

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Conn, John P., House  
other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 84 Ben Lomond Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Uniontown N/A vicinity  
state Pennsylvania code PA county Fayette code 051 zip code 15475

**3. Classification**

<b>Ownership of Property</b>	<b>Category of Property</b>	<b>Number of Resources within Property</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<b>Contributing</b>	<b>Noncontributing</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>          </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<b>Total</b>

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Dr. Brent Glass, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone

walls Sandstone

roof Slate

other Wood

Concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The John P. Conn House represents a harmonious blend of late Victorian and Early American design elements which together form a well articulated Colonial Revival dwelling constructed in 1906. This square, rather massively scaled stone edifice is serenely nestled within one of Uniontown's old affluent neighborhoods and is clearly reminiscent of the fleeting prosperity which was ushered into the region on the coat-tails of the booming soft coal and coke industry during the early 1900s. Most of the structure's original features have been carefully preserved throughout its eighty-two years of continued use as a residence. The relatively few ca. 1920s - 1930s period and post 1960 alterations, for the most part, have been restricted to the building's interior. At the rear of the tree shaded lot on which the dwelling stands is a compatibly designed 1½ story rectangular garage constructed prior to ca. 1930.

The structural plan of the Conn House generally adheres to a formal balance depicted in the Georgian-like square, three bay design with central hallway (Figure 1). This formality, which is well represented on the front elevation, does not carry over to the side and rear elevations where the combination of three and four bay openings are found nonsymmetrically aligned (Figures 6 and 7). The 2½ story dwelling is constructed of nonlocal Hummelstown brownstone which is laid in in alternating courses of extremely thin and moderately thick, roughened blocks (figures 5, 6, and 7). The foundation is formed of locally obtained and similarly roughened sandstone blocks as is the cut stone water table featuring a vertically sawn finish (Figure 5).

The low pitch, truncated hip roof is slate covered and includes a single gable dormer (combining Palladian-style windows and Victorian influenced fish scale shingles) on all but the rear elevation. A pair of similar but smaller, keyed gable dormers flank the larger, central dormer on the front view but exist alone on the rear slope. A modillioned cornice and denticular frieze underscore the roofline. Two tall, stone exterior chimneys are balanced on the opposing left and right elevations whereas two other similar end stacks appear in unbalanced alignment on the right and rear walls.

Like other areas of the house, the windows and doors also consolidate Victorian and Colonial Revival style ornamentation and are charac-

 See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Conn House

Section number 7 Page 2

terized by a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. Common to all of the openings, however, is a sawn stone finish similar to that which decorates the water table but which completely enframes the door and window openings. Most windows are 1/1 double hung sashes or similar 12/1 sashes (front wall only) with keyed stone flat arches. More Victorian in design are three large single plate-glass windows with floral patterned semi-elliptical transoms and keyed stone arches; these are located in Room 8 (dining room) and flanking the main entry. A smaller stained glass double hung window, with a flat arch, opens into the bathroom (Room 15). On the rear wall between the second and third stories is a large Palladian-styled window bordered with fish scale shingles and a paneled apron. Set into this Revival style opening is a large jeweled and stained glass window. This sash was previously removed but more recently was reframed and placed into its original setting.

Doorways into the dwelling comprise an equal variety of styles as do the windows. The front (main) entryway features a pair of ornately beveled glass doors with a stained glass transom and radiating keyed stone arch (Figure 8). Directly above it on the balcony is a pair of French Doors with segmented transom, denticular frieze, paneled pilasters, and unusually designed flanking double hung windows (Figure 9). More basic styles are employed on the lower level side and rear porch entries where wood and glass panel doors are capped by plain transoms.

The most prominent feature of this Colonial Revival structure is the colossal balconied porch which combines vestiges of both Classical and Victorian influenced treatment. Sharing space with the massive paired Corinthian columns (which support a fully enriched entablature) are Victorian turned balusters. Equally dimorphic are the lattice-covered porch openings which are capped with flat, radiating stone arches. The porch ceiling is covered with single beaded oak boards and from it is suspended an early 20th century electric chandelier. The original wooden deck was at some unknown period covered with red quarry tile which was also applied to the stone floor of the side porch. During the 1930s the second story front balcony was enclosed with the 8-light casement windows, and possibly the quarry tile flooring was also added at this time. In contrast to the massive front portico are two much smaller secondary porches which open centrally into the left wall (dining room) and the east corner of the rear wall (kitchen). The low pitch hip roofs are supported by wood posts (rear porch) and stone columns (left porch). Inscribed into the capital of the latter porch is "JAB 6-27-06." Though undocumented, the initials are believed to be those of Uniontown building contractor J.A. Baer who presumably constructed the dwelling in 1906.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Conn House

Section number 7 Page 3

The interior plan of the dwelling approaches the same level of formality in its symmetry as observed on the exterior. Structural balance is generally maintained on all three stories although the first floor is both two and three rooms deep, the second is three rooms deep, and the third is two rooms deep (Figures 2,3, and 4). The walls and ceilings throughout the house are of the original plaster finish and are enhanced with decorative wooden ceiling trim and baseboards. Similar wood moulding also serves as the interior door and window surround throughout the house. The original hardwood floors are, likewise, intact but are now concealed beneath wall-to-wall carpeting in all rooms but the kitchen (Room 3) and pantry (Room 4) where vinyl flooring has been installed over the wooden boards. Brick or stone fireplaces still exist in all the rooms where originally constructed, but all of the fireboxes were plastered over years ago by earlier occupants who consequently removed the mantelpieces. Attached to four of the fireplace units are the original built-in closets and cupboards.

Six-panel doors complete with black porcelain knobs and decorative escutcheon plates are in prevalent use in the interior entries; double doors of this type connect the stairhall (Room 5), the library (Room 1) parlor (Room 7), and dining room (Room 8) (Figure 10). The most elaborate entry leads from the stairhall (Room 5) into the vestibule (Room 6) and features a clear, leaded glass panel door with similarly leaded sidelights and lunette (Figure 11).

Oak is used exclusively throughout the dwelling except in the library (Room 1) where walnut paneling and bookcases were installed. The use of this paneling to cover the fireplace suggests that it was a remodeling feature. And judging from the existence of decorative cast steel radiators in each of the rooms, it appears likely that the walnut paneling (and the firebox closings) were 1920s-30s period renovations. Among the other original woodworking features are the single bead wainscoting in the kitchen (Room 3) and the floor to ceiling cupboards with porcelain pull knobs in the kitchen and pantry (Figures 12 and 13). Also of interest is the central stairway which ultimately winds its way to the third floor ballroom (Room 17). It includes beaded newel posts, turned balusters, and scroll ornamented stringers and paneled aprons (Figures 14 and 15).

Among the nonstructural features, three early electrical crystal chandeliers still hang from their original ceiling positions in Rooms 12, 13, and 21 (Figures 16 and 17). And particularly reflective of the building's earliest period is the intact early twentieth century

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetConn House  
Section, number 7 Page 4

bathroom (Room 15) which today remains virtually unaltered -- from its floral patterned ceramic wall tile, tulip pattern stained glass window, porcelain coated pedestal sink, claw footed bathtub, and beveled glass and wood medicine cabinet, to its detached, porcelain water closet (Figure 18).

The modifications to the Conn House have been primarily cosmetic rather than structural in nature and detract minimally from its historic appearance. Aside from the changes previously discussed, they include: 1) the addition of a screen enclosure to the rear porch; 2) the lowering of the kitchen and library ceilings and the installation of acoustical blocks; 3) the addition of built-in wood closets to the stairhall and ballroom; 4) the conversion of Room 10 from a dressing room to a bathroom; and 5) the possible creation of Room 18 from the original ballroom (Room 17). While it is impossible to document the dates of these alterations they appear to have been initiated between ca. 1950-80.

The Conn House occupies a corner lot at the intersection of Ben Lomond and Nassau streets in one of Uniontown's old affluent neighborhoods. Associated with the dwelling is a ca. pre-1930s garage located at the rear of the tree shaded property. It fronts onto a brick paved alley which may be roughly contemporary with the dwelling. The rectangular 1½ story garage is constructed of wood frame (covered with wood shingles) and rusticated concrete block which harmonizes with the dwelling's stone masonry design; the foundation is formed of sandstone rubble. The truncated hip roof, covered with slate and featuring multiple gable dormers, resembles the roof of the main dwelling though lacking the ornamentation. The structure remains basically unaltered but for the replacement in recent years of the previous doors with a pair of modern wood and glass lift-type doors, and the original (broken) 4-light fixed window with current 2-light sash. The building is a nice complement to the Conn House, and together, nestled among the old sycamores, oaks, and pines, they still evoke a sense of stately elegance which the passing years and the host of occupants have refused to compromise.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1906

Significant Dates

1906

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Baer, J.A.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The John P. Conn House is architecturally significant as a fine example of stately turn-of-the-century homes and, more specifically, of Colonial Revival dwellings in the Uniontown area. While it represents neither the largest nor the most opulently detailed residence of its genre, the Conn House has maintained a high level of integrity of both architectural design and historic setting; and in these combined qualities it is considered one of the finest representatives of the early Colonial Revival theme in the community.

The dwelling was constructed in 1906 for John P. Conn, a locally successful carpenter-turned-contractor and real estate/insurance broker who resided there until his death several years later. The property remained with the Conn family until 1918 when it was purchased by Altha L. and Celia G. Moser. After forty-two years of occupancy by the Mosers, the residence was sold in 1960 and twice subsequently. Since its 1906 construction the building has served continuously as a single family dwelling.

The Conn House typifies the many stately homes which sprang up in Uniontown at the turn of the century when Fayette County was in the throes of economic prosperity stimulated by the burgeoning of the soft coal and coke industry. With Uniontown strategically positioned in the heartland of the Connellsville Coal and Coke Region, the already bustling county seat naturally developed into a residential enclave for those fortunate enough to reap their financial harvests during this explosive industrial era. The transformation from an agricultural to an industrial economy was not limited to Fayette County but, instead, embraced the entire nation. An offshoot of this industrial phenomenon was the rising popularity of Period Revival styles in architecture both here and across the nation symbolizing America's nostalgia for the simpler, pre-machine age.

The Colonial Revival movement in architectural design found varied

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Conn House

Section, number 8 Page 2

expression among the array of prominent dwellings which graced Uniontown's several prominent neighborhoods. Those which survive today range in their adaptation from stylistically modest to opulently grand. The John P. Conn House depicts neither extreme. In keeping with Revival traditions, the dwelling exhibits a modicum of structural balance and formality but is carefully disciplined in its assimilation of both Early American and Victorian motifs. Compatibly interwoven with the Colonial-influenced symmetry, hip roof and fenestration, colossal portico, and keyed flat arches are the more graceful decorative Victorian elements, e.g., leaded and stained glass windows, turned balusters, lattice trim, fish scale shingles, etc. The ornamentation is characteristically underscored but carefully executed, with additional aesthetic results achieved through the medium of color and texture (another facet of Colonial Revival artistry). The use of Hummelstown brownstone (a distinctively reddish sandstone) adds a richness of color to the Conn House which is further highlighted by the rough stone surface and the unique bonding.

In scale and opulence the Conn House cannot compare to the Oak Hill mansion of local coal baron J.V. Thompson, located just west of the city line in North Union Township. While this structure symbolizes the very essence of Colonial Revivalism, it also portrays excessive wealth which is not generally reflective of the level of affluence in the Uniontown area. As more appropriately reflected by the Conn House, the local dwellings are smaller in scale but nonetheless, massive in their appearance, usually ascribable to the colossal porticos or columned porches. The examples most similar to the Conn House are the neighboring dwellings on Ben Lomond Street and those found on South Beeson Avenue (another residentially affluent area of the city).

The Fulton House at 100 Ben Lomond Street adheres more rigorously than the Conn House to a Colonial theme but in the last several years has undergone considerable exterior changes. Possibly the most similarly related dwellings are found at 147 Beeson Avenue and 83 Ben Lomond Street. Both are comparable in scale, plan, roof treatment, combined Colonial Revival and Victorian elements, etc. to the Conn House; and like the Conn residence, both properties include associated garages. But neither exhibits traits which architecturally would elevate them above the Conn House. In fact, the former of the two dwellings has compromised its integrity with a modern rear addition. Still another, more commodious structure of the Colonial Revival movement is the Robinson House at 63 Prospect Street. The massive portico and roofline of this mansion share affinities with the Conn House.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Conn House

Section number 8 Page 3

But despite its apparently unaltered exterior, the property conveys little of its historic feeling as it is entrenched within a residential development of conspicuously more modern, lower to middle income housing.

Several other Colonial Revival dwellings, comparable in elegance to the Conn House, are located at 76 Ben Lomond Street, 173 South Beeson Avenue, and 99 East Fayette Street. The former two examples while characteristically fusing Colonial Revival and Victorian traits, are quite dissimilar from the Conn House in their rectangular plan and gable roof design. The lattermost structure is more subdued in its scale than any of the homes previously discussed, including the Conn House, and likewise, conforms to the rectangular, gable roof variety. Furthermore, its conversion to a commercial rental property and its location along heavily traveled U.S. Route 40 have seriously compromised its historic feeling and architectural integrity.

In scale and aesthetic richness the Conn House is quite representative of Uniontown's stately turn-of-the century homes and Colonial Revival traditions, but several other design qualities distinguish it from its local counterparts: 1) Of all the elegant homes in the community including the Colonial Revival examples, only the Conn House is constructed of stone. The others are more commonly built of brick. 2) The use of Hummelstown brownstone in the construction of the Conn House is, itself, a locally rare trait. This distinctively reddish sandstone, quarried in Dauphin County (ten miles east of Harrisburg) until 1926, found prominent use in large scale public and commercial buildings, e.g., hotels, banks, churches, etc. spanning eleven states. A few of these brownstone structures may yet be found in the Pittsburgh area, but the Conn House is only one of three surviving examples (there were originally four) in Uniontown (the others are the Gothic-style Asbury United Methodist Church and parsonage on South Beeson Avenue). 3) The stone bonding is, likewise, unique in its application as only one other extant building in Uniontown, the commercial "Blackstone Building", is known to employ this pattern.

The excellent preservation of most of the original design features of the Conn House considerably enhances its local architectural merit. Few turn-of-the-century homes in the Uniontown area are likely to retain such a combination of original elements as the ceiling light fixtures, kitchen/pantry built-in cupboards, and particularly the entire early 1900s bathroom ensemble. Further, the presence of the



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Conn House

Section number 8 Page 4

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associated garage which fronts onto the city's only surviving brick paved alley and the unspoiled serenity of the neighborhood add a touch of charm and historic ambience to the property. With the dramatic economic decline within Fayette County in recent years, many of Uniontown's grand old homes are now falling victim to the wrecker's ball or to subdivision and subsequent reuse as commercial rental units. While the total extinction of this class of buildings in the city is not imminent, an ever increasing number are being stripped of their architectural and historic appeal. The John P. Conn House has been fortunately spared this fate and as such is considered one of the last of a dying breed.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Recorder of Deeds, Book 1 Page 39, Book 373 Page 53, Book 934 Page 762, Book 1106 Page 886, Book 1128 Page 171, Book 1298 Page 975.

Fayette County, Pennsylvania, Assessment Rolls, Uniontown, 1900-1910.

Jordan, John W. and James Hadden. Geneological and Personal History of Fayette and Greene Counties, Pennsylvania. Lewis Historic Publishing Company: New York, 1912, pp 624-25.

Lant, J.H. Uniontown and Connellsville Directory. J.H. Lant: Connellsville, Pennsylvania, 1911-12, pp 30, 46.

See continuation sheet

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property .3 acres

UTM References

A 17 : 608210 4417630  
Zone Easting Northing

B \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The John P. Conn House and garage are located on Lot 77 in the Gilmore Addition to the city of Uniontown. The lot begins at the east corner of Ben Lomond Street and Nassau Street then proceeds northeast along Nassau Street 155 feet to an alley; then southeast 75 feet to a point, then southwest 155 feet along the property line of Lot 76 to the northeast side of Ben Lomond

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The nominated property contains the two contributing buildings (dwelling and garage) and all historically associated land.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Denise L. Grantz and Joseph M. Crackovich  
 organization N/A date January 20, 1988  
 street & number 509 Redstone Street telephone (412) 246-9380 or 938-40  
 city or town Republic state Pa. zip code 15475

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Conn House

Section number   9   Page   2  

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Stone, Ralph W. Building Stones of Pennsylvania, Fourth Series,  
Bulletin MIS. Pennsylvania Geological Survey: Harrisburg,  
1932, pp 126, 157.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

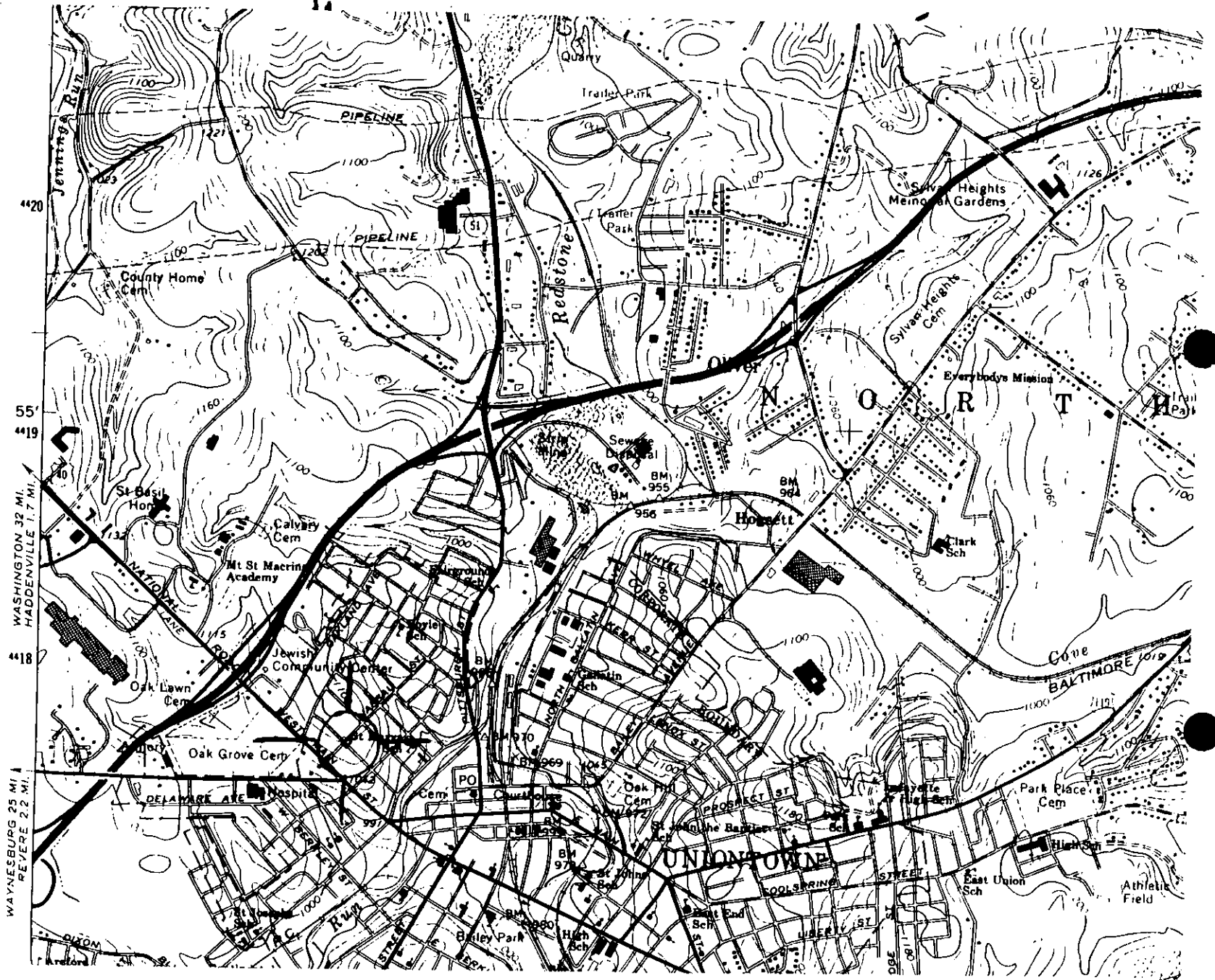
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Conn House

Section number 10 Page 2

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Street; then northwest 75 feet along said street to the point of beginning, containing .27 acres.



John P. Conn House  
 Fayette County  
 Water-Terrain Control  
 2016 17  
 E608210 N447630