taken May 4, 2018.

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Statement of Integrity

The exterior of the house retains overall good integrity in all seven aspects of integrity. The integrity of design is reflected in the form and construction details of this side-gabled, mid-to-late-19th century brick house. The original section of the house most importantly retains its original floor plan having a centered staircase flanked by single rooms on either side on both the first and second floors.

The integrity of materials is represented by the use of locally-manufactured bricks and limestone in the construction of the original house as well as the two rear additions. Of note, is that all of this original material remains unpainted and exposed. The exterior retains some stylistic elements such as the suggestion of cornice returns in the wrapping of the frieze boards around the upper corners of the original section of the house and the bracketed eaves on the front entry vestibule and the south-side bay window.

The integrity of workmanship is reflected in the structural brick walls with flat brick soldier-course lintels of this house, using primarily a 7:1 common bond but also shows 8:1 common bond in the rear addition. The brick and stone materials were all obtained locally, with local masons constructing the original house and both additions. A reported use of this property historically as a brick yard has not been confirmed.

The integrity of association is evident in its construction as a dwelling and in the addition of a commercial function in the rear addition. This is evident by the brick-filled loft door on the east wall of this addition and the presence of an eyehook for either a block and tackle or to lift a loft door upwards. An alarm on the front of the house is also reportedly from its former commercial use. It is similar in this regard to the house at 303 A Avenue that had a dwelling and a blacksmith shop but differs from that property in that the commercial function was also part of the main building but also included a detached structure in the rear corner of the lot as did the property at 303 A Avenue. It can be stated with certainty that the house had a carpenter shop circa 1906 (Sanborn 1906). The other ascribed functions of a grist mill, livery stable, store, and/or brick yard are less certain but the features physically present on the house including the loft door and hardware for block and tackle on the rear addition documents some type of grain and/or hay storage and would support the reported functions of a grist mill or a livery stable.

The integrity of location is represented by this being the original location for this house on a corner lot in Mount Vernon.

The integrity of setting is reflected in the retention of the large corner lot in an otherwise residential neighborhood. When originally built, it was towards the south end of town and may have had more of a rural setting to the south. Today, the surrounding buildings are all residential and largely of historic age, with the yards having grassy lawns and mature shade and pine trees. This lot abuts an unpaved alley that is used only for rear lot and garage access.

The integrity of feeling is represented by a house and property that still presents a sense of time and place of an early dwelling and commercial property in Mount Vernon.

Modifications have included the replacement of most of the windows with vinyl windows having faux 6/6 muntins; the addition of non-functional shutters to the façade and some first story windows; and the updating of many of the interior walls, ceilings, and finishes in the modern era. However, the house retains its unpainted exterior masonry, several historic-age if not original windows, the front-gabled vestibule and bay window with bracketed eaves, and notable additions to the rear that reflect the use of this property not only as a residence but as a commercial property in the late 19th century. The original section of the house also retains its original floor plan.

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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.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period of Significance

1859-1870

Significant Dates

1859

c.1862

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

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Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The James J. and Anna J. (Linean) Smith House #1 is locally significant and eligible for listing under the "Military Road-era Buildings, Structures, and Objects, c.1840-70" context and the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Buildings, c.1840-93" context of the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, *Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa*. This Smith House is significant under Criterion A of the Military Road-era context as a property "that illustrate[s] the effect the Military Road had on Mount Vernon settlement and is directly associated with important events of the period" and under Criterion C of the Military Road-era context as a property "that displays vernacular building techniques and traditional building materials, such as locally produced brick and locally quarried stone." This Smith House is also significant under Criteria A and C of the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Building" context as a property that has "associations with settlement patterns," and "that contribute[s] markedly to the distinctive architectural character of Mount Vernon" through its "wall covering of locally produced brick" and its Mid-19th Century stylistic influences. This Smith House, built 1859, meets these registration requirements under Criteria A and C of both historic contexts through its association with the Military Road and its role in the settlement of Mount Vernon, through its display of local building traditions and materials, namely locally quarried limestone, locally manufactured red-orange brick, and through the workmanship of the town's earliest masons. This is the first of two brick houses the Smiths had built. It is suspected that the Smiths built the first addition to the house in the early 1860s, with the next owners, the Fords, building the second addition in the 1870s. Both additions made use of the same local brick. The period of significance is 1859 to 1870, from the year the Smiths had the house built to the end of the period of significance for the "Military Road-era Buildings, Structures, and Objects, c.1840-70" context of *Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa* Multiple Property Submission.

This property is one of a group of 11 historic brick houses in Mount Vernon being nominated under the *Historic Resources of Mt. Vernon, Iowa* Multiple Property Submission in 2019.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

Criterion A: Historical Significance of the James J. and Anna J. (Linean) Smith House #1

Under the registration requirements for Criterion A of the "Military Road-era, c.1840-70" context, the James J. and Anna J. (Linean) Smith House #1 is a property "that illustrate[s] the effect the Military Road had on Mount Vernon settlement and is directly associated with important events of the period" (Long 1991:F2). According to the description of the significance of this property type:

Significant properties call attention to the establishment of the Military Road and illustrate the effect the route had on settlement in the Mount Vernon area. The Military Road was a key ingredient in fostering area settlement. Significant examples reveal an important architectural period and building tradition in Mount Vernon. Through their use of local building materials, these resources show how early settlers took advantage of natural resources to provide shelter during the Military Road era. They also represent the effects of a specific period of local efforts to capitalize on the presence of a major transportation route, the Military Road. Finally, significant properties illustrate a specific and influential period, the early settlement of Mount Vernon. In short, they date from the founding of the community.

Surviving properties from this pivotal period in the history of the community are so rare that examples from prominent building types, such as houses, that retain sufficient integrity are considered significant to understanding Mount Vernon's development (Long 1991:F2).

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Under the registration requirements for Criterion A of the “Mt. Vernon Local Brick Building, c.1840-93” context, the Albright House is also a property that has “associations with settlement patterns,” although the primary significance for this context is under Criterion C (Long 1991:F4). According to the description of the significance of this property type:

Although their significance is primarily architectural, many examples also call attention to the early settlement period of Mount Vernon. Their construction is associated with the establishment of the Military Road around 1840 and they illustrate the effect the route had on settlement in the Mount Vernon area (Long 1991:F3-F4).

James J. “J.J.” Smith had the house built in 1859 after acquiring the property from Harrison and Hannah Hall and may have kept a livery stable on the property as part of his horse trading business (Abstract of Title; Iowa Site Inventory Form). Smith was born in 1836 in Ohio. In 1848, he moved to Mount Vernon and “began life at the bottom of the ladder.” After arriving in Mount Vernon, Smith immediately started the first livery stable, an apparently lucrative business in the newly platted town dependent on the Military Road. An early advertisement of the business noted it was operated in connection with the College Hotel (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, July 22, 1887; *Mount Vernon News*, March 1, 1861) (Figure 12).

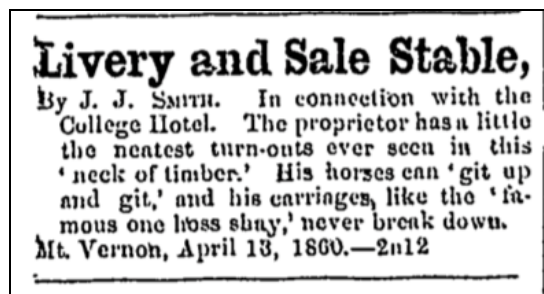


Figure 12. Advertising card for J.J. Smith's Livery and Sale Stable, 1861.

Source: *Mount Vernon News*, March 1, 1861

According to his partner in the livery business, J.T. Rice:

Mr. J.J. Smith. . . started the first livery stable in the town with a stock of two “crowbait” horses and an old “rickety” buggy or wagon. With this stock he commenced his horse trading career, and made that a business for some time, then commenced on a more general trading business, and has kept it up until the present time, and has become one of our most wealthy citizens (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, January 19, 1872; also see *Western Historical Co* 1878:559).

He married Anna J. Linean about 1858, which would coincide with his purchase of the property and building a house. By 1860, Smith had amassed a small fortune through his livery and sale barn during the Military Road era, owning \$4000 worth of real estate and \$2000 in personal wealth. Smith's eldest son, Elmer T. Smith, was born in the house in 1862 (*Mount Vernon Hawkeye-Record and Lisbon Herald*, May 12, 1927).² Given his increasing fortune during this occupation of this house, it is suspected that Smith first enlarged the home in the early 1860s. This addition was the one to the rear of the original house that has the stylish Italianate bay window.

² The Smiths also built the brick house at 201 2nd Ave NW in 1864. By 1870, Smith owned \$29,500 in real estate and \$8000 in personal wealth. The 1875 map of Linn County shows J.J. Smith as the owner of considerable tracts of land nearly surrounding Mount Vernon. The 1878 county history lists Smith in the directory as a “speculator,” and he was known even among students at Cornell College as a “famous character” and above all a successful horse trader. By the early 1880s, Smith's land and personal wealth was worth \$75,000 (US Census 1860, 1870, 1880; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, July 22, 1887; Andreas 1875; *Western Historical Co* 1878:718; *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, February 5, 1920).

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However, in 1864, the Smiths sold the house to Jacob Meek and Elizabeth M. (Borton) Lanning, a long-time resident of Linn County, who seem to have bought the property for John and Margaret Jane Lanning. After two mortgages on the property were paid, the Lannings sold the house in 1867 to Elias and Ann T. Ford (Abstract of Title; IA Census 1856; US Census, 1860, 1870). Elias Ford, born in Hawley, Massachusetts in 1807, lived most of his life in Albany and Schenectady, New York, where he owned successful merchandizing businesses. He and his wife did not come to Mount Vernon until 1867, "long after his sun had passed its meridian," according to the *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*. He engaged successfully in business for a few years, then took up farming (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, September 12, 1879). It is suspected that Ford made the second addition to this home in the 1870s as part of his farming endeavors, which might explain the suspected loft area of the second addition perhaps associated with a farm business such as a grist mill operation.

Ford converted to Methodism early in life, and during their time in Mount Vernon, the Fords'

home was the refuge of the wayfaring ministers. He and his amiable wife ever made their coming welcome and their stay delightful. In this way he was brought into fellowship with the best and many of the greatest of the servants of the church at that time (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, September 12, 1879).

After Elias Ford died in 1879, his wife and children took out a \$1000 mortgage, perhaps to remodel the farming/commercial structural aspects of the house into use simply as a dwelling. Ann Ford sold the property in 1882 to Catherine Bull, a widow, who owned the property until 1886, when she sold it to Isaac and Rebecca (Randolph) Sinclair (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, September 12, 1879; Abstract of Title).

Isaac Sinclair was born in Muskingum County, Ohio in 1825. He married Rebecca C. Randolph in 1846, and the couple eventually had seven children. The Sinclairs came to Mount Vernon in 1878, and "with the exception of a few months in Cedar Rapids" made the town their constant home. The Sinclairs purchased the brick home on 3rd Ave SW in 1886 (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, August 31, 1900). Isaac Sinclair

was not a professing Christian but he was a good neighbor. He was industrious and honorable, generous to his family to a fault, ready to do what he could as a citizen. Afflicted with a deafness that made conversational intercourse with his personal acquaintances well nigh impossible, he was a great reader and kept well posted in the news of the times, being able intelligently to pass opinions upon public questions (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, August 31, 1900).

A carpenter by trade, Sinclair opened a carpenter and repair shop "opposite the [skating] rink" in 1885, where, according to the notice in the *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*:

he is prepared to do all kinds of carpenter work and repairing; will build bay windows, verandas and porches, and kitchen furniture, such as cupboards, sinks, tables, stands and repair all kinds of furniture. He has a lathe and scroll saw and can get out brackets for porches, verandas, bay windows and also fancy shelf brackets. Will make door and window screens of all sizes. Send in your orders and he will fill them promptly (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, May 1, 1885).

After purchasing the brick house and lots on the corner of 3rd Avenue SW and 4th Street SW in 1886, Sinclair either built or converted an existing barn on the property into a repair shop, where he repaired wagons, buggies, and farm machinery, and built screen doors and windows (Figure 13). Given the likely stone construction of the carpenter shop as depicted on the 1906 Sanborn map, it is suspected that this building was built either by Smith in the 1860s or by Ford in the 1870s (see Figure 7). Although Isaac Sinclair died in 1900, the carpenter's shop was still labeled as a carpenter's shop in 1906 (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, February 21, 1896).

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Figure 13. Ad for Isaac Sinclair's Carpentry and Repair Shop "near residence on south side of town." This repair shop was in the rear yard behind Sinclair's house on Lot 5. Source: *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, February 21, 1896

After Rebecca Sinclair died in 1912, the Sinclair heirs rented the property until 1917, when they decided to offer the house for sale at public auction. The ad for the auction described the property (Figure 14):

This house is all in fine repair, with seven rooms, furnace, city water, cement walks, well painted, rooms finished in hard pine, well located a good home in every way.

The lot is 60 by 120 feet, a good laying lot well drained and good soil. This property is in one of the best parts of town, and is a splendid house, and will make a good home for anyone. Always finds a ready renter, the present renter has lived there four years (*Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, March 29, 1917).



Figure 14. This notice of the Public Sale of the Sinclair House after the death of Rebecca Sinclair gives a good description of the house and property in 1917. Note the carpentry shop is not mentioned.

Source: *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, March 29, 1917

In 1918, William and Ruth Simonds bought the house from Amanda (Sinclair) Torrance (Abstract of Title). Subsequent owners included: Saidee F. and Leonard Shipman (1923-1939), Willard A. and Leta Crain (1939-1940), Arthur M. and Edith Crain (1940-1955), James M. and Irene R. Macauley (1955-1956), Ivan L. and

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Orvilla Simonds (1956-1998), Lowell and Janet Cook and Glen D. and Kim B. Wolfe (1999-2000), and the current owners, Paul F. (Rick) Schwiebert, Jr., and wife Kimberly K. Schwiebert (2000-present).

Criterion C: Architectural Significance of the James J. and Anna J. (Linean) Smith House #1

Under the registration requirements for Criterion C of the "Military Road-era, c.1840-1870" context, the James J. and Anna J. (Linean) Smith House #1 is a property "that display[s] vernacular building techniques and traditional building materials, such as locally produced brick and locally quarried stone" (Long 1991:F2). According to the description of the Military Road-era housing property type:

The houses for this property type are built of deep red-orange local brick. Rooflines vary and include gable-side (the dominant shape), gable-front, crossed-gable, upright-and-wing, mansard, and hipped. Later examples are more likely to be hipped and early examples tend to be gabled. Most are two-story. Foundations are of locally quarried limestone (generally rubble or roughly dressed). Some lintels and sills are also stone. Brick is sometimes used decoratively for cornices, cornice returns, and more elaborate lintels. With the earliest examples, the use of brick with simple details and form results in a simplicity that contributes markedly to the charm of the community. Good representative examples are: 113 and 201 2nd Ave N, 417 A Ave S, 224 1st St SW, 600 and 601 1st Ave S. Stylistic influences include Greek Revival, the principal influence), Italianate, and Gothic Revival. The earliest examples often exhibit no strong stylistic influence but have a Federal stylistic simplicity and arrangement. (Long 1991:F3).

The Smith House is also significant under Criterion C of the "Mt. Vernon Local Brick Buildings, c.1840-93" context as a property "that contribute[s] markedly to the distinctive architectural character of Mount Vernon" through its "wall covering of locally produced brick" and its Mid-19th Century stylistic influences. According to the description of the significance of the Local Brick Building property type:

Buildings of locally produced brick and stone are a key visual element defining the nature and character of Mount Vernon, and their primary area of significance is architectural. Because of the key visual importance of this property type, most examples from the period c. 1840-1893 which retain their integrity are likely to be significant (Long 1991:F3-F4).

The Smith House, built in 1859, may have been constructed by one or both of the Albright brothers. As Janet Dumbaugh observed in her survey of brick buildings in Mount Vernon in 1978, the early pioneers of Mount Vernon "depended on craftsmen to build their new dwellings, which usually reflected styles of homes from communities left behind." Not only were an "unusually high number of brick homes" built during the Military Road era, Dumbaugh notes, but also "a high proportion of settlers were from the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area" (Dumbaugh 1980:2).³

The Lancaster area is world famous for its brick domestic and barn architecture. The [Pennsylvania] Dutch settlers in the early 1700s were ingenious in putting to use the native lime and muddy soils needed to make bricks. These same resources were available in the Mt. Vernon locale. Clay was easily extracted from the sides of the hills, limestone was plentiful, and the Cedar River banks supplied the sand. . . . The craftsmen of Mt. Vernon probably did not use pattern books and most certainly were not guided by city codes. They brought their skills and ideas with them and were limited to repeating the same designs with little variation until perhaps ten years later. These men usually built double brick walls with the bricks laid lengthwise in two parallel rows joined by crosswise bricks in various patterns. . . . Because of the resources available to make the bricks and the talented craftsmen from Pennsylvania it was natural and fortunate that Mt. Vernon should reflect this heritage (Dumbaugh 1980:2, 4).

Henry D. and William D. Albright were born and grew up near Hanover, Pennsylvania, which is near Lancaster. They arrived together in Mount Vernon in June 1852, attracted by the founding of Cornell College, and for the next few years they worked as brickmakers and builders for early settlers, but are specifically known to have

³ The Pennsylvania Dutch, also known as Pennsylvania Germans, are descendants of early German immigrants to Pennsylvania.
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built Old Sem and College Hall at Cornell College and the house in which Henry and his wife Juliana would reside for most of the rest of their lives at 224 1st Street SW. According to Dumbaugh, all three buildings feature similarities:

All are basically rectangular, with the entrance centrally located on the long side, and windows placed symmetrically beside the door on each side and in the same position on the second or more stories. It is still domestic architecture that has been adapted in the case of the college buildings, for another purpose.

The Home and College Buildings share another feature that seems to be quite a common feature in this era of vernacular design and that is the inverted square U of raised brick forming the lintel and extending a short way down the side of the window. . . . Another common design is the use of a semi-circular window or vent at the gable (Dumbaugh 1980:5).

As with other houses of this antebellum period, the brick of the Smith House is set in the Common Bond pattern, in which every seventh row is turned to form a tie between two rows of brick in a brick wall, creating a double wall. The double wall strengthened and supported the structure in addition to providing insulation and fire protection. William Albright would have supplied the needed building material – bricks and lime – at his brickyard at the bottom of the ridge on land just northwest of Mount Vernon cemetery. He may also have made some of the bricks on site using a temporary kiln, a common practice (Dumbaugh 1980:4; 5).

Archaeological Assessment

The potential for any prehistoric or historic archaeological remains within the property boundary was not evaluated as part of the present National Register nomination. However, the large rear and south-side yards have good potential for intact archaeological evidence of the former commercial use of this property as well as features such as privies and nonextant outbuildings.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this nomination was made possible by the assistance of members of the Mt. Vernon Historic Preservation Commission, who compiled the floor plans, conducted on-site photography, conducted historic research, and reviewed the various drafts of the nomination. The property owners also assisted with the compilation of floor plans, photography, and historical materials and reviewed the draft versions of the nomination. The City of Mt. Vernon provided support for the project and cash match towards the grant.

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The activity that is the subject of the National Register nomination has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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Washington, D.C. 20204

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Ad for Isaac Sinclair's Repair Shop, *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, February 21, 1896.

"Died: Ford," *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, September 12, 1879.

"Died: Smith," *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, July 22, 1887.

"Death of Isaac Sinclair," *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, August 31, 1900.

Dumbaugh, Janet. "A Survey of Brick Buildings in Mount Vernon, Iowa, 1850-1859. Unpublished typescript prepared for Nineteenth Century Architecture, University of Iowa, November 1980.

"Historic Jottings of Mount Vernon," *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, January 19, 1872.

"House at Public Sale," *Mount Vernon Hawk-Eye*, March 29, 1917.

Iowa State Census, 1885.

Long, Barbara Beving. *Architectural/Historical Sites Survey: Mount Vernon, Iowa – The Hill City*. Report prepared for the Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission, 1988.

"Simonds House, 316 3rd Ave SW," Iowa Site Inventory Form, prepared by the Mount Vernon Historic Preservation Commission.

U.S. Federal Census, 1860, 1870, 1880.

Western Historical Company Co. *History of Linn County, Iowa, A History of the County, Its Cities, Towns, Etc.* Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1878.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>41.921093</u> Latitude	<u>-91.420994</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is a parcel defined as Lot 5 Block 11 in Hall's 2nd Addition to Mount Vernon located at on the northeast corner of 3rd Avenue SW and 4th Street SW. The east and west boundaries are each 66 feet and the north and south boundaries are each 132 feet.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the James J. and Anna J. (Linean) Smith House at 316 3rd Avenue SW in Mount Vernon, Linn County, Iowa.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer A. Price, PhD/Consultant and Leah Rogers, Volunteer date March 1, 2020
organization Price Preservation Research telephone (319) 594-9513
street & number P.O. Box 5201 email jenniferprice1311@icloud.com
city or town Coralville state IA zip code 52241

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

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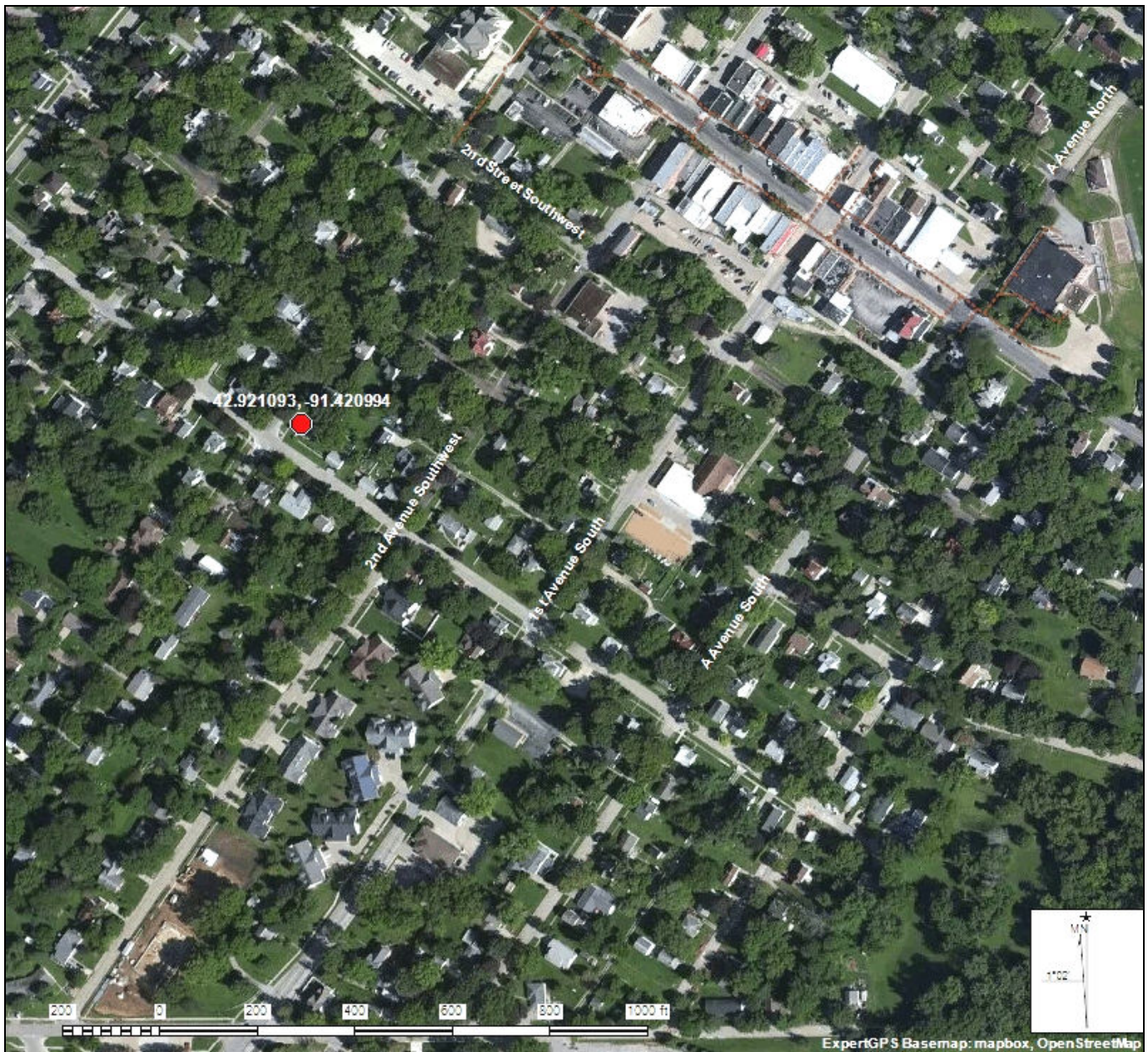


Figure 15. GIS Location Map.
Aerial map obtained from ExpertGPS Mapping Software, 2019.

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Figure 16. Local Location Map (white outline). Obtained from Linn County, Iowa GIS, 2018.

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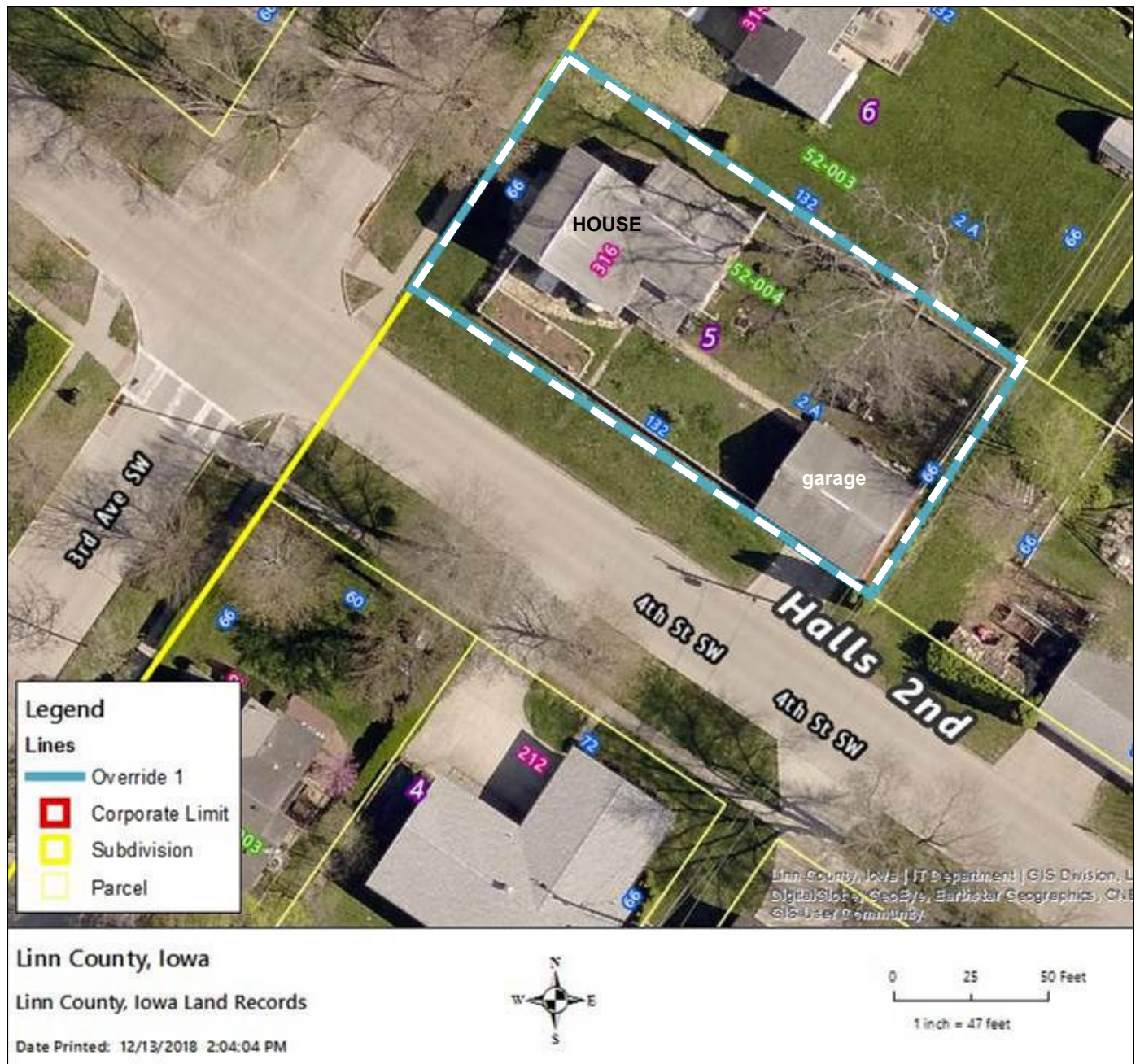


Figure 17. Site Plan Map showing NRHP boundary of Smith House.

Aerial obtained from Linn County Iowa GIS website, 2018

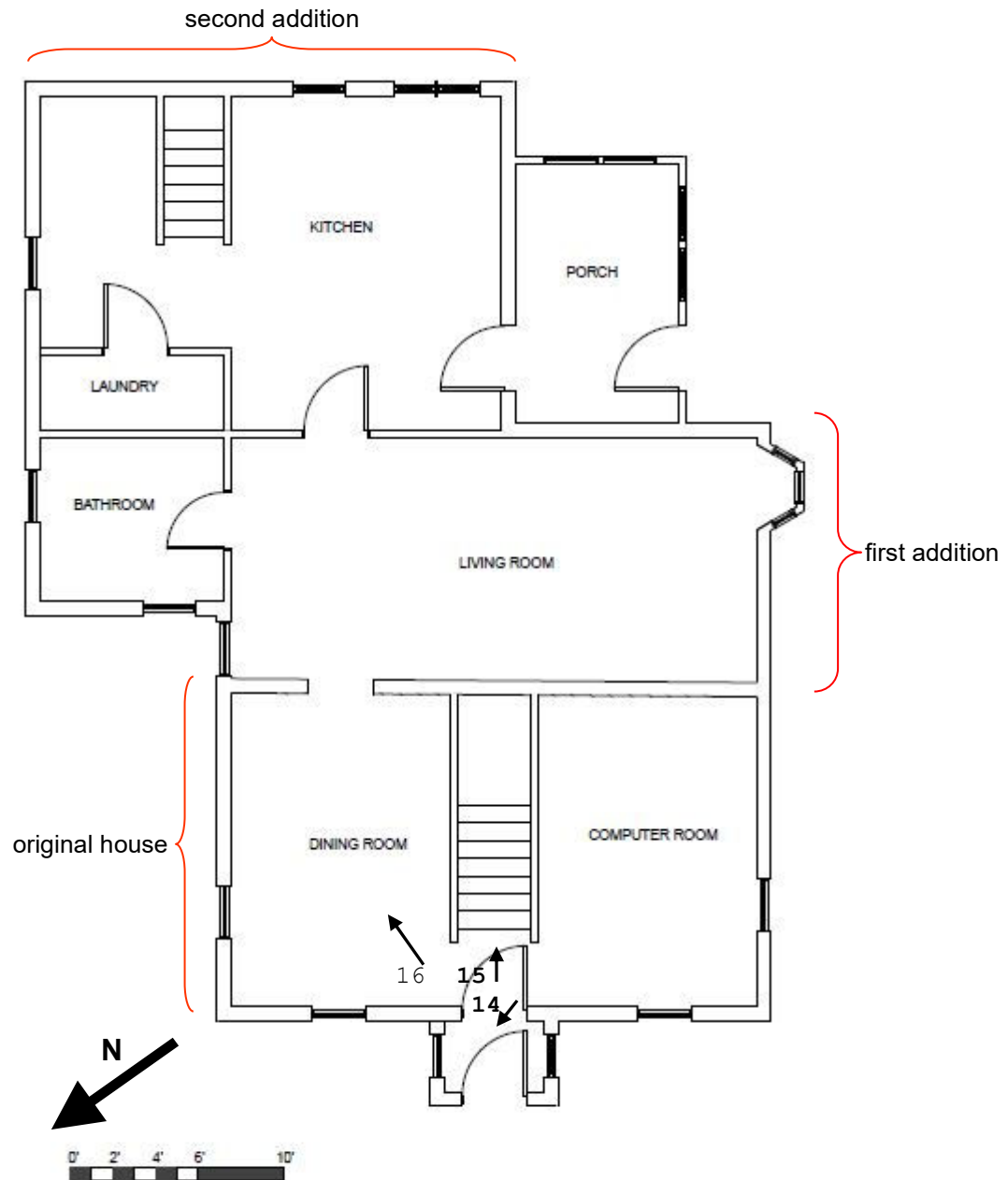
(white dashed outline = NRHP nomination boundary)

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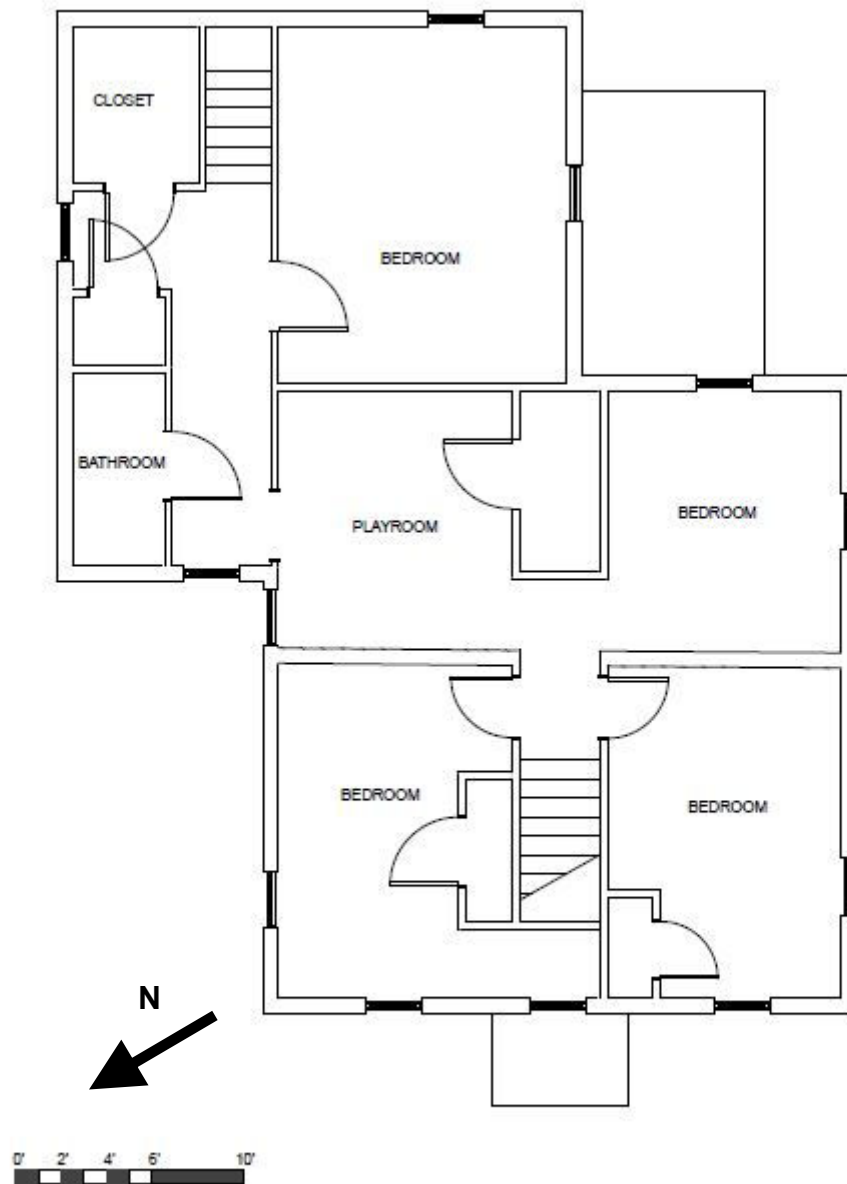
316 3rd Ave SW - MAIN FLOOR

Figure 18. Floor plan of first floor and showing directions of Photos 14-16.

Compiled by Ed Sauter, Mt. Vernon, 2018.

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316 3rd Ave SW - UPPER FLOOR

Figure 19. Floor plan of second floor.
Compiled by Ed Sauter, Mt. Vernon, 2018.

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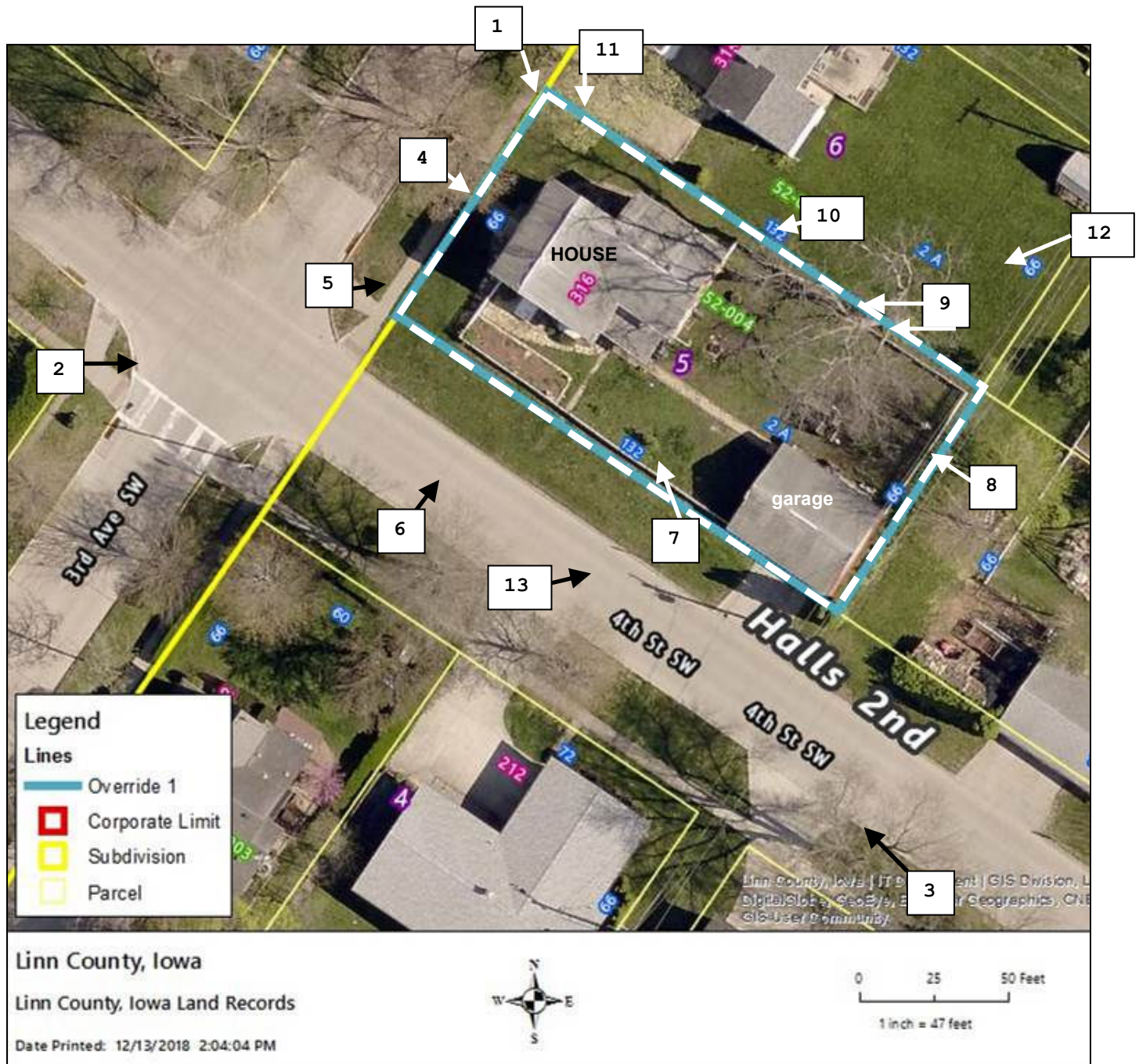


Figure 20. Site Plan Map showing direction of photos #1-13.
Aerial obtained from Linn County Iowa GIS website, 2018

(white dashed outline = NRHP nomination boundary)

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Smith, James J. and Anna J. (Linean), House #1

City or Vicinity: Mount Vernon

County: Linn County **State:** IA

Photographer: Leah D. Rogers and Mary Evans

Date Photographed: March 30, 2019 (1-15) and July 26, 2018 (14-16)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 16: General view of Smith House looking SSE
Photo 2 of 16: General view of Smith House looking East
Photo 3 of 16: General view of Smith House looking NW
Photo 4 of 16: Façade of Smith House looking SE
Photo 5 of 16: Façade and south side of Smith House looking ENE
Photo 6 of 16: South side of Smith House looking NNE
Photo 7 of 16: South side and rear of Smith House looking NNW
Photo 8 of 16: Rear of Smith house looking NW
Photo 9 of 16: Rear and north side of Smith House looking West
Photo 10 of 16: Rear and north side of Smith House looking WSW
Photo 11 of 16: North side and façade of Smith House looking South
Photo 12 of 16: General view of Smith House looking WSW from alley
Photo 13 of 16: Garage looking ENE
Photo 14 of 16: Interior of front vestibule looking NNW from interior front door
Photo 15 of 16: Interior of staircase to 2nd floor looking SW from interior front door
Photo 16 of 16: Interior of NW parlor looking East

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Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.