

Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(January 2016)

State Inventory Number: 44-02248 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: Elgar Law Office

B) Other names: 2023 downtown survey # DT-053

• **Location**

A) Street address: 207 N. Jefferson 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): 21 Lot(s): Lot 6 - S 60'

• **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>	
Contributing	Noncontributing		
<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

01A01: DOMESTIC / single family residence

02B03: COMMERCE/TRADE / law office

B) Current functions

01A01: DOMESTIC / single family residence

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

A) Architectural classification

09A: House

B) Materials

Foundation (visible exterior): 04C: Limestone

Walls (visible exterior): 15B: Vinyl siding

Roof: 05: Metal

Other: _____

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

Site Number: 44-02248 Address: 207 N. Jefferson 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 page 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

1913 *check if circa or estimated date*

Other dates, including renovations

1959

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 Lottie Schnicker & Joy Lapp Date: May 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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7. Narrative Description

This is a frame house with additions that appear to date to the conversion to a law office in 1959. The entire building is clad in vinyl siding. The front/east of the house has two one-story sections. The front/east section has a centered entry and a double-hung window to each section. Both sections extend to the south, connecting with the one-story section on the south. The earlier two-story gable-front house extends above these sections, with two widely spaced double-hung vinyl windows on the east/front. A 1991 photograph shows three-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes. The north and south elevations of the front/east section has a set of three wood windows, with a tall center window flanked by eight tall windows to either side. The second front section ends in a gable on the south side, with a double-hung vinyl window roughly centered under the gable. The one-story section to the west/rear has a small double-hung vinyl window. The south side of the second story of the two-story section has a pair of double-hung windows on the left/west and a single double-hung window on the right/east. The north side of a double-hung vinyl window on the second front section, which has a shed roof line on this side. The roofline of the two-story section of the house has been extended over the side addition, which has exterior wood stairs to a mid-level entry (likely connecting to interior stairs). The one-story addition to the rear has a double-hung vinyl window. The one-story addition across the rear of the house extends to the north and south to connect with the side additions, encircling the two-story section. The west elevation of this addition has an entry flanked by double-hung wood windows on the south/right, a center double-hung vinyl window, and a double-hung vinyl window to the north/left.

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. It is a house that was built in the 1910s, which was then converted for commercial purposes as a law office in 1959. Additions appear to have been built around the two-story house around this time for additional office space. The building contributes to the commercial history of the downtown, and it reflects the period of downtown development in the 1950s. 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

Dr. D.W. Robinson owned Lots 5 & 6 in Block 21 in the 1860s. This land includes the lot for this house historically at 209 N. Jefferson and the lot to the north at the southwest corner of Jefferson and Henry at 213 N. Jefferson. A large house was built on Lot 5 at the corner, replacing an earlier one-story house, where Robinson lived. A small one-story side-gable house was built on this site to the south in the 1860s, shown on the 1869 birds-eye view. The core of the current house appears to be this early house, which has been added to and enlarged over the years. The 1886 Sanborn map shows a small one-story frame house on the south part of Lot 5, as well as a large two-story house at the corner to the north on Lot 6.

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Robinson lived in the house at the corner, with a resident of this house not identified. The 1892 Sanborn map shows the same one-story dwelling on the south part of Lot 5, with an address of 207 N Jefferson.

On May 19, 1893, Dr. George E Smith purchased Lots 5 & 6 in Block 21 from the heirs of D.W. Robinson. The 1893 City Directory lists F.G. Tovrea, painter, at 207 N Jefferson, while Dr. G.E. Smith is listed at 209 N Jefferson, the larger house at the corner on Lot 5. The 1899 map shows the small one-story dwelling on the south part of Lot 5, with distinction of a front section and a rear section. It continued to be used a rental property.

On October 16, 1905, George E Smith and wife sold the S 60' of Lot 6 to Edward Gustave Gereke for \$1,200. In November 1905, the *Mt Pleasant Daily News* noted that Edward G. Gereke and wife of Burlington have taken up their permanent residence at 207 N. Jefferson, opposite the Y.M.C.A (*Mt Pleasant Daily News*, November 9, 1905, 4).

On April 29, 1908, Edward Gustave Gereke sold the S 60' of Lot 6 to Frances Bougher and husband for \$1,550. The 1909 Sanborn map shows the same one-story frame dwelling at 207 N Jefferson as the 1892 map, without the distinction of sections on the 1899 map. The 1911-12 City Directory lists James and Frances Bougher, retired, at 207 N Jefferson.

On December 18, 1912, Frances Bougher and husband sold the S 60' of Lot 6 to Jay J Pitcher. According to an article in the *Mt Pleasant Journal* on March 7, 1913, Pitcher paid \$2,500 for the property (p. 6). The telephone directories in 1913, 1915, and 1917 list Dr. J.J. Pitcher, residence, at 207 N Jefferson. During this period, he practiced medicine with his father Dr. A.O. Pitcher at 107 ½ Main St. His wife, Ella, died after an operation in Chicago in April 1918 ("Death of Mrs. Pitcher," *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, April 23, 1918, 4).

The house appears to have been rebuilt or significantly remodeled while owned by Dr. J.J. and Ella Pitcher. They paid \$2,500 for the property in 1912. According to an article in the *Mt Pleasant Daily News*, Pitcher sold the house in 1918 to Herman Elgar, who paid \$5500 for the "handsome modern cottage" (June 3, 1918, p. 4). The 1920 Sanborn map shows a larger footprint, one that is more common to a bungalow built in the 1910s. The house is deeper now than wide, and it has a full front porch. It is noted as one-story, though it appears to have been two stories in this period. The 1991 photograph shows 3/1 windows on the second story of the front of the two-story section, typical of the 1910s. There is also a tile block garage at the rear of the lot by 1920.

On May 25, 1918, J.J. Pitcher sold the S 60' Lot 6 to Herman Elgar. H.E. Elgar is listed at 207 N Jefferson in the 1919 telephone directory. The 1920 federal census lists Herman Elgar (33, born in Iowa) as a general practice attorney living at 207 N. Jefferson. His household includes wife Clara (19, born in Iowa), Betty (1 yr 9 mo), John (3 mo), and servant Opal Vorheisa.

H.E. Elgar is listed at 207 N Jefferson in the telephone directories in 1921, 1923, and 1925. The 1930 federal census lists Herman E. Elgar (45) as a general practice attorney living at 207 N. Jefferson, which he owns and is valued at \$4,500. His household includes wife Clara (32), Elizabeth L (11), John F (10), and Alanson K (2). H.E. Elgar is listed at 207 N Jefferson in the City directories in 1938 and 1941. The 1940 census lists Herman E. Elgar (57) as an attorney living at 207 N. Jefferson, which he owns and is valued at \$2,500. His household includes wife Clara (40), Betty (21), John (20), and Alanson K (12).

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The 1942 Sanborn map shows the house with the same footprint as the 1909 map. H.E. Elgar is listed at 207 N Jefferson in the telephone directories in 1944 and 1948. The 1950 census lists Herman Elgar (68, lawyer) and wife Clara (49) as living at 207 N. Jefferson. In June 1951, Alanson Elgar announced that he had passed the state bar examinations and would become associated with his father in the Elgar law firm, located on the second story over the Brown Lynch Scott store. He had graduated last week from the law course at Drake University ("Alanson Elgar to Enter Law Firm Here with Father," *Mt Pleasant News*, June 29, 1951, 1).

The 1955 city directory lists 207 N Jefferson as the home of Herman E. Elgar and the Herman Elgar Law Office. The law office of his sons John F Elgar and Alanson K Elgar were listed on the second story of the Louisa Building in the 1955 directory. The 1957 city directory simply lists 207 N. Jefferson as the home of H.E. Elgar. An advertisement for Elgar Law Office in December 1957 lists the office as over Brown Lynch Scott on the east side of the square. The firm included Herman E. Elgar (1910), John F. Elgar (1950), and Alanson K. Elgar (1951). The firm dealt in estates, property rights, tax law, patents, and abstracts (*Winfield Beacon*, December 26, 1957, 5).

In December 1958, the Elgar law offices were moved from this second story location over Brown Lynch Scott at the southeast corner of the square to the Elgar property on N. Jefferson. The new location was the former home of attorney H.E. Elgar and his wife, across northwest from the post office. Attorneys John and Alanson Elgar planned to make changes in the former residence to adapt it to their office needs. Mr. and Mrs. H.E. Elgar had moved to the new home at 607 N. White ("Elgars Move Law Offices," *Mt Pleasant News*, December 29, 1958, 1). Elgar Law Office is listed at 207 N. Jefferson in the 1960, 1962, and 1964 city directories. Mary Elgar (daughter of Alanson) recalls it as a two-story house in this period. Herman E. Elgar died on March 19, 1964 at age 82.

On July 26, 1965, the S 60' of Lot 6 were transferred from the estate of Herman Elgar to Clara R Elgar et al. The 1966 City Directory lists Elgar Law Office at 207 N Jefferson. In 1968 and 1970 City directories list Elgar Law Office, Alanson Elgar, at 207 N Jefferson. In the 1973 and 1976 City directories, John Elgar, brother of Alanson, also appears in the listing for the Elgar Law Office at 207 N Jefferson. In 1978, the law office was moved to a new location at 207 E. Washington, with that building remodeled prior to the move.

The city directories in 1980 and 1981 do not have a listing for 207 N Jefferson.

On July 16, 1981, the S 60' of Lot 6 was transferred from Clara Elgar to her children, Elizabeth Anderson, Alanson Elgar, and John Elgar. On July 21, 1985, Elizabeth Anderson et al sold the S 60' Lot 6 to Ronald and Barbara Wyse. The city directories in 1986 and 1989 list renters living at 207 N Jefferson. In January 1991, a sign permit was issued for the building for Mennonite Fellowship, including a photograph of front at this time.

On May 30, 1992, Ron and Barb Wyse transferred the S 60' of Lot 6 to the Ron & Barb Wyse Trust. The 2002 and 2011 city directories list renters living at 207 N Jefferson.

The Ron & Barb Wyse Trust transferred the property to Allison Smith and Janet Smith in July 2014. Allison transferred her interest to Janet in December 2017. The house continues to be used a rental property.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Building and sign permits, City of Mount Pleasant, Iowa

City and telephone directories, Mt Pleasant:

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.

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

History of Henry County, Iowa. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1879.

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

Koch, Augustus. *Birds-Eye View of the City of Mount Pleasant, Henry County, Iowa*. Chicago, IL: Merchants Lithographing Co, 1869. In collection of Henry County Heritage Trust and Mount Pleasant Public Library, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

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.

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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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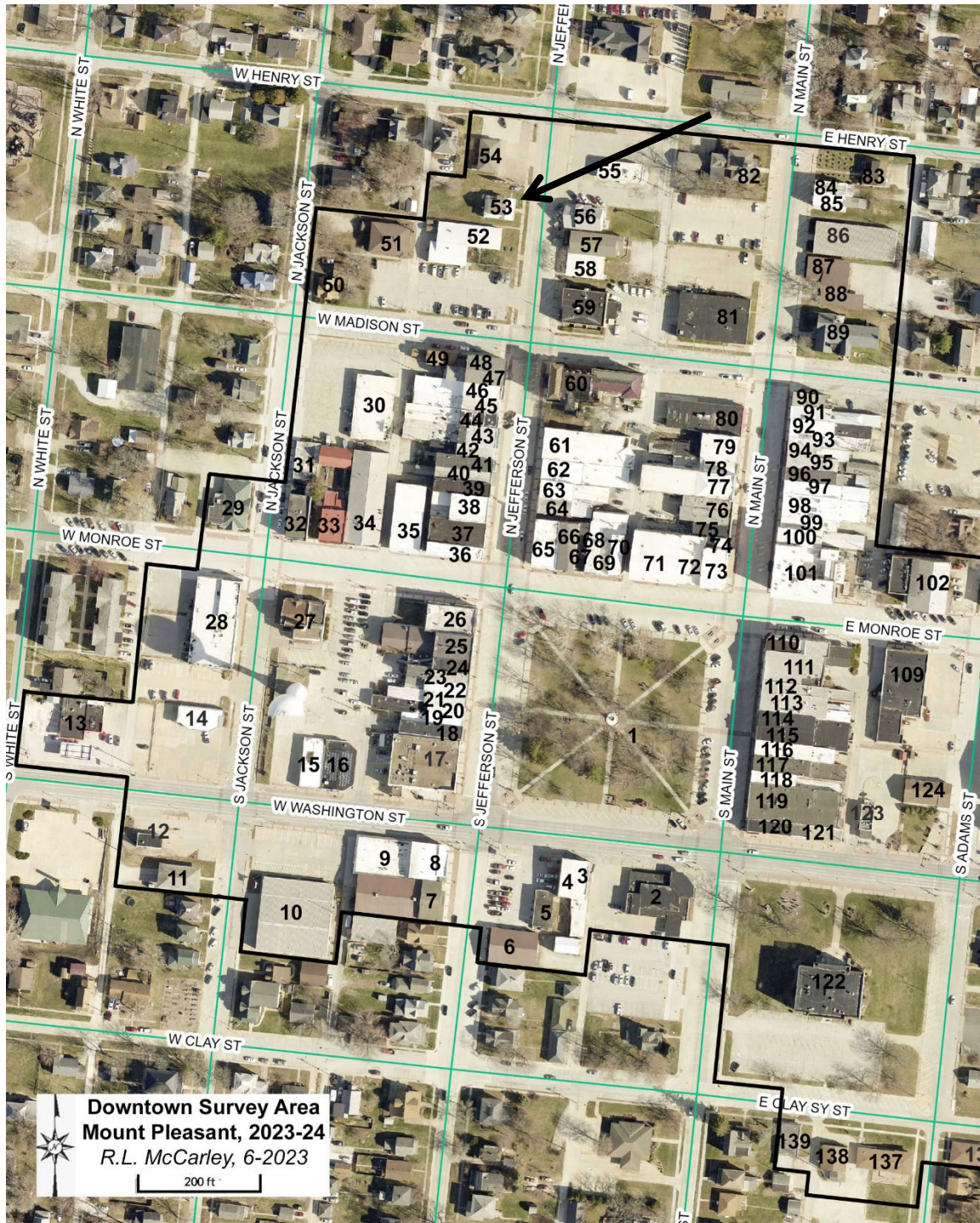
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Location map



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Historic images



House in 1947 on N. Jefferson St

**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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Property at time of 1991 sign permit application (City of Mt Pleasant building permits)

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Digital photographs



Photograph 44-02248-001. East elevation, looking west (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-02248-002. North elevation, looking southwest (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-02248-003. South elevation, looking north (October 2023)

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Photograph 44-02248-004. West elevation, looking east (October 2023)