

Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(January 2016)

State Inventory Number: 44-00447 New Supplemental

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

Non-extant Year: _____

Read the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions carefully, to ensure accuracy and completeness before completing this form. The instructions are available on our website.

• **Property Name**

A) Historic name: Modern Laundry

B) Other names: 2023 downtown survey # DT-015

• **Location**

A) Street address: 217 W. Washington St

B) City or town: Mount Pleasant (Vicinity) County: Henry

C) Legal description:

Rural: Township Name: _____ Township No.: _____ Range No.: _____ Section: _____ Quarter: _____ of Quarter: _____

Urban: Subdivision: Original Block(s): 5 Lot(s): Lot 4 - E 35' of W 100'

• **Classification**

A) Property category: *Check only one*

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

B) Number of resources (within property):

<i>If eligible property, enter number of:</i>		<i>If non-eligible property, enter number of:</i>	
<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>		
<u>1</u>	Buildings	<u>—</u>	Buildings
<u>—</u>	Sites	<u>—</u>	Sites
<u>—</u>	Structures	<u>—</u>	Structures
<u>—</u>	Objects	<u>—</u>	Objects
<u>1</u>	Total	<u>—</u>	Total

C) For properties listed in the National Register:

National Register status: Listed De-listed NHL NPS DOE

D) For properties within a historic district:

- Property contributes to a National Register or local certified historic district.
- Property contributes to a potential historic district, based on professional historic/architectural survey and evaluation.
- Property *does not* contribute to the historic district in which it is located.

Historic district name: Mt Pleasant Downtown Historic District Historic district site inventory number: 44-02280

E) Name of related project report or multiple property study, if applicable:

MPD title Intensive Level Historical and Architectural Survey of Downtown Mt Pleasant, Iowa Historical Architectural Data Base # HADB-02986

• **Function or Use** *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Historic functions

02A08: COMMERCE/TRADE / business/ laundry

02E: COMMERCE/TRADE / specialty store

02G01: COMMERCE/TRADE / restaurant / cafe

B) Current functions

02E: COMMERCE/TRADE / specialty store

• **Description** *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

A) Architectural classification

09F05: Commercial / brick front

B) Materials

Foundation (visible exterior): 10A: Concrete block

Walls (visible exterior): 03: Brick; 10A: Concrete block

Roof: 15C: Rubber

Other: _____

C) Narrative description **SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED**

• **Statement of Significance**

A) Applicable National Register Criteria: *Mark your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria*

- Criterion A: Property is associated with significant events. Yes No More research recommended
Criterion B: Property is associated with the lives of significant persons. Yes No More research recommended
Criterion C: Property has distinctive architectural characteristics. Yes No More research recommended
Criterion D: Property yields significant information in archaeology/history. Yes No More research recommended

B) Special criteria considerations: *Mark any special considerations; leave blank if none*

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

C) Areas of significance

Enter categories from instructions

05: Commerce

02: Architecture

D) Period(s) of significance

E) Significant dates

Construction date

1941 *check if circa or estimated date*
Other dates, including renovations

F) Significant person

Complete if Criterion B is marked above

G) Cultural affiliation

Complete if Criterion D is marked above

H) Architect/Builder

Architect

Builder/contractor

I) Narrative statement of significance **SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED**

• **Bibliography** *See continuation sheets for the list research sources used in preparing this form*

• **Geographic Data** *Optional UTM references* *See continuation sheet for additional UTM or comments*

Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD	Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD
1				2			
3				4			

• **Form Preparation**

Name and Title: Rebecca Lawin McCarley / research by Pat White Date: March 1, 2024
Organization/firm: SPARK Consulting / Mt Pleasant HPC E-mail: sparkconsulting@octaspark.com
Street address: 1630 Park Ave SE Telephone: 319-200-9767
City or Town: Cedar Rapids State: IA Zip code: 52403

• **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** *Submit the following items with the completed form*

A) For all properties, attach the following, as specified in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions:

- 1. Map** of property's location within the community.
- 2. Glossy color 4x6 photos labeled** on back with property/building name, address, date taken, view shown, and unique photo number.
- 3. Photo key showing each photo number on a map and/or floor plan, using arrows next to each photo number to indicate the location and directional view of each photograph.**
- 4. Site plan** of buildings/structures on site, identifying boundaries, public roads, and building/structure footprints.

B) For State Historic Tax Credit Part 1 Applications, historic districts and farmsteads, and barns:

See lists of special requirements and attachments in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions.

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

The SHPO has reviewed the Site Inventory and concurs with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:

- Yes No More research recommended
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

SHPO authorized signature: _____ Date: _____

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Name of Property	County
217 W. Washington St	Mount Pleasant
Address	City

7. Narrative Description

This is a one-story brick commercial building constructed in 1941 for a laundry / dry cleaners. The building includes a larger west (217) half and a smaller east (215) half. Each half has a single-door entry with transom and a large window, which has been replaced. The transom area for each window is clad with siding (historic photograph shows transoms opening). The windows have a rowlock brick sills, and the windows and entries have soldier brick lintels. Simple square brick corbels extend across the frieze, with the parapet extending several courses above this row. The west elevation reveals concrete block construction. There is a side entry in the front half of the elevation, with a second entry in the rear half filled with concrete block. A window between the side entries is partially filled with concrete block, with a smaller windows inserted. The roof slopes to the rear of the building, with parapet walls along either side. The rear (north) elevation has a garage door on the right/west half and a pedestrian door on the east/left half. The building retains good integrity overall.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Modern Laundry appears to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building within the potential Mount Pleasant Downtown Historic District. The building contributes to the historic commercial character of the downtown, and it reflects the period of downtown development in the 1930s to early 1940s. The building clearly reflects its design from its construction in 1941, with simple brick details characteristic of this period. The building retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a historic commercial building in a historic district.

Based on research and evaluation conducted to date, this building does not appear to likely be individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Assessment of the interior features and modifications would be required for a full evaluation of the individual eligibility of the building.

Developmental history of property

This one-story, brick commercial building located at 217 West Washington Street was built in 1941.

The 1886 and 1892 Sanborn fire insurance map shows no buildings on the E 35' of the W 100' of lot 4. The vacant lot has an address of 102 Washington, with a blacksmith to east and the stand pipe for the water system to the west. The 1899 Sanborn fire insurance map shows a two-story, iron-clad building, with a concrete floor on the lot used for a paint shop. The 1909 and 1920 Sanborn fire insurance maps show the same footprint for this 2-story, frame building (with a brick addition) as the previous map. The address is 102 W Washington (215 W Washington in 1920) and the building is used for a steam laundry in 1909 and 1920. The 1911 city directory lists Mt Pleasant Steam Laundry at 217 W. Washington. The 1913 to 1923 telephone directories list the Laundry Co at this location, which is listed as 219 W. Washington.

On 18 May 1926, R.S. Galer sells the E 35' of the W 100' of lot 4 to Elwood and Mary Williams (Transfer Book "1", page 7). Per the obituary of Elwood Williams (1885-1947), ...*he owned and operated a laundry in Mt. Pleasant for 18 years before selling the business in 1941...* (Mount Pleasant News, December

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1947). Crystal Laundry is listed here at this location (then 219 W. Washington) in the 1925 to 1939 telephone directories.

On 10 January 1941, Elwood H. and Mary L. Williams sell the lot to Mary E. and William M. Gass (Transfer Book "1", page 7). The newspaper notes: "LOCAL LAUNDRY SOLD TO JAMES GASS – Will Build New Structure And Install New Equipment...Mr. Gass expects to raze the present building..." (*Mount Pleasant News*, January 11, 1941, page 1) In July 1941, James Gass, proprietor of the Modern Laundry, was noted in his recently built building, which was Washington - W - 217 newly equipped by him ("Local Laundry Costs Explained," *Mount Pleasant News*, July 28, 1941, page 1). The 1941 Mount Pleasant City Directory shows the Modern Crystal Laundry operating at 215 W Washington, Jim Gass, proprietor.

The 1942 Sanborn fire insurance map shows a large, one-story, concrete block building, with a concrete floor and brick-tile on the front façade. A doorway at the rear of the building leads to a smaller room and the boiler room. The building has 8' ceilings and appears to be 13' in width. The address is 219 W Washington, and the building is a steam laundry. The 1944 telephone directory lists Modern Laundry in this building (listed as 215 W. Washington and 219 W. Washington).

On 27 September 1945, Mary E. & William M. Gass and James H. Gass (their son) sell the lot to G.B. Gilliland (Transfer Book "1", page 7). An announcement in the *Mount Pleasant News* (October 3, 1945, page 3), reports the Modern Laundry and Dry Cleaners is open for business under new management, G.B. Gilliland, Proprietor. After a short time, the laundry building is sold again. On 4 March 1947, G.B. and Golda B. Gilliland sell the lot to Joe W. and Agnes R. Dunkin, as joint tenants w/R.O.S. (Transfer Book "1", page 7). The 1948 telephone directory lists Modern Laundry in this building (listed as 215 W. Washington and 219 W. Washington).

On 18 December 1950, Joe W. and Agnes R. Dunkin sell the lot, via warranty deed, to Leo R. Kennedy and J.K. Magnuson (Transfer Book "2", page 6). On 31 October 1958, Cozette Magnuson transfers her interest in the property to Jerome Magnuson (Transfer Book "2", page 6). On 27 March 1961, Leo R. and Leilla E. Kennedy sell their ½ interest in the E 35' of the W 100' of lot 4 block 5 to Jerome K. Magnuson (Transfer Book "2", page 6).

Modern Laundry is operating at 215 W Washington (east half of this building) from 1950 to 1953, per the telephone directories. Howe's Shoe Repair shares their space. Howe's Shoe Service is listed here (215, east half) in 1955, with Modern Laundry moving to 401 W. Washington by 1957. Globe Gifts was then listed here in 1957-1958 (Ruth & Ronald Heyde). Trabert General Insurance Agency and Keefe Real Estate were listed here in the 1962 directory, with the latter becoming Keefe-McBeth Real Estate. Both offices were listed at 215 W. Washington in 1964 and 1966. Ron Wyse, affiliated with State Farm Insurance, was then listed here from the late 1960s to middle of 1970s.

In the west half of the building (listed as 217), Dunkin Feed & Produce was located in 1950, noted as in the Modern Laundry building (*Mount Pleasant News*, July 18, 1950, page 4). In March 1951, Helen Ross and Juanita Gholson open a café "in the south part of the Modern Laundry building on West Washington street, formerly owned by Joe Dunkin. It is called 34 Grill." (*Mount Pleasant News*, March 24, 1951, page 1). The café was located in the west half of the building (217). Thirty-Four ("34") Grill is listed at 217 W. Washington St in 1957 to 1966 city directories.

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Magnuson Neon Signs is listed in this building as 221 W. Washington in 1955 and 1957 city directories. Magnuson Neon Signs is then also listed at 217 W. Washington St in 1962 to 1966 city directories. It appears that the café operated in the south part of the west half and the sign company in the north part of the building.

The 1976 city directory lists Magnuson Neon Signs at 217 W. Washington St (no listing at 215). Other businesses listed here include Henry County Abstract Company (1979-1983); James R. Miller (1983); Hertz Rent a Car (1990); Yenchay's Market (1993-1997); McMahons Karate (2000); Guns Ltd, Inc. (1993-2000s).

On 16 December 1981, the Estate of Jerome K. Magnuson changes title to the property: 1/3 to Marabelle Magnuson and 2/3 to Dell B. Magnuson Secor (Transfer Book "3", page 6). On 25 April 1988, via warranty deed, Marabelle Magnuson and Dell B. Magnuson Secor & John Secor sell the lot to John David Klopfenstein (Transfer Book "3", page 6; Deed Book 479/128).

Starting in the 1950s, it appears this building has occasionally had three commercial spaces available: the south section of the building (with separate entrances on the east and west) and the north section of the building (accessed from a doorway on the west of the building). The south/east side of this commercial building is currently occupied in 2024 by Steam Demons, a vape shop. The south/west and north/west sections of the building are vacant. The building has been owned since August 2019, by J & L Enterprise Properties, LLC (John & Lin Klopfenstein), who purchased it from John David Klopfenstein.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Building and sign permits, City of Mount Pleasant, Iowa

City and telephone directories, Mt Pleasant:

Bowron, Watson. *Henry County Directory for 1859-60*. Burlington, IA: Watson Bowron, 1859.

Annawalt & Lawrence's Bi-ennial Mt Pleasant Directory. Burlington, IA: Hawk-Eye Steam Printing House, 1867.

Annewalt, E.H., compiler. *Mount Pleasant City Directory*. Burlington: Daily Gazette, 1870.

Mount Pleasant City Directory for 1893. Mt. Pleasant, IA: Francis D. Craig, 1893.

Mason, George T. *Directory of Henry County, Iowa, 1911-12*. Mt. Pleasant, IA: The News, 1911.

Mount Pleasant Telephone Company. Telephone directories issued in 1913, 1915, 1918, 1921, 1925, 1927, 1937, 1939, 1944, 1948, 1950, 1952.

Groce, W.H. *The City Directory of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa*. Mt Pleasant: Groce, 1938.

Johnson Publishing Co. *Mt Pleasant, Iowa*. City directories issued in 1955, 1957, 1960, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1873, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1993, 2001, 2011. Manitowoc, WI: Johnson Publishing Co.

Cornerstones. Mt Pleasant: Mt. Pleasant Beautiful Committee, 1991.

Henry County Bicentennial Commission (HCBC). *The History of Henry County*. Dallas, TX: National ShareGraphics, Inc., 1982.

Henry County Historical Society. Vertical files and albums in files at Mt Pleasant Public Library.

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Henry County Heritage Trust. Collection of historic images, in files and posted in Facebook albums. Collection in former Saunders School, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Henry County Recorder's Office / Henry County Auditor's Office. Property records, transfer books, and deed records. Henry County Courthouse, Mt Pleasant, Iowa

Jaynes, Peter H., ed. *Highlights of Henry County History 1833-1976*. Burlington, IA: Doran & Ward Lithographing Co., 1977.

Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Sesquicentennial, 1835-1985 (MPS). Mt Pleasant, IA: The Committee, 1985

Naumann, Molly Myers. *Architectural and Historical Resources of Mount Pleasant, IA*. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Documentation Form, May 1991. On file with the State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, IA.

Sanborn Map Company. *Mount Pleasant, Iowa*. Fire insurance maps for 1886, 1892, 1899, 1909, 1920, 1942. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection.

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Location map



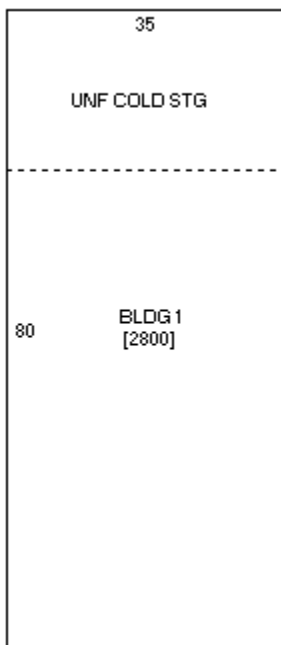
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Building footprint



Sketch by www.camavision.com

Henry County Assessor (<https://beacon.schneidercorp.com>)

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Historic images



Modern Laundry in 1940s (HCHT Facebook album)

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1990 survey photograph (Naumann 1991)

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Digital photographs



Photograph 44-00447-001. South elevation, looking north (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00447-002. West half of south elevation, looking north (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00447-003. East half of south elevation, looking north (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00447-004. West elevation, looking east (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00447-005. North elevation, looking south (October 2023)