

Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(January 2016)

State Inventory Number: 44-00375 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: Mt Pleasant News Building

B) Other names: 2023 downtown survey #DT-034

• **Location**

A) Street address: 215 W. Monroe 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): 4 Lot(s): Lot 4 - E 57.5' - also E 57.5' of Lot 3

• **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>		
—	Buildings <u>1</u>	—	Buildings
—	Sites —	—	Sites
—	Structures —	—	Structures
—	Objects —	—	Objects
—	Total <u>1</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

02E01: COMMERCE/TRADE / auto showroom

02A05: COMMERCE/TRADE / newspaper

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): 10B: Concrete

Walls (visible exterior): 03: Brick

Roof: 15C: Rubber

Other: _____

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

Site Number: 44-00375 Address: 215 W. Monroe St City: Mt Pleasant County: IA District Number: 44-02280

• **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

D) Period(s) of significance

E) Significant dates

Construction date

1920 *check if circa or estimated date*

Other dates, including renovations

1979

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

Wesley Barton Construction

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 Jeff Fager & Pat White Date: March 8, 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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7. Narrative Description

This is a one-story brick building constructed as a garage in 1920, with a façade remodel for the local newspaper in 1979. The façade brick and configuration date to the 1979 remodel. A glass door entry is centered on the west half of the building. Narrow tall rectangular windows are spaced to either side of the entry, outlined by projected brick detail. The east half of the building has a pair of similar tall windows and an identical single tall window, each outlined with the same projected brick detail. A flared metal awning extends across most of the façade. The upper portion of the façade is a simple brick wall. Overall, the façade reflects design ideals of the 1970s, with smaller windows for energy savings. The side elevation along the alley reflects the original brick construction from 1920. Several openings have been filled with concrete block. A pedestrian door and a garage door are located along this side.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

This building 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. The remodeling for the *Mt Pleasant News* in 1979 is one of several façade and building improvements at the end of the 1970s in downtown Mt Pleasant. This work was completed within the preliminary period of significance for the potential historic district, and thus it is considered significant within the history of the potential district. 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 at this time. When the 1979 remodel becomes 50 years old, the historic significance of this building related to individual eligibility should be re-evaluated.

Developmental history of property

This one-story, commercial building located at 215 West Monroe Street was built in 1920, with a façade remodel completed for the *Mt Pleasant News* in 1979.

The 1886, 1892, 1899 and 1909 Sanborn fire insurance maps all show a large, 1-story, frame lumber shed on lots 3 and 4, extending to the north from W Monroe. In 1886 and 1892, the address was 104-105 W Monroe and it was the location of the Mt. Pleasant Lumber Company. In 1899 and 1909, the address was 211-213 W Monroe, and it was the location of the M.C. Hall Lumber Yard.

On June 17, 1914, a disastrous fire occurred. It was the “*worst blaze in the history of the city*”. M.C. Hall’s Lumber Yard and the nearby Christian Church (to the east) were completely destroyed (*Mount Pleasant Journal*, June 18, 1914, page 1). M.C. Hall rebuilt his lumber company on the northwest quarter of this block, later selling this property along W. Monroe Street.

On 16 July 1920 (recorded 8 February 1921), M.C. Hall and wife sold the E 57 ½’ of lot 3 and the E 57 ½’ of lot 4 to H.E. Rukgaber for \$2,500 (Transfer Book “1”, page 5).

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“Work Started On New Garage” – H.E. Rukgaber has broken ground for his new and strictly modern garage which will be built on West Monroe. The building will be 57x150 feet and one story. Earth removed from the excavations at the garage will be used to fill the lot he has just purchased on E Monroe (*Mount Pleasant Weekly News*, June 2, 1920, page 1). Mr. Rukgaber expects to get into his new garage about the middle of November (*Mount Pleasant Daily News*, October 22, 1920, page 2).

The 1920 Sanborn fire insurance map shows a very large, 1-story building, with brick-faced, tile walls 12' in height. There is a cement floor, steam heat, electric lights and the capacity for 30 cars. The address is 211-213 W Monroe and the building is used for a garage, with a show room in the front/south of the building, facing W Monroe.

Mount Pleasant telephone directories from 1923, 1925, and 1927 show H.E. Rukgaber operating a garage on W Monroe. Rukgaber then built a big garage along W. Washington to the south in 1935, moving to that building. The 1938 Mount Pleasant City Directory shows A.M. Nesbitt occupying the garage. By late 1938, The Fleenor Pontiac agency “will occupy the building now housing the Nesbitt agency, who has been located in the Rukgaber building on West Monroe. The transfers will take place November 1st” (*Mount Pleasant News*, October 26, 1938, page 1).

The 1942 and 1920 Sanborn fire insurance map shows the same footprint for the building.

On 2 July 1945, Walter L. Rukgaber, et al, sold the E 57 ½' of lot 3 and the E 57 ½' of lot 4 to Roy Fleenor for \$19,500 (Transfer Book “1”, page 5). Mount Pleasant city directories from 1941 to 1957 show the Fleenor Pontiac Company operating their new car store at 215 W Monroe, with Roy E. Fleenor, owner. They also offered auto accessories and repair. Fleenor also maintained a location on E. Monroe at Adams.

Iris Bowling Lanes announces a grand opening on April 11, 1958 (*Mount Pleasant News*, April 9, 1958, page 4). Owners Carl Burky and Harold Burky operate the bowling alley until 1960, when the Iris Bowling Lanes business is sold to Ed Pook. “The Burkys (had) operated the Iris Lanes on West Monroe for 2 ½ years. They purchased the building from Roy Fleenor and installed the equipment; later they installed the automatic pin setters making the bowling center fully modern” (*Mount Pleasant News*, October 22, 1960, page 1). Iris Bowling Lanes/Iris City Bowling is shown in Mount Pleasant city directories at 215 W Monroe from 1960 to 1964.

On 1 July 1965, Carl E. and Irene T. Burky sold the E 57 ½' of lot 3 and the E 57 ½' of lot 4 to Margaret Rogers Patterson and Warren K. Rogers, Sr. (Transfer Book “2”, page 5). Iris Lanes (Bowling) has moved and announces a grand opening at their new location, east of the city, near 34 (*Mount Pleasant News*, August 11, 1965, page 8).

“News Now In New Location” – The Mt. Pleasant News moved operations from the location at 211 West Monroe Tuesday morning to the new location, next door west, the former bowling alley location. The move from the location (which has been the home of the News for 37 years) has been in progress for the last couple weeks (*Mount Pleasant News*, September 7, 1965, page 1). On October 30, 1965, “The News” held an Open House at their new 215 W Monroe location. Mount Pleasant city directories from 1966 to 1979 show the Mt. Pleasant News at 215 W Monroe.

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During May 1971, several transactions occurred between Roy and Luella Fleenor and members of the Rogers family (Warren K. & Helen F. Rogers, Sr., Warren K. & Olive K. Rogers, Jr. and Margaret Rogers Patterson) resulting in The Mount Pleasant News, Incorporated owning the E 57 ½' of lot 3 and the E 57 ½' of lot 4 block 4 (Transfer Book "2", page 5).

In 1971, the *Mt Pleasant News* was acquired by Inland Industries, Inc. of Lenexa, Kansas. They later purchased the *Washington Journal* in Washington in January 1987 and the *Fairfield Ledger* in July 1991 ("Fairfield Ledger Purchased," *Mt Pleasant News*, July 3, 1991, 1).

A building permit was issued to Wesley Barton Construction for the Mt Pleasant News on September 5, 1979, for \$35,000 to remodel the façade of the building. A sketch of the building shows the current configuration the front of the building, with a narrow window, entry, narrow window, paired narrow windows, and a narrow window. This was one of the projects completed in 1979 as part of "Operation Pride" that focused on improvements in downtown Mt Pleasant.

City directories from 1980 into the 2010s continue to list the *Mt Pleasant News* at 215 W. Monroe St. They closed this location on December 14, 2018, and moved up the street to 119 W. Monroe on the north side of the square (*Mt Pleasant News*, December 10, 2018, 7).

The News sold the building to Inland Media Company in October 2016, who then sold it to WMPF Group, LLC in November 2016. The building has been owned since October 2018, by Greibahn Properties, LLC, who purchased it from WMPF Group, LLC.

This commercial building located at 215 West Monroe Street is currently occupied in 2024 by Gray Barn Industries, a screen printing and embroidery shop.

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.

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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.

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 Beautiful. Mt Pleasant: Mt Pleasant News Company, 1909. Reprint issued in 1988.

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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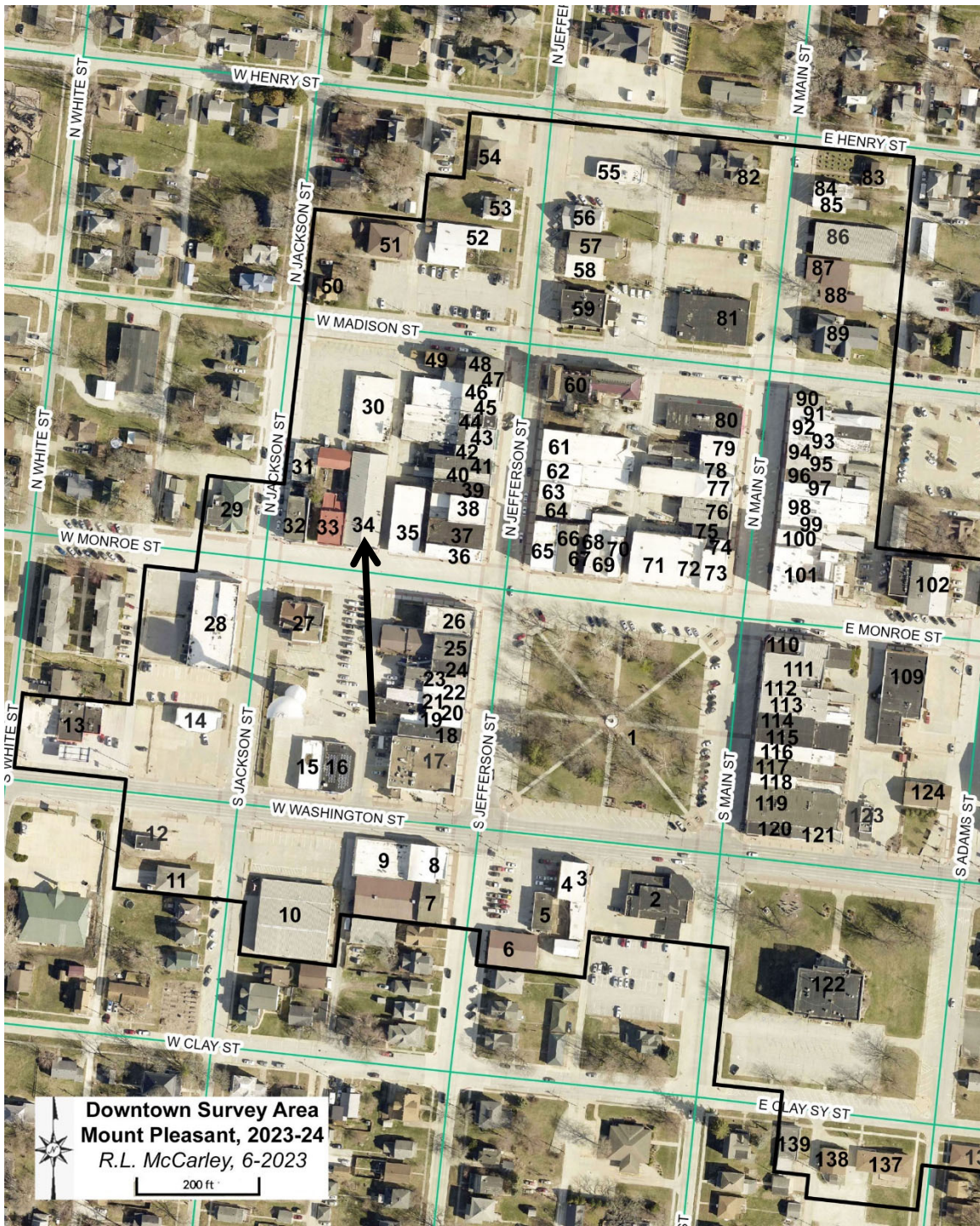
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215 W. Monroe
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City

Location map



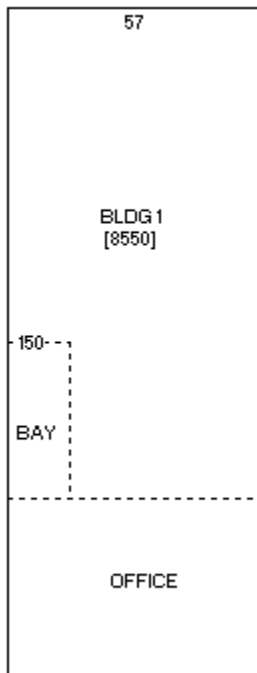
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Building footprint



Sketch by www.camavision.com

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

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Historic images



Building on W. Monroe St in 1947

section of 1947 aerial photograph of Mt Pleasant, looking north
(HCHT files, printed in *Des Moines Register*, April 27, 1947, sec 9, p3, p83)

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Building at 215 W. Monroe at far left around 1964 (HCHT Facebook album)

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North side of 200 block of W. Monroe St in July 1965, looking northeast (HCHT collection)

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**Building at far left occupied by *Mt Pleasant News* in January 1976
(HCHS vertical files, Mt Pleasant Library)**

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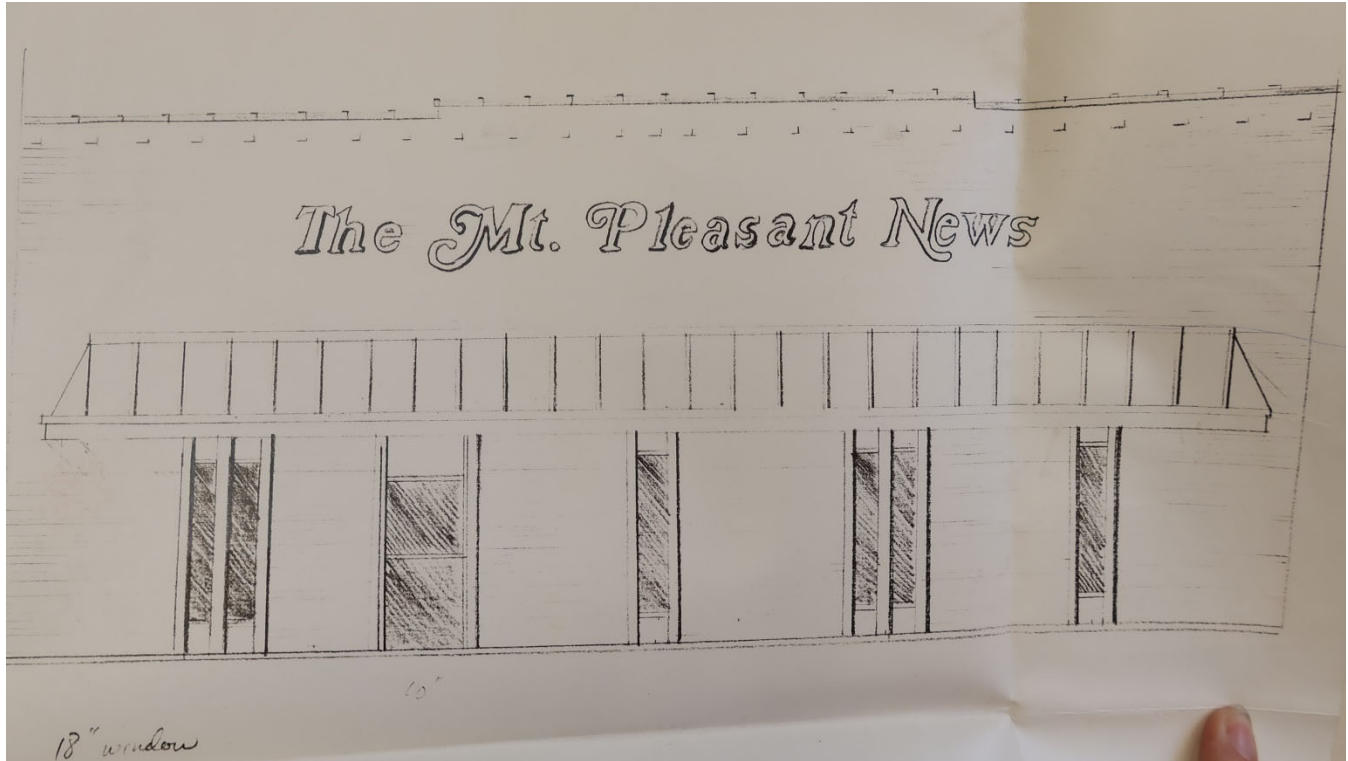
County

215 W. Monroe

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Sketch included for building permit issued on September 5, 1979 (City of Mt Pleasant building permits)

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1990 survey photograph (Naumann 1991)

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Digital photographs



Photograph 44-00375-001. South elevation, looking northwest (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00375-002. East elevation, looking northwest (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-00375-003. West elevation, looking east (June 2024)

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Photograph 44-00375-004. East and north (rear) elevations, looking southwest (June 2024)