

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See Instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic N/A
and/or common Midtown Harrisburg Historic District

2. Location

street & number Approx. Boundaries: Forster Street to Verbeke St, and low eastern water line of Susquehanna River to Third Street N/A not for publication
city, town Harrisburg N/A vicinity of
state Penna. code 42 county Dauphin code 043

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple (see enclosed property ownership listing)
street & number See Attached
city, town Harrisburg N/A vicinity of state Penna 17101

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dauphin County Courthouse
street & number Front and Market Streets
city, town Harrisburg state Penna 17101

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Harrisburg Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date Fall, 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Penna. Historical & Museum Commission, Bur. For Historic Presevation

city, town Harrisburg state Penna

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Midtown District is bounded by Forster Street on the south, Third Street on the east, the low line of the Susquehanna River on the west, and the properties facing the north side of Verbeke Street on the north. The district excludes an apartment house for the elderly at the corner of Front and Verbeke Streets, and gas stations, on north corners of Front & Verbeke Streets and 2nd & Verbeke Streets.

Physically, this is one of the most architecturally intact areas in the City of Harrisburg. There are few interruptions in the rhythm of the streetscapes. Overall, there have been few alterations and little demolition to disturb this rhythm, which is essentially 2½ and 3 story rows of buildings.

The built environment features several predominant styles including Italianate, Federal, Second Empire, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne and Eastlake. Most common are the Italianate, Second Empire and Queen Anne Styles or vernacular forms thereof. Excluding several intrusions, buildings in this zone range in age from 1860 to 1910, with most dating from 1875.

Physical building and streetscape features common to the district include:

- earlier frame constructed and 2½ story, attached and semi-detached (corner properties)
- later three story, brick constructed, attached and semi-detached (corner properties) dwellings.
- consistency in architectural style within rows, although variations exist among rows:
- two and three bay facade organization.
- extensive use of decorative wood moldings and brackets on exterior doorway and window trim, and cornices.
- zero setback development.
- corbelled brick cornices and mansard roofs.
- tapestry brick veneer on later buildings.

Common inappropriate alterations, though used only sporadically prior to the establishment of the municipal district, include:

- aluminum siding.
- "perma-stone" and "brick-cote".

EXP. 10/31/84

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In addition to the above, intrusions are limited to surface parking. Only two examples of new construction, within the past thirty years, exist. These are the Salvation Army Building, at Green and Cumberland Streets, and the addition to the Second United Church of Christ on Verbeke Street.

Workmanship on the buildings in this zone is of high quality and is revealed in the brickwork and finely detailed decorative elements. While variations occur within the area as to architectural styles, the workmanship throughout maintains a high standard.

Architectural details remain essentially intact throughout Midtown. Most building changes are of a reversible surface nature frequently involving the application or the loss or replacement of a decorative detail. Throughout the area, buildings are well maintained and are generally well renovated or restored with the exception that sandblasting has been undertaken on some buildings.

As elsewhere in Harrisburg, brick is the most frequently used material, although frame buildings appear in the district. Modern materials, such as aluminum siding, appear as intrusions on some of the older buildings which are, generally, frame constructed. However, the overall integrity of this area, though impacted by some intrusive elements, remains essentially intact.

Greenery makes an important contribution in Midtown. The streetscape is marked by trees lining the major and minor arteries throughout the area. Some trees appear to be newly planted in parts of the area. Flower beds and window boxes appear occasionally along Second Street, Penn Street and Green Street, and along some side streets.

In the district, paving is usually in good condition, yet there are some areas of broken uneven or missing sidewalks. A city payment replacement program was recently completed on several streets. Both brick and concrete sidewalks exist.

Several of the anchor properties, which contribute to the district, are noted in the Pennsylvania Historic Resource Forms which are attached hereto. A property by property description follows these forms.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

Specific dates Multiple Builder/Architect Multiple

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

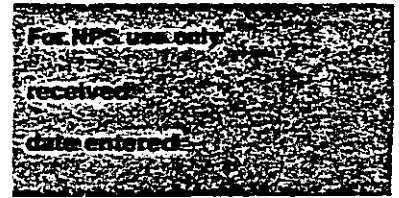
Historic Midtown, between Forster and Verbeke Streets and the low eastern water line of the Susquehanna River and Third Street, represents one of the oldest, principally residential, and architecturally significant districts in the City of Harrisburg. Partially contained within the Borough annex of 1838, and totally within the original city of 1860, the area started its growth just after the Civil War, physically representing the beginning of a true city, and was hatched from the prior development of the small Borough which stopped at North Street.

Historic Midtown was originally devoted to farm land. A remnant of this is survival of an early 19th Century farmhouse at 1108 Penn Street, which unlike its neighbors, was not an urbanized property. The area consisted of land holdings of noted Harrisburg families, which were subdivided in the mid to latter portions of the 19th Century. In total, six subdivisions occurred between 1857 and 1979 which dictated the chronological development of the neighborhood. The older subdivision of William Verbeke, 1857, (including the blocks on the north and south sides of Verbeke Street) contains some of the oldest development in the neighborhood, many being two and one half story, frame structures. Later subdivisions in the 1860's and 1870's, such as those of the John Osler Estate, 1867, and the Berrier Estate, 1879, prompted more substantial three story, brick construction.

Second Street was the most prestigious street at that time in the neighborhood, featuring rows of townhouses built for mid to upper income professional and merchant families. Front Street in the 900 and 1000 blocks remained essentially undeveloped until the early 20th Century due to the fact that the Old Millerstown Turnpike, which branched off from Second Street at North Street following a northwesterly path to join Front Street at Herr Street, absorbed undevelopable right-of-way. Even though the turnpike was vacated sometime in the 1880's, development in this area did not occur until a later time. Contrary to Front Street's prestigious image farther downtown, the area of North Front Street, north of Herr and south of Sayford Streets, and between Bartine Street and the River, was nothing more than a collection of small frame working class houses which faced both sides of the street.

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This area was known as Hardscrabble. Several boat liveries and other river related activities, operated from the rears of these houses on the west side of the street. In the early 20th Century, and as part of the "City Beautiful Movement", these west side buildings were razed to make way for the expansion of River Front Park north from Forster Street, the Sunken Gardens, and the construction of the famous river steps along the river's water line, all of which accented and complimented the midtown neighborhood.

The "City Beautiful Movement" was launched in Harrisburg in 1901 by the Harrisburg League of Municipal Improvements, the noted group of citizens and civic leaders which initiated a public improvement program so ambitious, that it became a national model. In addition to the services of other professionals, the League engaged landscape architect Warren H. Manning of Boston to lay out the City's park system, including this portion of River Front Park. The Third Street corridor, bordering Historic Midtown to the east, originally was residential in nature, but rapidly switched to neighborhood commercial use at the end of the 19th Century. The most intensively commercial portion of the street developed at the corner of Third and Verbeke Streets, the location of the historic Broad Street Market. The Central Trust Company building (1893) at Third and Verbeke Streets, the adjacent Commercial Trust Building (1907), and the Potts Apartment Building (1905) at Third and Herr Streets, reinforced the commercial and multifamily residential character of the street. This was preceded by a failed attempt to develop the street as a prestigious residential boulevard as evidenced by the erection of twin Second Empire styled mansions; the David Maeyer and S.S. Hershey houses at 1102 and 1104 North Third Street. The Maeyer house, which remains today unaltered, became the home of Harrisburg's YWCA by 1901. The Hershey residence, which was drastically altered, was converted to accommodate the Jewish Community Center and later the Police Athletic League.

The later 19th Century residents of Historic Midtown, unlike in many other urban areas of its time, consisted principally of born Americans with American born parents rather than either immigrants or first generation Americans as being more prevalent during this period of mass immigration. According to the 1880 census, only 4% percent of the neighborhood population was born outside of the United States, generally in Germany or Great Britain. 85% percent of the residents had American born parents. The census also indicated that the majority of the residents were skilled laborers and housewives. Principal labor employment generators included the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Harrisburg Cotton Factory and Silk Mill, at Front and North Streets (demolished). Other occupations included clerks, teachers, painters, tailors, merchants, doctors and lawyers.

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Prior to 1950, the Midtown neighborhood was a contiguous northern extension of the residential neighborhood which existed south of Forster Street, which is currently considered the northern residential area of the City's downtown. Forster Street was a regular cross street like Briggs Street, to the south, and Boas Street, to the north. However, with the growth of the state capital complex, improved access from the West Shore was necessary to accommodate commuter traffic. In 1950, the M. Harvey Taylor Bridge was constructed and Forster Street was widened to the south as a six lane thoroughfare. This change physically divided what was once a contiguous neighborhood and cast the Midtown area, north of Forster Street; as physically and psychologically, a separate neighborhood.

Historic Midtown's significance, as has been recognized through its designation as a municipal historic district, lies in its cohesive and integrated block fronts, existing architectural integrity, period of construction, relationship to the Susquehanna River, River Front Park, and Broad Street Market, importance as being one of Harrisburg's earlier subdivided neighborhoods of substantial building stock, and being representative of an important segment of late Nineteenth Century urban America.

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

SEE ATTACHED

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 43

Quadrangle name Harrisburg, West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 8	3 39 3 50	4 45 9 19 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 8	3 39 1 70	4 45 8 6 14 0
E	1 8	3 39 1 30	4 45 8 9 8 0
G			

B	1 8	3 39 5 5 0	4 45 8 8 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 8	3 39 8 9 7 0	4 45 8 9 8 0
F	1 8	3 39 0 8 0	4 45 9 1 7 0
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached boundary description

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
-------	-----	------	-----	--------	-----	------	-----

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeb Stuart, Downtown Projects Director

organization City of Harrisburg

date December 21, 1982

street & number 10 North Market Square

telephone (717) 255-6412

city or town Harrisburg

state Pennsylvania 17101

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date 3/18/83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Major Bibliographical References

Atlas of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Harrisburg Title Company, Harrisburg 1901.

Roe's Atlas of the City of Harrisburg. Frederick B. Roe, Philadelphia, 1884.




Frew, Kenneth. The Harrisburg of Architect Charles Howard Lloyd (1892-1932). An unpublished manuscript. 1982 Copyright registration number; TXu 106-953.

Steinmetz, Richard and Robert Hoffsommer. This Was Harrisburg. Stackpole Books, 1976.

The Chautauquan, March 1904, Springfield, Ohio: The Chartauquan Press.

U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census, X, 1880. for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Fifth Ward.

*Midtown Harrisburg
Historic District*

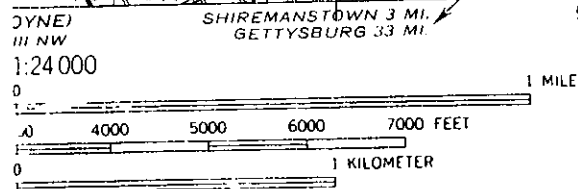
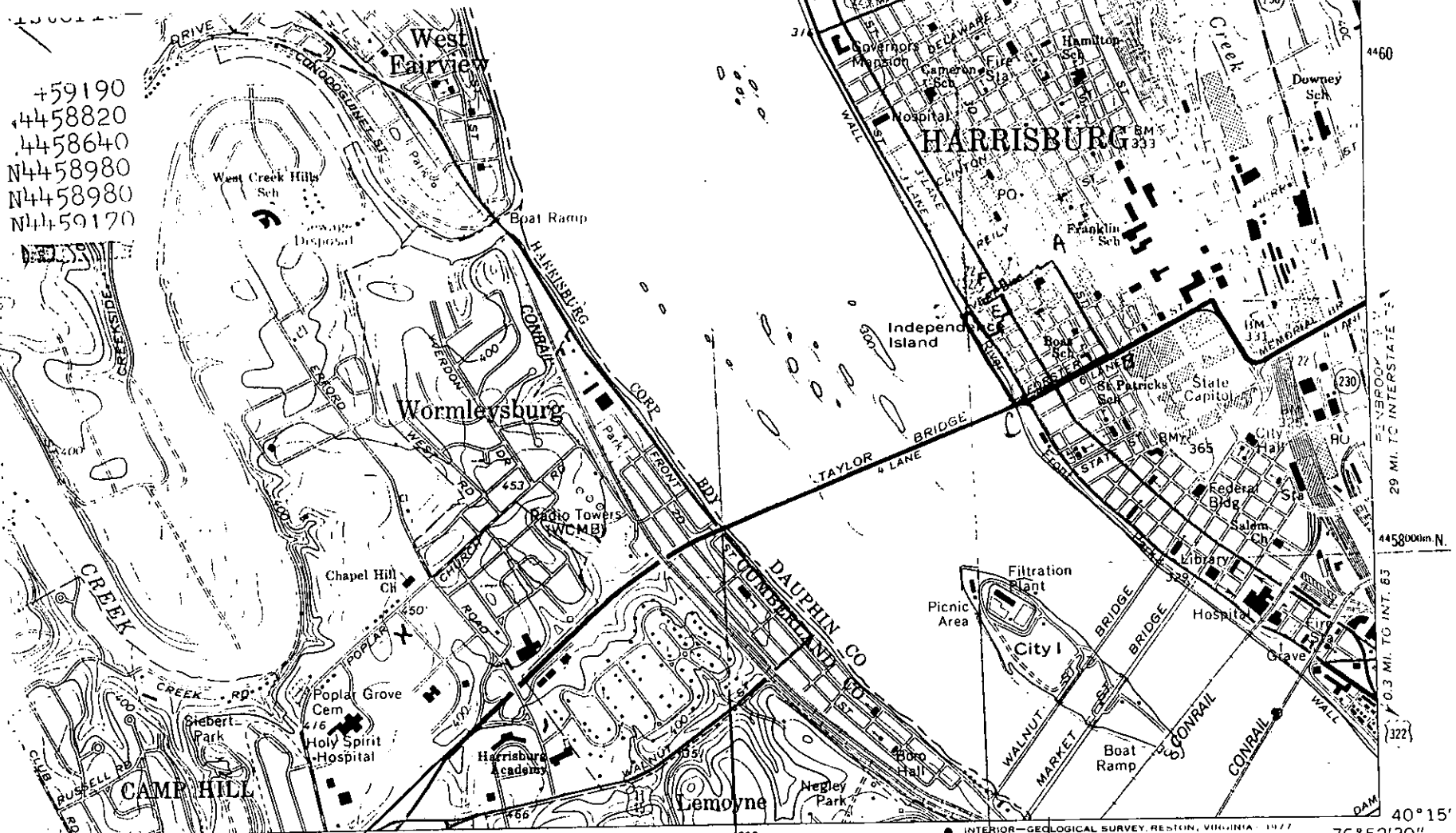
-  INTRUSIONS
-  ANCHOR BUILDINGS
-  CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS



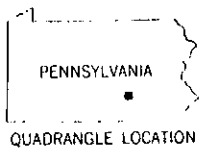
HARRISBURG

WILLIAM PINE WOOD

+59190
 +4458820
 +4458640
 N4458980
 N4458980
 N4459170



INTERVAL 20 FEET
 VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929



NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
 SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
 AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Midtown Harrisburg Historic District

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

HARRISBURG WEST, PA.
 SW/4 HARRISBURG 15' QUADRANGLE
 N4015—W7652.5/7.5

1969
 AMS 5664 IV SW—SERIES V831

4460
 29 MI. TO INTERSTATE 78
 4458000m N.
 76°52'30"
 40°15'
 0.3 MI. TO INT. 63
 322