

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Thompson, Thomas H., House

other names/site number Wayside Manor

2. Location

street & number 815 Water Street

N/A not for publication

city or town Brownsville

N/A vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Fayette code 051 zip code 15417

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Thompson, Thomas H., House
Name of Property

Fayette County, Pennsylvania
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 2 | 0 | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 2 | 0 | Total |

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

N/A

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/mansion
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty stores
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Mission/Spanish/Colonial Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick with cut stone facing
walls brick
roof ceramic tile
other stone

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet

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The Thomas Thompson House is a large, three-and-a-half story, brick house built in 1906 in the Spanish/Mission/Colonial Revival styles. The house lies several blocks west of the Brownsville Commercial National Register Historic District on a level lot in the Bridgeport (or Southside) section of town. It has a red Spanish tile roof, stone-faced dormers on three elevations, with the stone rising to form curved-topped pediments, beige pressed Norman brick throughout the body of the house, with carved stone lintels and quoins, and smoothly-dressed stone facing in the exposed portion of the basement. It is situated near the center of a fifteen block by three block level section of Brownsville in the alluvial plain of the river, surrounded by a variety of brick and frame structures. Scattered throughout this alluvial plain are a number of early nineteenth century and mid-nineteenth century brick houses in Greek Revival, Italianate, and other styles. Most of the houses immediately surrounding the Thompson House however, are greatly-altered two story frame structures. Along the river are several large industrial structures, including a railroad yard and a five-story brick brewery building almost across the street from the house. The Thompson House is the largest residential structure in the neighborhood. Behind the Thompson House is a two story hipped-roofed garage/carriage house built by the same architect, in a very closely matched brick, in 1917-18. The Thompson House exhibits architectural detailing, both inside and out, most of which is in a very good state of preservation. Aside from aluminum soffit in the eaves of the house, minor alterations to the front and back porches, and removal of several first story interior walls, the house remains essentially untouched and unchanged since its 1906 construction.

The Thompson House has a hipped roof with red Spanish tiles. There is a dormer in each face of the roof, the front and side dormers being faced with carved stone. Each dormer has two double sash (1/1) windows separated and flanked by stone trim which supports a stone gable facing. At the top of the facing of the dormer gables, the stone rises in a semi-circle about two feet above the ridgepole. The rear dormer has a hipped roof. The dormer roofs have Spanish tile, with flat red ceramic shingles on the dormer cheeks. Six tall chimneys rise from the roof. They are brick with a mixture of brick and stone ornamentation at the top of each. At the base of the roof is a box gutter/cornice, the underside of which has been clad in aluminum. The fascia of the cornice is still wood and has a row of dentils continuous around the entire house.

The facade (north) is three bays wide and is dominated by a three bay porch on square, panelled columns. The porch roof is hipped with Spanish tile, the middle bay projecting slightly forward forming a separate hip. There is a wide wood frieze connecting the columns. It has a panelled surface, with diamond and circle panel designs at the corners and at the centers of the

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porch bays. The top stage of each column has a quatrefoil panel on each face, and there are carved wooden corbels at each side of each column, where the column meets the frieze, carved in an acanthus leaf pattern. The floor of the porch is multicolored ceramic tile on concrete. There is ghosting in the floor in the center of each bay where a wide pier (three feet high, about five feet long) was originally located (according to the drawings) forming the middle section of the original porch railing. These piers were connected to the columns by more typical sections of wood railing with balusters (now missing). The base of the porch is faced with smoothly-dressed stone. The porch is accessed by seven stone steps with smoothly-dressed stone sides. Flanking the steps and in the side elevations of the porch are apertures with iron grills, opening into the air space beneath the porch. The openings are paired in the side elevations, and tripled to each side of the steps.

The facade has large openings in each of the three bays. The center bay is a large three-part doorway with an oak door containing a large light of bevelled and leaded glass flanked by bevelled and leaded glass sidelights. Originally, the door was recessed about three feet in a niche ornamented with carved Corinthian pilasters, panels, and a wainscot surface scored to simulate 4" square tiles on the sides of the niche. This niche has been closed in as an air lock, so that there is now a wooden storm door flanked by sidelights with plain glass matching the opening sizes in the recessed doorway in the plane of the facade. This enclosure was accomplished in the 1970s or earlier, using carved pilasters, panels, and other wooden details that had been removed previously from the interior of the house. To each side of the doorway (in the remaining two bays of the facade) is a large single pane window with transom.

The second story facade windows are arranged in groupings in each bay. The center bay has three single sash windows with individual stained glass transoms. The sill level for these windows is higher than elsewhere in the second story to accommodate the peak of the porch roof. This cluster of windows has a flat arch of seven stone voussoirs in place of a lintel, the center voussoir being a curved stone corbel. To each side of this window cluster is a pair of double sash (1/1) windows with a single stone sill and a large single stone lintel. The upper edge and sides of the sash are carved to form a drip moulding. The second-story windows are connected by a thin stone beltcourse that continues around the house. Below this beltcourse, each corner of the house has stone quoins.

The main feature of the east elevation is a two-story bay window. It has large single sash windows with clear glass transoms in the first story. The transoms are replacement wood sashes where stained glass was originally installed. The second story of the bay window has a two-light

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single sash window high in the center facet of the bay, also being a replacement for a stained glass transom that has been removed. This window has a five-vousoir flat arch like that of the center bay of the facade. It is flanked by double sash (1/1) windows in the other two facets of the bay, each of which has a stone lintel with a corbel at the center. The remaining windows of this elevation are double sash (1/1), paired in the bay south of the bay window, and single in the bay north of the bay window, with large stone lintels with carved drip mouldings as found in the flanking bays of the facade.

The west elevation centers on a porte-cochere supported on four panelled columns matching those of the front porch, except that they rest on stone piers. The porte-cochere has a tin roof, a frieze to match that of the porch, and aluminum cladding in the soffit area. Sheltered by the porte-cochere is a doorway with a single-leaf with a single light of bevelled glass. There is a small window to each side of this door. Above the roof of the porte-cochere is a large window consisting of three double sash (1/1) windows with a three-part transom and a flatarch with seven vousoirs, similar to the one in the center second story facade area. Flanking the porte-cochere and large window opening are paired double sash (1/1) windows, each pair sharing a lintel with drip moulding.

The south (rear) elevation has a hipped roof porch sheltering three doorways. The porch has an asphalt roof, a plain frieze, and square wood columns on tile piers, with a concrete slab porch floor also on tile. A wooden ramp for accommodation of persons with disabilities has been added to the face of the porch. The westernmost of the three doorways has two leaves with a large light of bevelled glass in each, and a shared transom. The center doorway is a ca. 1940 three-panel and three-light door with a narrow band of glass block to each side. (This doorway was originally not a door, but a specially-designed window/pantry for passage of milk and other items delivered for kitchen use, according to the drawings.) The easternmost doorway has three panels and a square light, and a single-light transom. In the first story, the porch is flanked by two square window openings with large stone lintels with the carved drip moulding as in the facade. The window to the west of the porch is single sash, while the opposite window is double sash (1/1). The second story has four window openings with the large lintels with carved drip mouldings. Three of these windows are double sash (1/1), while the one over the double doorway is a single horizontal sash, about six feet wide and three feet tall, with two lights of glass.

The first story interior consists of four rooms plus a stair hall and a small powder room. The main room of the first story was originally three rooms (dining room and two parlors, plus a

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large center hallway), but is now one large room with details that show the original stylistic distinctions from room to room. The floor of the large room is hardwood with four different inlaid parquet patterns.

The floor of the northwest parlor area of the large room has a rope pattern in the parquet. This area has a mantelpiece with tall, plain Doric columns with volutes and dentils along the bottom of the mantel. The tile of the hearth is dark green, and dark green tile has been placed in the fireplace and facing to match in the recent restoration.

The parquet of the northeast parlor area floor has a pattern resembling a zig-zag folded striped ribbon. The trim in this portion of the room was historically painted antique white. The mantelpiece in this area is an elaborately carved art nouveau wooden piece with a horizontal mirror and narrow white tile in the fireplace, hearth, and facing. The mantelpiece is now painted white and the remainder of the trim is brown to match the stained wood in the remainder of the room.

The dining room portion of the room has a diamond parquet pattern, the parquet being laid out as an elongated octagon matching the shape of the bay window at the end of the room (the walls now missing in the opposite end of the dining room may have also been semi-octagonal, as suggested by this floor pattern). The dining room area has walls panelled with stained wood up to about six feet from the floor. The mantelpiece in this area has fluted square columns and red quarry tile in the hearth, fireplace, and facing.

The remainder of the large room was originally a large ell-shaped hallway from the front door to the staircase. This area is bordered by a narrow rope pattern in the parquet. The parquet is interrupted by two square plaster columns, one of which contains a steel column supporting a steel "I" beam installed when the individual walls were removed. Straight ahead of the front door is a fireplace whose mantelpiece has diamond-panelled square pilasters following the design of the front porch. This fireplace has red quarry tile in the hearth and facing.

At the west end of the hallway area is a sweeping grand stair, the main feature of the interior of the house. The stair has a main flight leading up from the first floor to a landing at which point it splits into two smaller flanking flights to the second floor level. The stair is made of quarter sawn oak, with turned balusters and curved steps, and flares outward on both sides at the bottom, where there are newel posts with panelled sides and quatrefoils resembling those on the front porch columns. Portions of the stair hall have wooden ceiling panels, but about half of

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the panels were removed when the walls were dismantled.

The rest of the first story consists of three roughly equal sized rooms across the rear of the house, an enclosed rear stairwell, and a small powder room under a portion of the main stair. The powder room is accessed from a landing three steps down toward the cellar, under the main flight of the stair. Next to the powder room is the door to the porte-cochere. The powder room has original white tile on the walls and floors.

The southwesternmost room of the first story was originally Mr. Thompson's office. It is accessed by a recessed doorway near the foot of the main flight of the stair. Next to the door is a deep built-in closet, with paired doors. This may have originally been a built-in bar or liquor cabinet. There is a fireplace in this room, but the mantelpiece is missing. This room has painted woodwork and has been converted to a unisex rest room, equipped with special fixtures for people with disabilities.

The center room in the rear of the first story was originally the breakfast room. It has a fireplace with a small built-in china cupboard, with leaded glass doors. Above the mantelpiece, a mural on oil cloth was found in the recent restoration. It had been damaged by drywall cement and was carefully recovered with drywall without further damage, as restoration was not immediately possible. The opening from this room to the hallway portion of the large room is a large open doorway. Originally a smaller doorway with pocket door, this doorway was enlarged when the walls were removed from what is now the large room.

The southeasternmost room was the kitchen. Between it and the breakfast room is the rear stairwell. The stair is plain, stained pine, with turned balusters, and square newel posts. Between the stairwell and the kitchen, there appears to have been a built-in cupboard with pass-through windows, serving as a butler's pantry. A small pocket door next to this butler's pantry led to the dining room, and next to it was the door to the breakfast room. The pocket door to the dining room is still present (blocked-off by drywall on the staircase side for fire code reasons), but the butler's pantry has been removed and replaced with a steel door. The door to the breakfast room has also been replaced with a steel door as part of the enclosure of this stairwell as a fire tower.

The kitchen was at one time two rooms, a kitchen and a large pantry along the side of the dining room. The pantry was converted to bathrooms when the first floor was substantially remodelled, and in the recent restoration, little evidence of the pantry finishes were found, and

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the dividing wall was removed making a larger kitchen. Another historic feature found in the kitchen was a section of tile wall and floor at the chimney pilaster, where the original kitchen stove was located. This tile, which was somewhat damaged when found behind ca. 1970 drywall, was re-covered in the recent restoration, but is still present beneath the new finishes. A commercial kitchen has been installed in this kitchen/pantry area to serve a restaurant whose dining room is located in the large adjoining room.

The second story consists of five large square bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a nursery, all surrounding a central room built to be the house's "music room." The second story details have remained almost perfectly intact since the construction of the house.

The northwest bedroom has an art nouveau carved wood mantelpiece with horizontal mirror and white tile, similar to that found in the northeast parlor area in the first story. The trim in this room was historically painted antique white. To the side of the fireplace is a closet with a two-leaf panelled wood door.

The center room on the north side of the second story was the nursery. It has stained woodwork and a closet with a pair of panelled wood doors on the music room side. It has a pocket door connecting it to the northeast bedroom.

The northeast bedroom has bird's-eye maple trim and mantelpiece. It is connected to the nursery and master bedroom by pocket doors. There is a closet to the side of the fireplace with a pair of panelled wood doors.

The master bedroom is the center room on the east side of the house. It terminates to the east with the bay window. It has a stained mahogany art nouveau mantelpiece with a horizontal mirror and white tile, and a large walk-in closet with a pair of panelled wood doors. The master bedroom is connected to the southwest bedroom and the smaller bathroom by pocket doors.

The smaller bathroom has a toilet with a stained wooden tank ornamented with pilasters and other details, a porcelained sink on metal brackets, a claw-footed tub, a closet, and white tile floors and wainscot. A door leads to the back hall. Next to the door is a mechanical intercom mouthpiece mounted on the wall. Outside the door, in a tiny anteroom, is a large utility sink and a laundry chute door. The larger bathroom has white tile walls and floor, a large oval tub on claw feet with fixtures at the side, a toilet with a wooden tank ornamented with pilasters and other details, a closet with paired wood doors, a pedestal sink, and a square, shallow tub that was

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the base of a shower unit.

The southeast bedroom, apparently originally the maid's quarters, has no fireplace, two closets with wood doors, and stained pine trim throughout. The southwest bedroom has a fireplace, a closet with paired wood doors, and a fireplace with mantelpiece and horizontal mirror. All the trim in this room has historically been painted (or stained) almost black to resemble ebony.

The music room has a mantelpiece with fluted Doric columns and mirror. Flanking the fireplace are open doorways leading to the back hall that connects the two bathrooms, rear stair, and two southern bedrooms. These doorways have brass fixtures where draperies were originally hung. A steel fire door has been installed in the doorway west of the fireplace to enclose the rear stair as a fire tower. There is a large closet near the master bedroom door. The ceiling of the music room has a mural on oil cloth depicting musicians and musical instruments. The two smaller flights of the grand stair coming up from the lower floor, lead into the music room, and between them, a second main flight, with identical curved steps, balusters, and newel posts identical to those of the main flight below, leads upward toward the third story.

The third story consists of a large room (possibly originally a ballroom), and two smaller rooms with a lesser degree of finish. The grand stair forks two-thirds of the way up, becoming two smaller flights, as it does in the lower section. One of these flights leads to the large room that extends across the north side of the house. This room has two large closets with paired panelled doors. The front dormer window is located high enough that a raised floor area was constructed in front of it. The upper half of the walls in this room (as well as in the other two rooms) are sloped following the roof rafters. A small access panel leads from the ceiling of this room to the top half of the attic, in the peak of the roof.

Running along the south edge of the large room is a hallway connecting the main stair to the rear stair. From this hallway are doors to the three attic rooms, and a doorway to the landing area at the top of the rear stairs. From the landing area, a door leads to the eastern room, and a large rectangular opening, framed as a doorway, but now partially closed-in as part of the fire tower enclosure, leads to the western room. There are steel fire doors at the top of both stairs, installed in the recent restoration to meet Pennsylvania fire code laws. The door from the stair to the large room is a historic wooden door with a glass light.

The Thompson House basement is divided into three main areas by brick bearing walls

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that run east-west. The main access to the basement is by way of the main stair, which has a final center flight to the basement, with balusters and newel posts to either side, essentially a toned-down version of the center flight in the upper stories, without the curved steps and curve in the balustrades. The steps and stringers in this flight were replaced in the recent restoration, having been discarded when the main stair had been dismantled at an earlier date. Under the stairs is an area that has been enclosed with drywall and is accessed by two small wooden doors. The stair leads down into a long basement room which ends at the semi-octagonal shape of the base of the bay window. In the bay window area are three sets of small double sash windows, set high in the wall, with small window wells on the exterior side. About four feet beyond the bottom step of the main stair, the floor of this center room steps down three more steps to a sunken concrete area. There is a tile half-wall to each side of the three steps reaching this area.

To the north is another long room, with exposed brick walls, similar in size and finish to that of the center room. This room has small casement windows around the periphery, some opening into the crawl space under the front porch.

The southern one-third of the basement consists of a small brick room (the original furnace room) in the southwest corner, and a larger area east of it which has been divided by drywall partitions into two smaller rooms and a bathroom. At the center of this area is the bottom flight of the rear staircase, enclosed completely with drywall. The room in the southeastern corner, east of the rear staircase, contains a set of original slate stationary tubs and a door leading out to an exterior exit stairwell. This area, apparently the house's original laundry has recently been fitted out with fixtures for dish washing and food preparation for the recently installed restaurant on the first floor. The laundry chute originally opened into this room, and the door from the chute is still in place in the ceiling of the room.

The carriage house stands behind the Thompson House and was built in 1917-18. It is a two story hipped roof structure of beige pressed Norman brick and was designed by the same architect as the Thompson House. It is a rectangular building with a garage on the first floor and an apartment on the second floor. It remains essentially unchanged since its construction.

The Thompson House has experienced preservation, alteration, and restoration in the course of its history. The Thompson family lived in the house until the onset of prohibition, without making any major changes that are known. One known change was installation of a window seat in the dining room, on top of the original wainscot; this feature was dismantled in subsequent changes to the house). During and perhaps after prohibition, when the distillery was

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relocated to Canada, the house continued to operate for some time as a part-time residence of the family. At a later date, after many years of disuse or part-time use, it was purchased by a Jehovah's Witness Congregation. It was suited for their use only in that it contained some large rooms that could be used for meetings. As the congregation grew, some portions of the house got very little use and remained essentially untouched, while a large portion of the first story was dismantled for the construction of a large meeting room. The interior partition and bearing walls were removed from two-thirds of the first story, and eventually, even the grand stair was dismantled and removed to expand the meeting room. The parquet floors were covered with asphalt tile, and most of the first story walls were veneered with drywall and/or waferboard panelling with a synthesized wood finish. The pantry was made into a large bathroom, and an airlock was added to the front door. These changes appear to have occurred over a number of years, primarily in the 1960s and 1970s. However, most of the interior woodwork, such as the mantelpieces, was removed and stored, making it possible to restore them.

In 1990-1993, Mary Jean Cicconi purchased the house and undertook an extensive restoration. The drywall veneers and asphalt floors were removed from the first floor. The floors were cleaned and sanded as needed, and some sections of the parquet were replaced, as needed (particularly where radiators had leaked). Plywood that had been put down to level up the floor where the walls were originally located was replaced with hardwood roughly matching the remainder of the floor. The staircase was reconstructed, and window sashes were restored (particularly where stained glass transoms had previously been removed and replaced with plywood panels). A few ceilings were levelled and reinforced (particularly under the bathrooms), and all loose plaster areas (or missing plaster) were replaced with drywall. New lighting fixtures were installed, all wood finishes were rejuvenated (a few were stripped of layers of damaged paint, as necessary), and other similar measures were taken to fully restore the house. For fire egress reasons (to accommodate restaurant/retail occupancy) a partial system was installed and the rear stair was enclosed on all floors with steel doors.

The house, thus, has an unusual combination of features exhibiting turn-of-the-century opulence in an unusual state of preservation, restored features, and areas where rehabilitation was undertaken to cleanup, retrofit, and produce matching finishes to accommodate the present use.

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1906-1918

Significant Dates

1906

1908

1917

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Estep, Harry Summers

Ramella, Sebastian P.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

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The Thompson House is eligible for the National Register under criterion "C" as an outstanding example of the Spanish/Mission/Colonial Revival styles. It was built during the coal and coke boom that transformed Brownsville at the turn of the century. Also included in this nomination is the contributing 1917-18 carriage house. The Thompson House stands out as one of the grandest homes built in Brownsville in 1906-08.

Brownsville was an important commercial center, rivalling Pittsburgh in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when the National Road, passing through the town, was the major transportation route through the region, and regional boat building and iron making facilities were clustered around the town. The development of canals, railroads and related industrial growth in Pittsburgh in the middle decades of the century, left Brownsville a dwindling small town of little regional importance until the late nineteenth century. In the 1890s and early 1900s, the development of the Klondike coking region in western Fayette County brought Brownsville back briefly as a regional center of industry and commerce. During this period, many office buildings, stores, banks, homes, and churches were added to the community's existing fabric. The Thompson House is the grandest example remaining of large residential structures built during this period.

The Thompson House was built by Thomas Thompson, son of Sam Thompson, a wealthy farmer and distiller, and a member of Brownsville's once-substantial Quaker community. Samuel Thompson, founder of Thompson's Distillery, was born in East Bethlehem Township, Washington County, a few miles west of Brownsville, in 1820. He was, like his father, a farmer, and established the distillery in 1844. Distilling was then a common means to produce a cash income from farmland. Small distilleries were distributed throughout Washington County and the adjoining counties as early as the eighteenth century, and whiskey production was so important to the early economy of the region that many local farmers played active roles in the Western Insurrection in 1794. By 1900, whiskey production was concentrated in or near a dozen or so small towns. Thompson's Distillery was initially operated from an eighteenth century stone grist mill, Kinder's Mill, on Plum Run, a few miles south of Beallsville. About 1900, the Thompsons built a substantial new complex of large brick buildings in West Brownsville, directly across the river from the site of the Thompson House. Samuel Thompson moved to Bridgeport (now the Southside of Brownsville) before he died in 1899.

The move to Bridgeport may have been influenced by the family's Quaker heritage. Brownsville, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was the center of about a dozen Quaker settlements in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Bridgeport was one of the few urbanized

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areas that had a Quaker meeting, and consequently was the site of one of the largest meeting houses in the region. The Quaker families of Bridgeport were major players in the boat building industry and in other industrial and commercial endeavors that contributed to Brownsville's early commercial importance.

The Thompson House was built in 1906-08. It was one of the grandest homes ever built in Brownsville. It was designed by Pittsburgh architect Harry Summers Estep, and constructed by Sebastian P. Ramella, a stone mason who learned his trade in his native Italy. Estep was in partnership with his brother Erle Edgar Estep. H.S. Estep began to study architecture in 1888, and his brother joined him thirteen years later. Both were born and raised in Pittsburgh, where H.S. Estep died in 1939 at age 67. Estep also designed the carriage house built behind the Thompson House in 1917-18. It is not known if the Estep firm designed any other buildings in Brownsville, and no records have been retrieved of buildings they designed elsewhere. Sebastian Ramella did build a number of other buildings in Brownsville contemporary with this structure and similar in style. The nearest example is the building housing the Antique Grill at 101 High Street at the edge of the Brownsville central business district. Like the Thompson House, the Antique Grill is a large ivory brick building with an eclectic mix of turn-of-the-century details. However, unlike the Thompson House it is a commercial row building with three storefronts and two stories of apartments above. Architecturally it is distinguished by multistory bay windows in the facade faced in pressed metal.

The significance of the Thompson House stems mainly from its scale and sophisticated ornamentation, both in the exterior masonry and wood details, and lavish interior woodwork and intact bathrooms. The downstairs rooms were lined with ornately-milled, high quality wood of various kinds, in various styles, from the fluted pilasters, wainscot, and parquet floors, to the pocket doors, large mantelpieces, and sweeping grand stair. Similarly, the second story had ornate mantelpieces in each of four main bedrooms, and a different kind of wood was used in every room, ranging from quarter sawn oak to mahogany to bird's-eye maple. In two rooms, the woodwork was painted antique white, and at least one room had wood stained/painted very dark to resemble ebony. The second story bathrooms were lined with white ceramic tile, both having tubs and toilets of ornately detailed ceramic and wood. The large bathroom has a large, oval tub, the bottom part of a ca. 1900 shower unit, and a pedestal sink, all indicative of an unusually expensive, luxurious bathroom design for the time. Both bathrooms have intercom systems built into the walls.

The second story rooms are interconnected in an innovative way, with pocket doors connecting the master bedroom to a bathroom on one side and to an adjoining bedroom and

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National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3Thompson, Thomas H., House
Fayette County, Pennsylvania

thence to an adjoining nursery room on the other side. The center hall is designed to be a "music room" with musical motifs in the ceiling painting. Additional flexibility/formality was also lent by the draperies on the doorways to either side of the fireplace in this room. Another unusual characteristic in the relationship of the rooms is in the provision of a back hall connecting the two bathrooms, so that they do not connect to the music room as most of the bedrooms do, and so that they are closely connected to the maid's quarters.

Brownsville has a number of other houses that reflect the opulence of upper-class living during the coke era industrial boom of 1900-1915. The other houses are located primarily in the Northside neighborhood of town, particularly along Front Street, the town's original (pre-1820) "Main Street," where the pre-Civil War structures are about equaled in number and grandeur by large turn-of-the-century residences. Along Front Street, for instance, good examples of bevelled and leaded glass similar to that of the Thompson House are found on about every other house, including houses numbered: 209, 306, 410, and 412. An exceptional example is 515 Front Street, the Kissinger Funeral Home, a ca. 1920 house with several other features resembling those of the Thompson House (a tile roof, light-colored brick with quoins, a porte-cochere, fluted columns, but overall Federal styling). At 613 High Street (Southside/Hiller neighborhood, about four blocks up the hill from the Thompson House) is an ivory brick house with a diamond-pattern panelled wood frieze at the roof line, resembling that of the Thompson House, but otherwise Swiss Chalet style in its detailing. Details of the Thompson House including maids' quarters, music room, nurses' rooms, intercom systems, and fine architectural detailing are signs of coke and whiskey era opulence and historical importance of the mansion.

The house that most closely parallels the Thompson House in Brownsville is located at 514 Market Street (a block from Front Street) in the Northside neighborhood, now housing the law offices of Attorney Daniel Chunko. It is a ca. 1905 two-and-a-half story house in Spanish/Mission style, plainer than the Thompson House, and built of red brick. Its dormer window has quoined corners in the stone window surround and an ogee-arched brick parapet with stone coping, similar in style to the Baroque stone parapets of the Thompson House dormers. Other windows in this house have stone or terra cotta voussoirs, resembling those of the Thompson House. The Chunko Building porch is on brick piers, but it does have the panelled wood frieze with diamond-shaped panels as in the Thompson House. The porch roof, however, has a gable above the entrance steps, with half-timber details resembling the Swiss Chalet details of 515 High Street. The Chunko Building, in general, shares many details with the Thompson House, but is not nearly near as large or stylistically impressive as the Thompson House.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

Thompson, Thomas H., House
Fayette County, Pennsylvania

The Thompson family owned and lived in the mansion until ca. 1949 when Thompson's widow sold the house and it was used briefly as an office for a construction company before passing to William Guseman. In 1956 The Jehovah's Witness purchased the house and used the first floor rooms for worship purposes. The Jehovah's Witness congregation removed several first story walls and covered various surfaces (panelling and dry wall veneer on walls, asphalt tile on floors, and suspended ceilings) to create a large first story meeting room. In 1990 Mary Jean Cicconi purchased the mansion and began the process of restoring/rehabilitating it for use as a restaurant with specialty shops on the upper floors. Cicconi changed the name to Wayside Manor because of the current street pattern which makes it difficult to find since it is a distance from the main highway.

Thompson, Thomas H., House

Fayette County, Pennsylvania
County and State

Name of Property

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | 1 7 | 5 9 4 2 0 1 | 4 4 2 9 3 1 0 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Terry A. Necciai

organization Historic Preservation Consulting date June 1994

street & number 211 Second Street telephone 412-258-6037

city or town Monongahela City state PA zip code 15063

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Mary Jean Cicconi

street & number 1000 Water Street telephone 412-785-9381

city or town Brownsville state PA zip code 15417

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

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Thompson, Thomas H., House
Fayette County, Pennsylvania

Drawings, on the site at the house, by Harry Summers Estep, dated 1906-08 and 1917-18.

Fleming, Josephine Ramella. Interview with daughter of Sebastian P. Ramella, builder, June 1992.

Rook, Charles Alexander, Editor-in Chief, Western Pennsylvanians A Work Newspaper and Library Reference, Pittsburgh: James O. Jones Company, 1923, pg. 345.

Swetnam, George and Helene Smith. A Guidebook to Historic Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991. pp. 310 and 312.

The Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1 April 1939, obituary of Harry Summers Estep.

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National Park Service

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Section number 10 Page 1

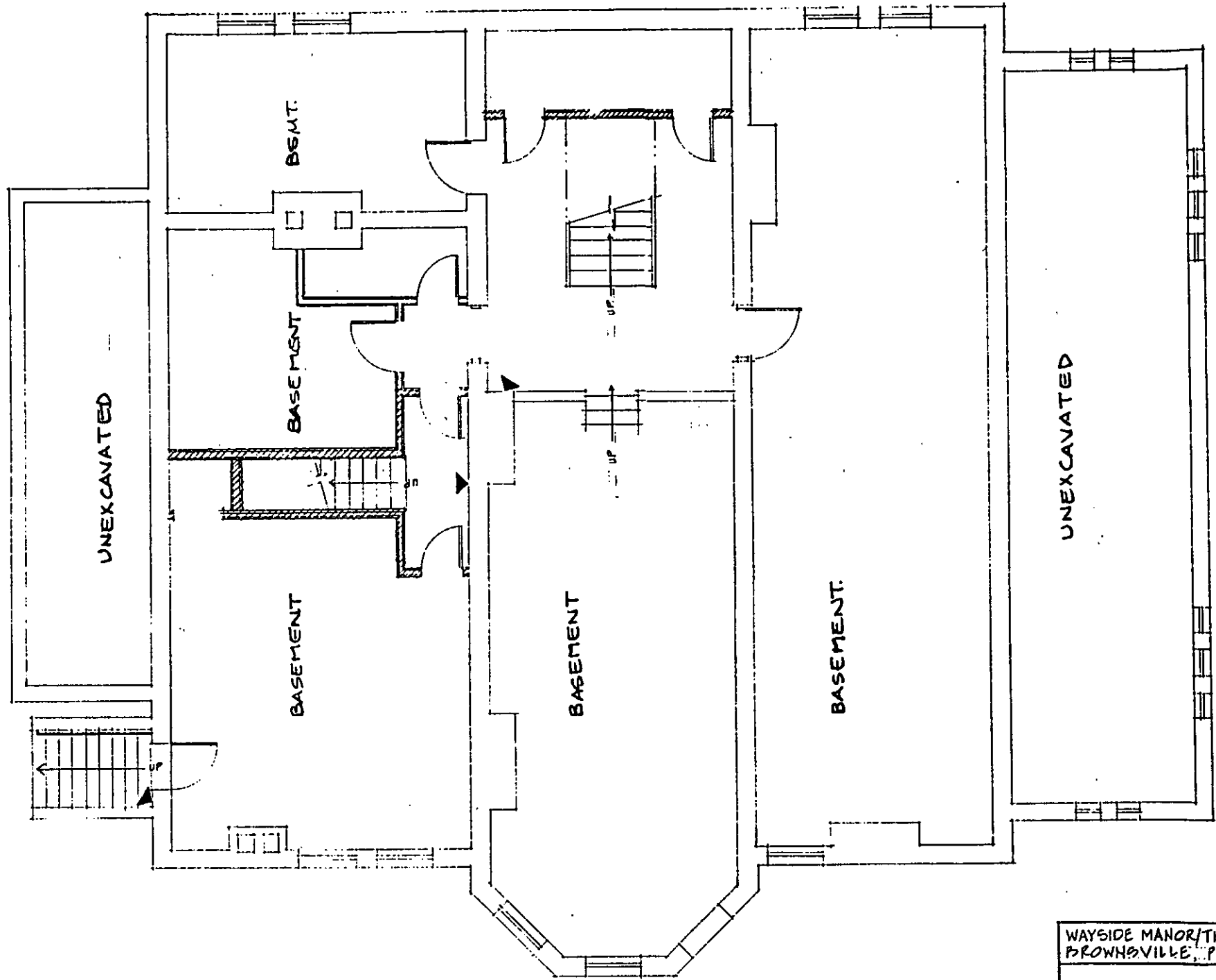
Thompson, Thomas H., House
Fayette County, Pennsylvania

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated property are described on District 2, Map 7, Parcels 70 and 71.

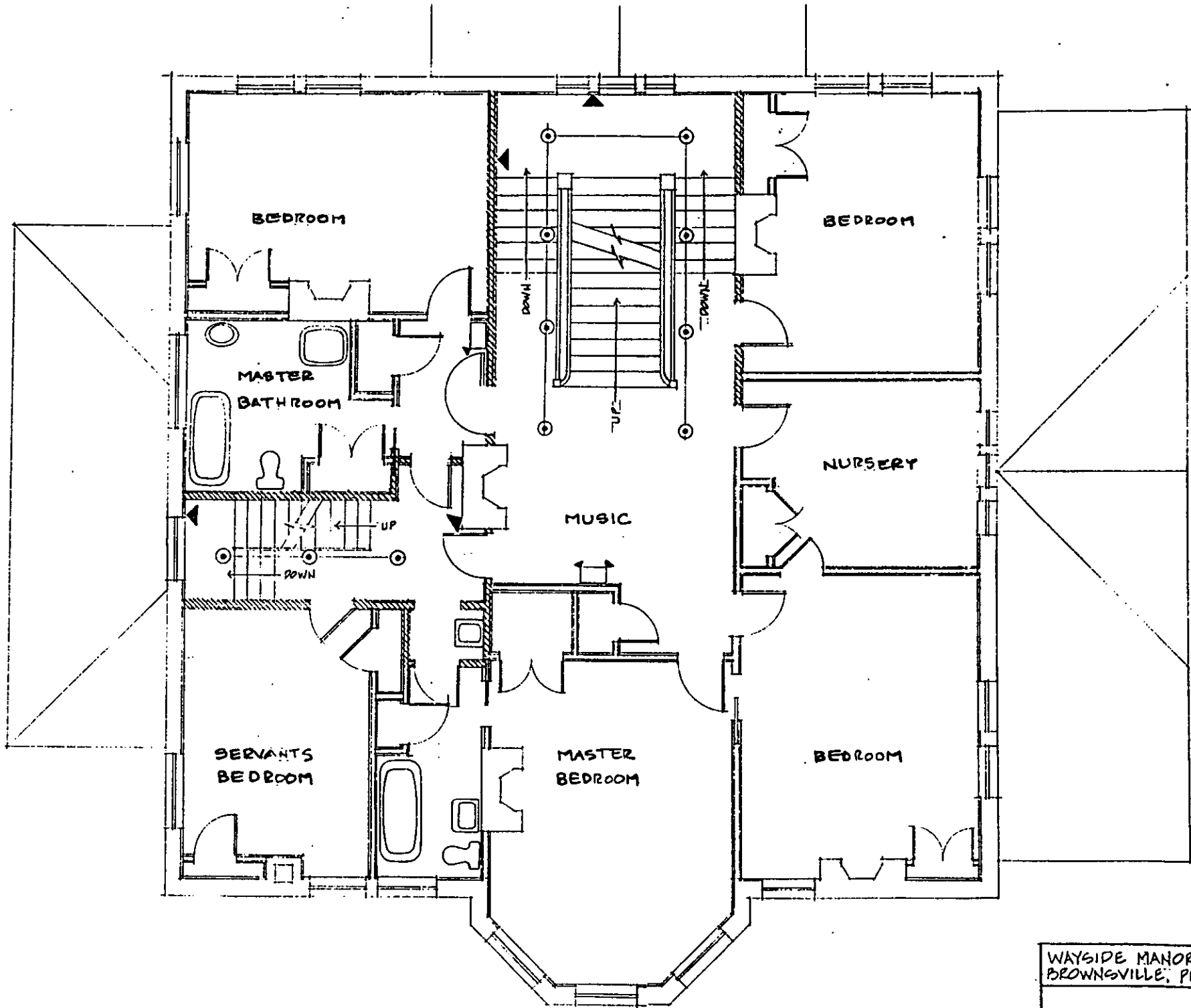
Boundary Justification

This tax parcel contains all the property historically connected to the Thompson House, including a carriage house built in 1917-18, which has subsequently been parcelled-off as a separate piece of property with a different owner.



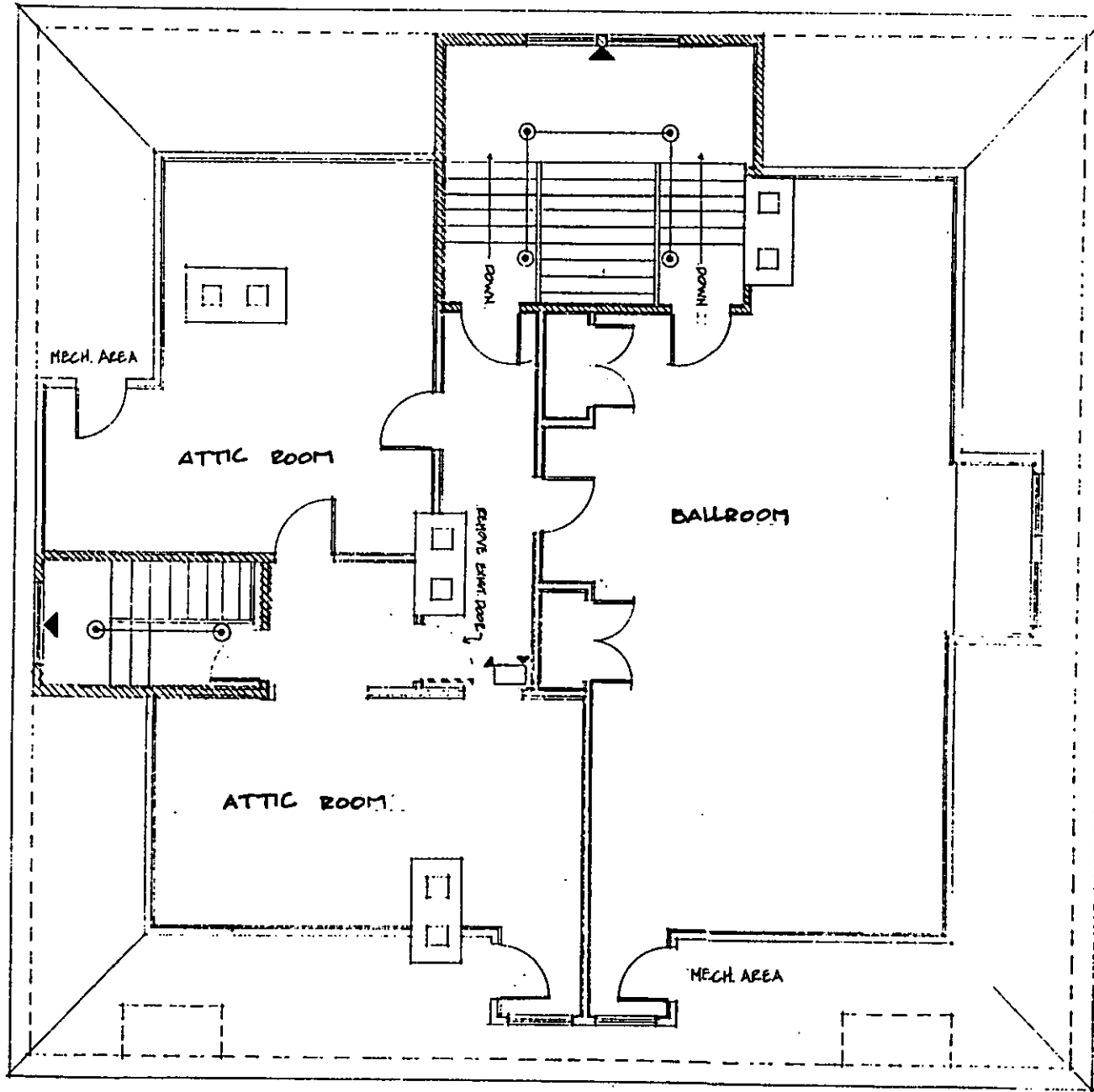
WAYSIDE MANOR/THOMPSON HALL
BROWNSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

BASEMENT



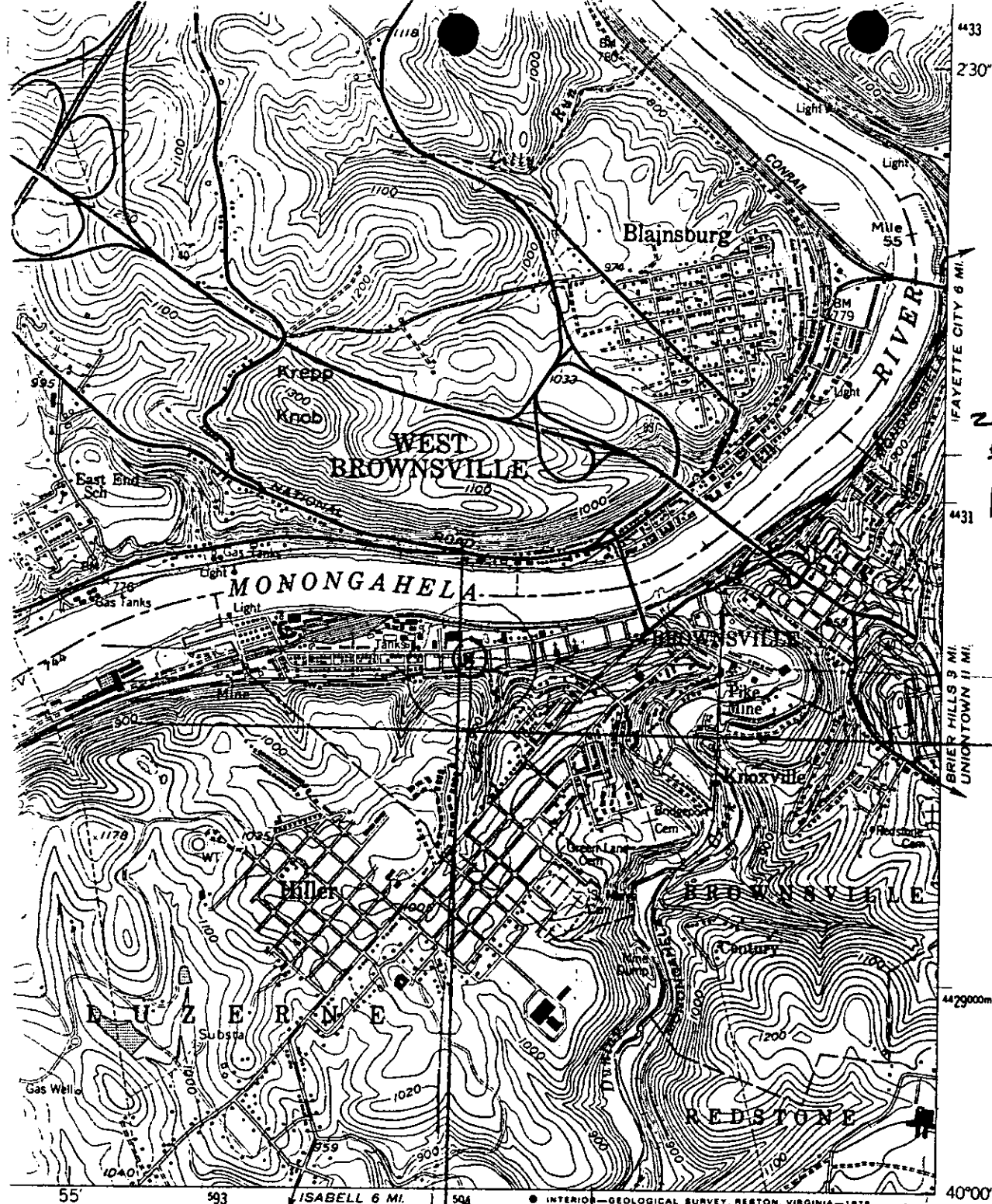
WAYSIDE MANOR/THOMPSON
BROWNSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

SECOND STORY



WAYSIDE MANOR/THOMPSON HOUSE
 BROWNSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA JUNE

THIRD FLOOR



UTM_s
 ZONE 17
 E 59420
 N 4429310

1 MILE



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty _____ Light-duty _____
- Medium-duty _____ Unimproved dirt _____
- U. S. Route (shield symbol) State Route (circle symbol)
- Interstate Route (circle with red border symbol)

CALIFORNIA, PA.

Thomas Thompson
 House
 Brownsville Borough
 Fayette County, Pa

N4000—W7952.5/7.5
 1954
 PHOTOREVISED 1979
 AMS 5064 III SW—SERIES 7831

(NEW SALEM)
 5063 IV NE