

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Springfield Public Square Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 149, 138, 137, 134, 127, 132, 124, and 122 Park Central Square, 219, 221 South Ave. [N/A] not for publication

city or town Springfield [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Greene code 077 zip code 65806

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] 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 [x] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [x] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Mark A. Miles
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

MARCH 21, 2006
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or 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

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Page 2

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources Within Property	
		Contributing	Non-contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	6	3 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	0	0 sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	6	3 Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri 1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Office Building
COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

Current Functions

VACANT/NOT IN USE
COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Office Building
COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant

7. Description

Architectural classification

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN

MOVEMENTS/ Commercial Style

MODERN MOVEMENT

OTHER: two part commercial block

Materials

foundation concrete
walls brick
terra cotta
roof not visible
other

See continuation sheet []

Narrative Description See continuation sheet [x].

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Page 3

8. Statement of Significance
Applicable National Register Criteria

☒ **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

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

See continuation sheet [x].

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography See continuation sheet [x].

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

Commerce

Period of Significance

ca. 1890-1956

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architects: Opal and Torbitt (Heer's)
Builder: Johnson Construction Co. (S. S. Kresge front.)

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State Agency
☐ Federal Agency
☐ Local Government
☐ University
☐ Other:

Name of repository:

Springfield Library Center

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Page 4

10. Geographical DataAcreage of Property: Approximately 2.08 acres**UTM References**

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	473965	4118197	15	474063	4118197
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	473970	4118031	15	474058	4118026

[] 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 Debbie Sheals
organization Private Contractor
date November 7, 2005
street & number 29 S. 9th St. Suite 204 telephone 573-874-3779
city or town Columbia state Missouri zip code 65201

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 FOP for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name See continuation sheet
street & number _____
telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

Summary: The Springfield Public Square Historic District encompasses the entire west half of the public square, in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri. It includes all of the buildings with an address of W. Park Central Square as well as two with addresses on South Street that are functionally related to buildings on the square. The district contains a total of ten buildings. One of those, the Heer's Building, was individually listed 10/24/02. Of the other nine buildings, six are contributing. All of the contributing buildings are examples of the "Downtown Commercial Buildings" property type, which was discussed in the Multiple Property Submission (MPS) cover document, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri." Together, they form the most intact grouping of historic resources on the square today, and as a group they meet the registration requirements for a historic district under Criterion A, as laid out in the cover document. The three non-contributing buildings are among the smallest of the group, and do not overly detract from the historic streetscapes. The buildings in the district were built between ca. 1890 and 1954, and range from modest 19th century two-part commercial blocks, to a ten-story office tower. Buildings of note include the Landers Building, which is the largest intact historic office building in downtown Springfield, and the Springfield Cigar Company Building, the only reasonably intact 19th century commercial building left on the square today. At the other end of the period of significance are three buildings, all of which housed national chain stores, which were built or substantially remodeled as part of a post-World War II building boom on the square. All of the contributing buildings are commercial buildings which cover their entire lot; there are no outbuildings or other resources within the district boundaries. As a group, they reflect nearly a century of commerce in the heart of Springfield, Missouri.

Elaboration:

The Springfield public square has an open center, ringed by commercial properties. The center of the square is landscaped, with large shade trees, a sunken plaza and a fountain. The plaza was installed during an early 1970s redevelopment project, which also included the construction of flat metal canopies to shelter the storefronts of all of the buildings that face the square. Those canopies obscured historic details, and were considered to negatively impact the historic integrity of the buildings on the square when the Multiple Property Submission was written in 1998.¹ The 1970s canopies have recently been removed from all except the northeast quadrant of the square, and several of the buildings in the proposed district are slated for historic rehabilitation projects.

¹ Phillip Thomason, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri," National Register Nomination, Multiple Property Submission, 1998, (On file with the Missouri Historic Preservation Office, Jefferson City, MO), Section H, page 1. See also pages 1-5 of Section F, for more discussion of the Downtown Commercial Buildings property type.

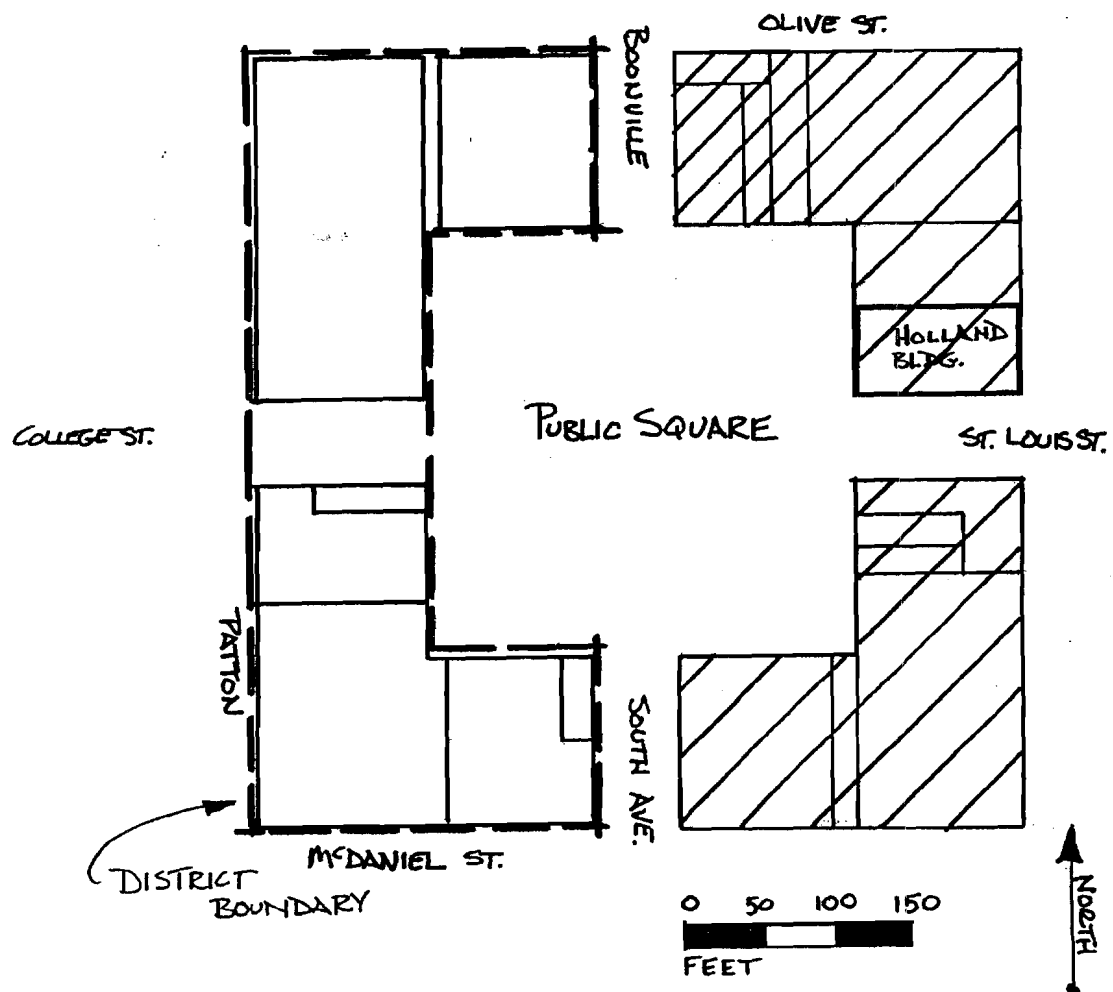
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Figure One. Site Plan and Boundary Map, with current parcel lines. Drawn by Deb Sheals, from an aerial-photo property map provided by the City of Springfield.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

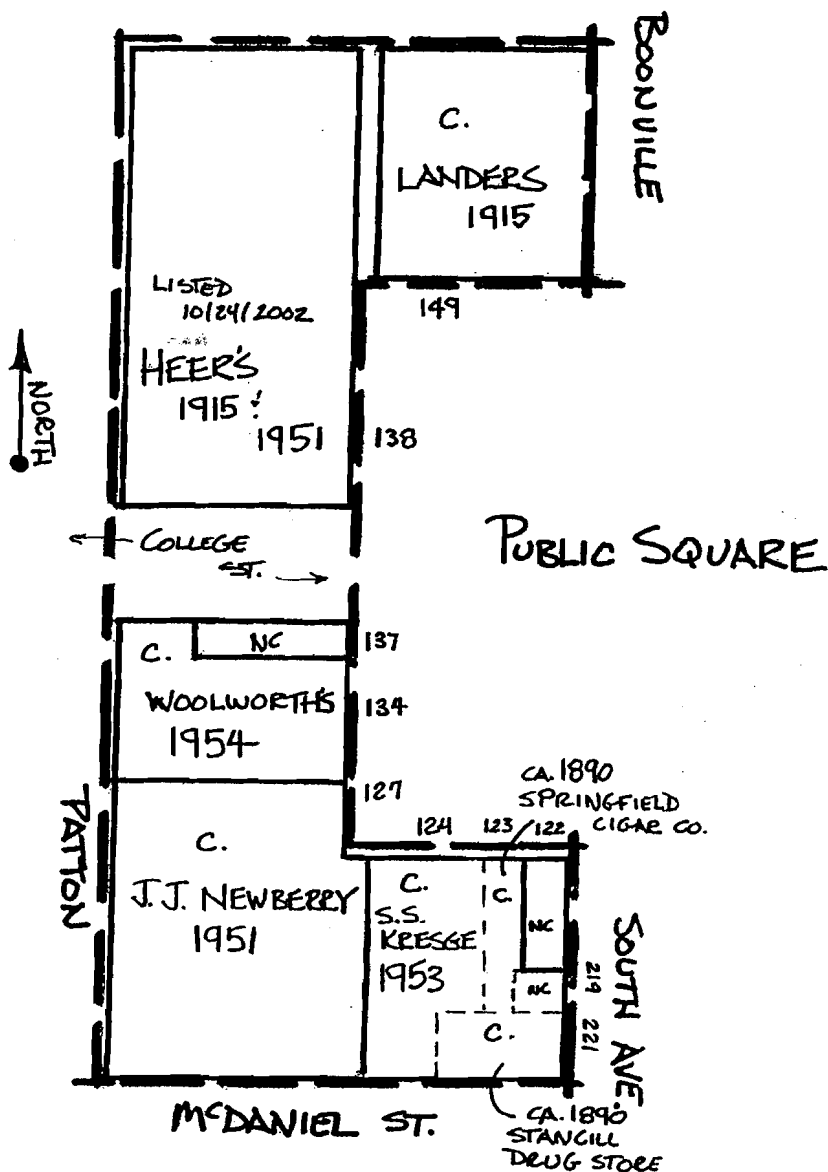
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Figure Two. Footprint Map. With current addresses, construction dates, and historic names.

Drawn by Deb Sheals.



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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

All of the lots on the Springfield public square contain buildings, and all of those buildings are commercial. Construction dates for all of the buildings on the square range from ca. 1890 to 1972. Those within the district were built between ca. 1890 and 1954.

Streets radiate out from the center of the four sides of the square (in each of the compass directions). To the north is Boonville Avenue (called Park Central North for the block closest to the square), to the east is St. Louis Street (called Park Central East close to the square), to the west is College Street (Park Central West close to the square), and to the south is South Avenue (Park Central South). Those streets divide the properties fronting the square into quarters. (See Figure One, Site Plan.) This layout, which originally included a courthouse in the open center, is called a Lancaster Square.²

The northeast and southeast quarters are not included in the present district because the buildings there do not appear to be eligible at this time. Most of the buildings on the northeast quarter of the square are two or three stories tall, and all were built after 1913, when a major fire destroyed many buildings on the north side of the square. That quadrant also includes the Holland Building, a highly intact, five-story office building constructed in 1914. The Holland Building was individually listed in the Register 11-15-2000. Although many of the other buildings in that quarter of the square are relatively intact, the presence of the 1970s canopy there obscures a good deal of their facades. Those buildings are located directly across Boonville Avenue from the northeastern boundary of the district. (Photo 13.)

The southeast quarter of the square contains a row of three, three-story commercial buildings which appear to date to just after the turn of the century. Two of those buildings are relatively intact; the other has been substantially remodeled. A large 1970s bank building occupies the entire south end of that quarter. The bank property is directly adjacent to South Avenue, which forms the southeastern boundary of the district. (Photo 8.)

The public square historic district covers the other two quarters of the square, which is the entire west half. The northwest quarter contains just two buildings, which are among the largest intact historic commercial buildings in Springfield. The Heer's Department Store, which is located just north of College Avenue, occupies the largest lot on the square. The main part of that building is seven stories tall, with a three-story ell on its north side. The ten-story Landers Building occupies the entire north leg of that quadrant. Both of those buildings, which were built in 1915, are clad with light colored glazed terra cotta.

The contributing buildings on the southwest corner of the square include the oldest immediately recognizable commercial building on the square, the ca. 1890 Springfield Cigar Company building, as well as three large variety store buildings which were constructed or remodeled during a local post-World War II building boom. Those buildings were built or

² Marian M. Ohman, A History of Missouri's Counties, County Seats and Courthouse Squares, (Columbia: University of Missouri Extension, 1983) pp. 29-31.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 5

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

remodeled between 1951 and 1954. There are also two addresses on South Street that are now part of one of the parcels facing the square, 124 W. Park Central Square. From the late 1930s on, those two buildings served as east entrances to businesses which face the square.

The Public Square Historic District contains an intact collection of historic resources, with a wide range of construction dates and building types. Historic functions include a cigar store, variety stores, a major department store, and one of the largest historic office buildings in the city. As a group, they are largely intact, and the planned historic rehabilitation of several of these buildings will assure that they remain intact, in good condition, and in use, for many years to come.

Individual Property Descriptions. The properties are listed north to south, by their current addresses. Construction dates are from early Sanborn Maps, building permit records, and various historic photographs. [c] denotes a contributing building; [nc] is non-contributing

1.) 149 W. Park Central Square. Landers Building. 1915

The Landers Building is one of the largest building in the district, as well as one of the largest intact historic buildings in the downtown area. It is ten stories tall, with a two-story rear addition that appears to be fairly recent. The Commercial Style building is sheathed with white terra cotta, and it features simple Classical Revival style detailing. It is topped with a large cornice which has small square brackets, and there is a secondary cornice which divides the top two floors from the body of the building. Those top floors feature two-story tall terra-cotta pilasters, between which are three-part windows and bronze spandrel panels. Below that secondary cornice, the walls are simple, with flat terra cotta sheathing and paired windows. The dark windows themselves are all newer, but the original openings, mullion configurations, and spandrel panels are intact. Historic photos show that the original windows were also dark, and the new windows have had little impact on the overall appearance of this large building. (The new windows probably date to the late 1970s, when the building became the Missouri State Office Building.) The ground floor of the Landers building retains its original patterns of fenestration, with mostly modern materials. There are two smaller terra cotta cornices at the street level, one at the first floor and one at the second floor, and the second floor windows are flanked by inset ornamental panels. [c] Photos 1, 12, 13, 14.

2.) 138 W. Park Central Square. Heer's Building. 1915

The Heer's Department Store is a tall commercial building which is sheathed with cream colored terra cotta; it is the largest historic department store in Springfield. The building consists of two main sections. The oldest and most visible section, which is seven stories tall, was built in 1915, and a large two-story addition to the north was completed in 1951. The original section occupies the northwest corner of the square; most of the addition is tucked

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 6

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

behind the Landers Building, to the north. The oldest section of the Heer's building has two main elevations; the east wall faces the square, and the south wall faces Park Central West, which was originally College Street. Those two elevations are ornamented in a similar fashion, with wide window bays, terra cotta sheathing, and a prominent ornamental cornice. There is also a square rooftop tower on the older section which has the name "Heer's" on each of its four sides. The addition is much simpler, with relatively flat wall surfaces sheathed with stucco, terra cotta, and brick. The addition also has a formal elevation facing north to Olive Street. The Heer's Building was individually listed 10/24/2002, and is in the early stages of a comprehensive rehabilitation. Photos 1, 2, 9, 13.

3.) 137 W. Park Central Square.

This small two-story corner building could date to the late 1900s, but it has been substantially altered over the years and retains no historic exterior fabric. It has a corner entrance and small storefronts at the ground floor, and stucco walls and newer windows on the second story. [nc] Photos 2, 3.

4.) 134 W. Park Central Square. F. W. Woolworth Co. 1954

This broad three-story building is L-shaped, with two formal street elevations that have seen very few changes. It wraps around the smaller corner store to the north and has elevations on both the square and the nearby side street. The widest part of the building faces east, to the square, and a similar, smaller, elevation faces north, to Park Central West (College Street). The façade on the square has a glass and aluminum storefront system at the ground floor, with a flat, light-colored brick wall on the upper levels. The storefront has four main bays, three of which retain what appears to be the original glass and aluminum storefront system. The southernmost bay was in-filled when a fire stair was added to the building several years ago. Just above the storefront can be seen the remains of an early flat canopy, which was removed when the 1970s canopies were constructed; rehabilitation plans for this building tentatively call for the recreation of that early canopy.

The upper façade square features a large rectangular panel, into which are set bands of windows for the second and third floor spaces. The rest of that panel is faced with large sheets of green marble, and the same type of marble is used along the sides of the storefront. The upper windows have plain aluminum frames, with three-part horizontal divisions; they too appear to be original. The north elevation of this building is in essence a narrower version of the façade. It has the same type of flat brick wall with an inset panel for both sets of upper level windows, and an open storefront system at the ground floor. The storefront is sheltered by an early or original flat metal canopy. All elements on this elevation are highly intact, and apparently original. The elevation even retains original signage for Woolworth's. The transom above the paired north entrance doors features a painted sign that reads "F. W. Woolworth",

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 7

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

and "Woolworth's" is spelled out in the terrazzo flooring in front of that doorway. [c] Photos 2, 3, 4, 10, 11.

5.) 127 W. Park Central Square. J. J. Newberry Co. 1951

The Newberry Building is tucked into the very southwest corner of the square. It is a relatively large, highly intact building, with just a small frontage on the square. It is a one-story building with an open glass and aluminum storefront, with a simple flat wall above. The storefront has aluminum framing, with low granite bulkheads and two wide entranceways. There are small fluted aluminum piers at the edges of the storefront, and the transoms above the display areas are faced with the same material. The transoms above the doorways are of glass. All elements of this storefront system appear to be original; the only thing missing is a curved canopy and sign that were in place when Newberry's occupied the building. The upper part of the façade is also original, although faced with newer sheathing.

The rear walls of the building also have street frontage. The south wall faces McDaniel Street, and the west wall faces Patton. Both of those elevations are fairly simple, with flat brick walls and aluminum-framed windows. The south wall is faced with tan bricks, and the west wall has slightly rougher red bricks. A small storefront and entrance on the south elevation has the same type of aluminum framing and granite bulkheads found on the façade, and there is a matching corner entrance at the intersection of McDaniel and Patton. [c] Photos 4, 5, 8, 9.

6.) 124 W. Park Central Square. S. S. Kresge Co. 1953 (new front). [c]

This is a wide two-story tall building, with an open glass and aluminum storefront, and flat terra cotta facing on the second floor. This started out as two late 19th century buildings, which were combined while being used by the Kresge Company, in the 1940 and 50s. The present façade was put on in 1953 for the Kresge Company, which continued to occupy this space into the 1980s, and the exterior has seen few changes since that façade was added. The storefront, which appears to be the one installed in 1953, has narrow aluminum framing members, and a low bulkhead faced with dark granite. There is one off-center entranceway in the west section of the storefront, and one single doorway on the east edge of the building. The single doorway has been in-filled, but the original opening is intact. The edges of the ground floor are faced with pinkish terra cotta panels, and a band of stucco in a similar color runs along the top of the storefront, to cover the area where the 1970s canopy was attached to the building.

The second floor of the façade is faced with large square terra cotta panels which match those on the edges of the storefront, and the top edge of the building is ornamented with a row of rectilinear medallions, which are also of terra cotta. The second floor windows contain a mixture of glass blocks and single-light hopper windows. The window units may be a later addition, but the openings themselves appear to be original to the 1950s front. The shape of

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 8

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

those window openings reflects the fenestration of the 19th century buildings within; historic photos show that the varied sizes of the current openings follow those on the original buildings. (See Figure Three.)

This building also has a storefront on its south wall, facing McDaniel Street. The building steps down in the rear, and is just one story tall at the south end. The south storefront, which appears to date to the early 1940s, has a central entrance, and large display windows over a low granite bulkhead. An aluminum-framed signboard spans the space above the storefront. That storefront is in poor condition and partially covered over, but largely intact. (See Figure Three.) [c] Photos 4, 5, 6, 8.

Figure Three. Photo of the Kresge storefront on McDaniel Street. This was taken between 1936 and 1951; it is from the personal collection of Nancy Brown Dornan.



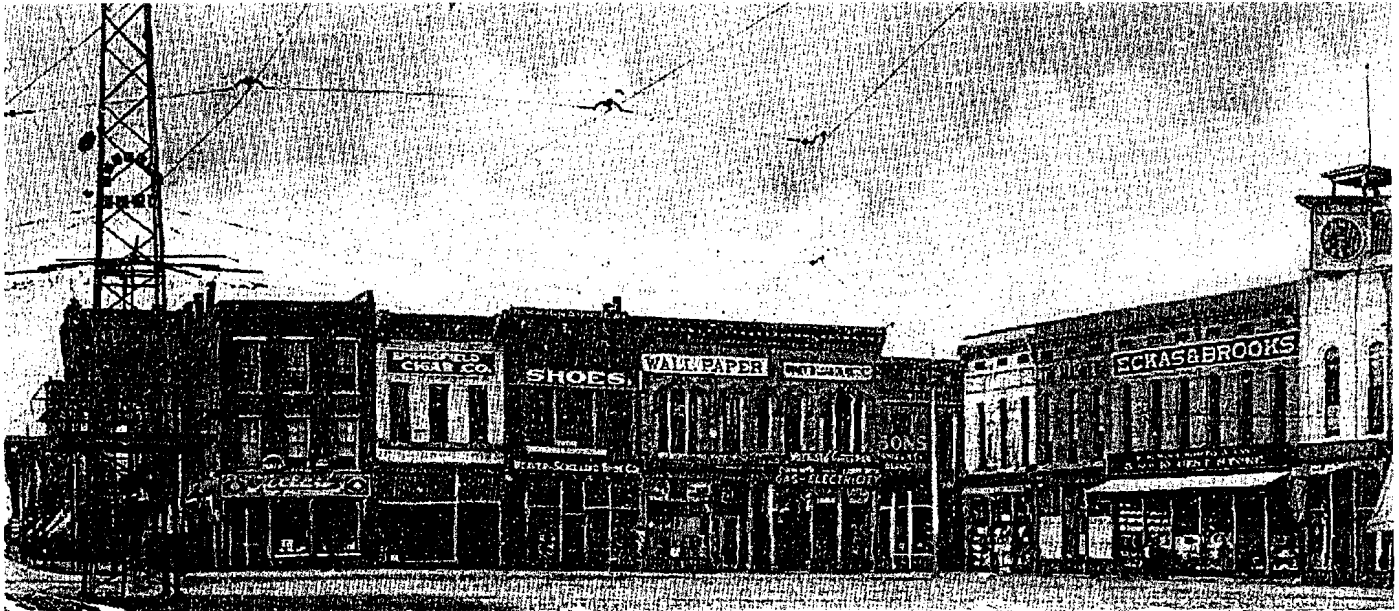
**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 9

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

Figure Four. Photo of the southwest corner of the square, taken around 1907. The “Shoes” and “Wallpaper” buildings were remodeled to their current form, now 124 W. Park Central Square, in 1953. The building labeled “Springfield Cigar Company” is now 123 W. Park Central Square. Photo courtesy of the State Historical Society of Missouri.



7.) 123 W. Park Central Square (now part of 124) Springfield Cigar Company, ca. 1890

This is the only building on the entire square that is immediately recognizable as a 19th century building. It is a narrow brick two-part commercial block with an open storefront and a row of three tall arched windows on the second floor. The ground floor storefront opening is largely intact, although the storefront itself is of new materials. There is a wide band of modern stucco along the top of the storefront, which covers the place where the 1970s canopy was attached. The stucco matches that used on the building to the west.

The second floor has seen remarkably few changes. Although it is missing its early cornice, the upper façade does still have 19th century windows, as well as the remnants of a wall sign that was in place in 1900. The tall narrow window openings have segmental arched tops, and early or original one-over-one wood windows are in place behind modern plywood sheathing. The central window even has an early sign for a second floor tenant; the word “DENTIST” is spelled out in gold block letters on the lower sash of that window. The wall

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 10

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

above the windows bears remnants of at least two different wall signs, one of which reads "Springfield Cigar Co." (See photo 6.) That sign is clearly visible in several photos of the square which were taken around 1900. (See Figure Four.) [c] Photos 5, 6.

8.) 122 W. Park Central Square. Current exterior, ca. 2000.

This narrow three-story corner building could date to the late 1900s, but it has been substantially altered over the years and retains no historic exterior fabric. The current finishes and patterns of fenestration are less than a decade old. This is the largest of the non-contributing buildings in the district, but is of a size and scale appropriate to its surroundings. [nc] Photos 5, 6, 7.

9.) 219 South Avenue. Current front, 1988.

This is a ca. 1890 building which received an all new-façade in 1988. It is a small brick two-part commercial block, with an open ground floor storefront and evenly spaced rectangular windows at the second floor. A stepped parapet at the roofline contains a simple stone plaque that reads "Morris 1988". Although the façade is newer, it is of sympathetic style and materials, and the building fits well within the historic streetscape. [nc] Photo 7.

10.) 221 South Avenue. Stancill Drug Store. ca. 1890

This is a wide two-story red brick commercial building, with two shop spaces. It sits at the corner of South and McDaniel, facing east to South Avenue. It has a wide ground floor storefront and a row of four round-arched windows in the second floor of the façade. The upper part of the façade bears signs of having been rebuilt, and an early cornice is no longer in place there. The windows, which are currently covered with plywood, retain early or original, 1/1, arched window sashes. The sashes are in poor condition, and missing window glass, but highly intact. The ground floor storefront appears to date to the 1930s, at which time this building began serving as the eastern entrance to the Kresge store on the square. The storefront has narrow aluminum framing, and a low bulkhead that is faced with stucco that is painted black. There are two recessed doorways in the storefront. The doorways have wood and glass doors. The south wall of the building, which runs along McDaniel Street, has single segmental arched windows along the second floor, and short wide windows on the first floor. The first floor openings are intact, but have been in-filled with concrete blocks, and those on the second floor are covered with plywood. Early window sash remain in place behind some of the plywood covers, although they are in poor condition. [c] Photos 7, 8.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 11

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

Summary: The history of the Springfield Public Square Historic District, in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri, reflects the history of Springfield's commercial center, as discussed in the Multiple Property Submission (MPS) cover document "Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri." The public square has been the commercial heart of Springfield since the town was platted in the 1830s, and in many ways it embodies the historic context of "19th and early 20th Century Commercial Buildings," as described in the MPS Cover Document. With construction dates ranging from ca. 1890 to 1954, the buildings in the district constitute a cohesive group reflecting a wide range of commercial development in the community. The district includes the only immediately recognizable 19th century building on the square, the ca. 1890 Springfield Cigar Company building. That two-part commercial block provides a visual link with 19th century commerce, while the tall, terra cotta-sheathed office towers across the square reflect a major building campaign that occurred after a disastrous fire in 1913. The newest buildings in the district are a group of three stores which were constructed or remodeled for major variety store chains in the early 1950s. Those were the product of a local building boom which followed World War II. The nominated group meets the registration requirements as a district under Criterion A, with local significance in the area of COMMERCE, and it also contains important examples of the "Downtown Commercial Building" property type. The ca. 1890-1956 period of significance begins with the construction date of the oldest intact buildings, and ends at the standard fifty year cut-off date.

Elaboration: The public square was a featured element in the original plat of Springfield, which was laid out by John Polk Campbell on fifty acres of land in the early 1830s. Campbell's donation of that fifty acre tract led to Springfield being named the seat of Greene County, which was established in 1833.³ Campbell is said to have modeled the square layout after that in his home town of Columbia, Tennessee. That layout, which features streets radiating out from the center of each side of the square, is relatively rare in Missouri. According to A History of Missouri's Counties, County Seats and Courthouse Squares, only seven counties in the state utilize such a layout, which is classified in that work as a Lancaster Square.⁴ The Springfield square was the first Lancaster Square to be platted in Missouri.

The Springfield square is also unusual in that it no longer contains a courthouse. It was platted to serve as a courthouse square, and it did house county courthouses through the 19th century. A two-story brick courthouse occupied the very center of the square from 1836

3 Shanna Boyle and Julie March, eds. Crossroads at the Spring, (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Co. Publishers, 1997) p. 12.

4 Ohman, pp. 29-31. The others are Madison, Stoddard, Osage, Cedar, Ripley and Howell.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 12

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

until 1861, when it was destroyed in a fire. It was replaced by a larger new building, which was located on the northwest corner of the square, on the lot now occupied by the Heer's Building. By the time that courthouse was becoming obsolete, however, North Springfield and the Commercial Street business district had also developed, and the decision was made to build a new courthouse on Center (now Central) Street, at a point roughly halfway between the two commercial centers. That courthouse, which opened in 1912, is still in service today.

The center of the square has remained more or less open since the ruins of the burned courthouse were removed in the early 1860s. A variety of structures have graced that center spot over the years, the first of which was a wooden bell-tower erected around 1871. That tower was replaced in the 1880s by a stone monument to General Nathaniel Lyon, and in 1895, that too, was replaced, with the "Gottfried Tower". The Gottfried tower was a tall metal tower which was topped by a small replica of the Statue of Liberty. It remained on that site until 1909, when a paved circular area was installed to serve as a turnaround for streetcars and automobiles. That area was widely known as the "pie."⁵

With or without courthouses, the public square was the dominant commercial center in the community throughout the period of significance. The earliest known photograph of Springfield, which dates to 1859, provides ample evidence that the square was by then a thriving commercial center. The photo shows tightly packed frame commercial buildings lining the southeast corner of the square.⁶ Businesses in view in the photo include a confectionary, a tinware manufacturer, and at least two livery stables.

The earliest Sanborn map of Springfield, which was made in 1884, shows that commercial development in the area was centered on the square and the blocks immediately south of it. All of the buildings on the square were commercial, and almost all of the lots were filled. Businesses in operation included several banks, retail stores, and offices. With the exception of the courthouse, the buildings on the square were relatively modest; most were 20-30 feet wide and 2 to 3 stories tall, and there was a mix of brick and frame construction.

Commercial development remained strong through the end of the century, and later Sanborn maps show similar patterns of use. By the time of the 1891 Sanborn, most of the buildings facing the square were of brick construction, and although there were several taller, multi-shop buildings, the overall size of the individual businesses were about the same as they had been earlier in the century, with few store spaces that were more than 20 or 25

⁵ Dick Grosenbaugh, A Million Hours of Memories: A Condensed History of Springfield, MO, (Springfield: Springfield Sesquicentennial Committee, ca. 1979) No page numbers used.

⁶ The photo is reproduced in Boyle and March, p. 14.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 13

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

feet wide. The Springfield Cigar Company Building, which Sanborn maps indicate was built between 1886 and 1891, is the only building on the square today that is recognizable to that period of development. The building has had a variety of occupants over the years, including a boot and shoe store in the 1890s, the cigar company around 1900, and a women's clothing store in the middle 20th century. Today, it is largely vacant, but slated for a full rehabilitation in the near future.

The other 19th century building in the district, the Stancill Drug Store, is located just around the corner, at 221 South Avenue. That building is of comparable form to the Springfield Cigar Company Building, except that it is twice as wide, and was home to two different stores when new. It has definitely been there since around 1890, but could have been built as early as the 1870s. Sanborn maps seem to indicate this structure replaced a similar one on the site between 1886 and 1891, but a photo of the street taken in 1876 shows a building at this location that is very much like this one. The Stancill building's location at the south edge of this district provides a visual link with the adjacent South-McDaniel-Patton Historic District, which contains a number of 19th century commercial buildings.

In June of 1913, the north side of the square was struck by a major fire. Eight buildings were destroyed, for an estimated loss of some \$800,000.⁷ Although the fire was a calamity which completely wiped out the northeast corner of the square, it triggered the construction of several of the largest and most impressive buildings on the square today. They include the Holland Office Building, the Heer's Department Store Building, and the Landers Office Building. (The first two are individually listed and the Landers Building is contributing to the current district.) They are the three tallest buildings on the square, and each features ornamental terra cotta sheathing, which was at the time a relatively new construction material. All three also feature architectural designs that clearly belong to the 20th century, with simpler, classically derived systems of ornamentation. They also feature "fire-proof construction," which includes such things as masonry construction, metal fire doors, and metal-framed windows with safety glass. The 1933 Sanborn Map of the square clearly illustrates the preference for such construction methods in the recently-erected buildings on the north side of the square. (See Figure Five.)

⁷ Boyle and March, p. 15.

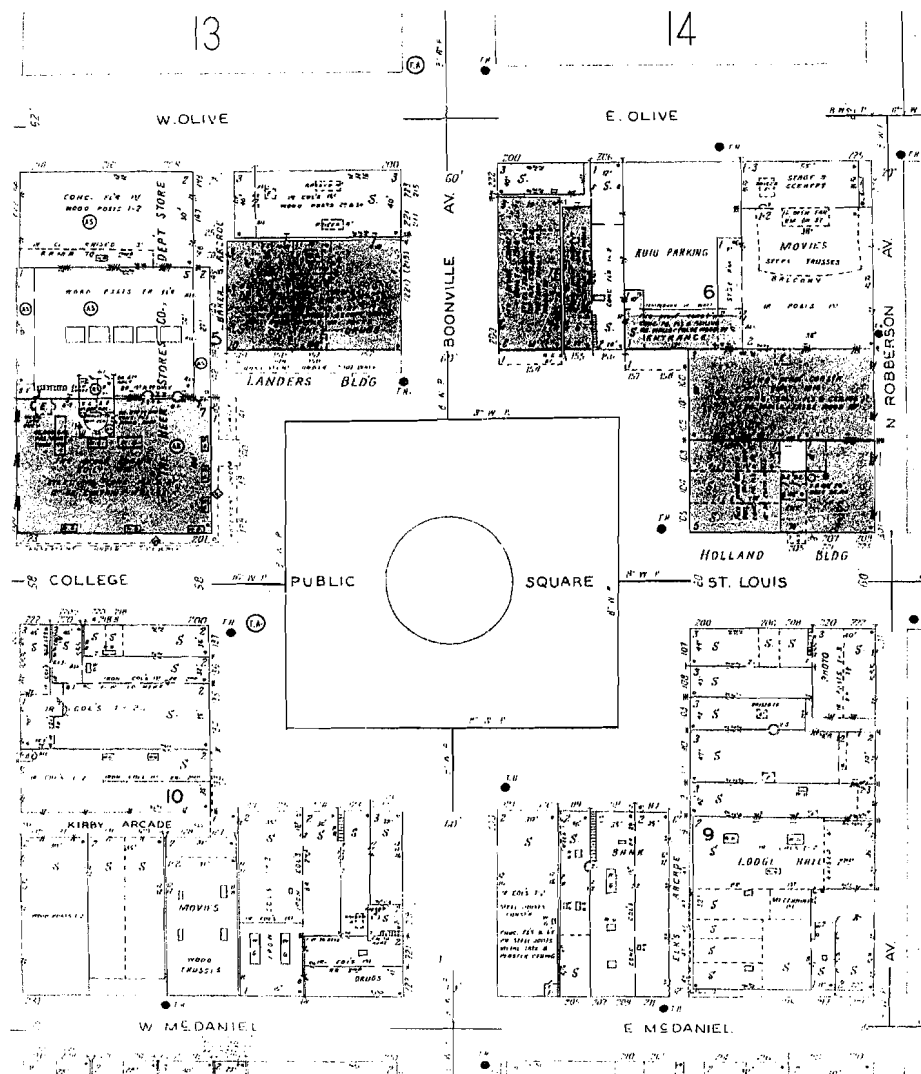
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Figure Five. 1933 Sanborn Map of the Square. The dark areas are labeled as “fire-proof construction” on the original map.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

The next flurry of improvements on the square took place as the nation rebounded from World War II. As is often the case, private investment was paired with, and at least partly spurred by, improvements in public infrastructure. The city's streetcars had stopped running in 1937, and as the economy started picking up in the 1940s, the city took measures to make the commercial areas in town more attractive and automobile-friendly. That included removing the "pie" from the center of the square and increasing parking in the open center section. The city also removed or covered old streetcar tracks, and repaved both the square and Boonville Avenue, which runs north to Commercial Street. A local paper noted in 1947 that Boonville had just been paved all the way to Commercial Street, and noted that its "white way lights" would soon be in operation. There were also several articles that year about plans to add landscaping and lighting to the new parking areas in the square. (See Figure Six.)

Figure Six. Front page of the Springfield Daily News, July 2, 1947.
The Landers Building is in the background.



WALKWAYS FOR THE SQUARE—The excavation which you see in this picture marks the location of the sidewalks which you will use in crossing the northwest section of Springfield's new Public Square. The eight-foot walkways will border each of the Square's new parking areas, and also will mark the boundaries of the new trafficways directly through what was the pie. Visible in the picture is a section of the conduit which will serve traffic signals to guide both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. This northwest parking area will be completed this week, and workmen then will proceed to the northeast section. Meantime, with completion of underground work on the south side of the Square, that section will be opened to traffic on Thursday morning. When the northern parking areas are finished, work will begin on the two southern sections, which then of course must be barricaded again.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 16

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

The late 1940s and early 1950s also brought a significant amount of private investment to the square. The Holland Building, on the east side, saw a large scale remodeling in 1948, which included all-new finishes at street level, and two years later, a major remodeling began on the Heer's Building. In addition to a complete interior update and the construction of a large new wing on its north side, the Heer's building also saw a complete make-over of its exterior at the street level. The new look included cleaner lines and a somewhat horizontal emphasis, which were typical of Streamlined Moderne architecture which was popular at the time.

It was the southeast corner of the square that saw the most change during that period, however. Changes there went beyond simple upgrades, to include two all-new buildings and the addition of one completely new façade. Between 1951 and 1954, three major construction projects took place in that quadrant. As was the case for the Holland and Heer's projects, that work was all done for companies that were already established businesses on the public square: F. W. Woolworth, J. J. Newberry, and S. S. Kresge. Those chain variety stores had all been operating there for at least twenty years by that time, each in a building or buildings that dated to the 1880s or 90s.

The first company to launch a building project in that corner of the square was the J. J. Newberry Company. In 1951, they demolished a sizable row of 19th century buildings, and constructed a large new building in its place. Two years later, the S. S. Kresge Company decided to upgrade their store, which was directly west of Newberry's. Kresge took a different route, and simply remodeled the building they already occupied. They installed a modern new façade and canopy across the two large 19th century buildings they occupied. Kresge had been working on expansions and improvements for several years by then, which may have affected their decision to remodel rather than build from scratch. In the 1930s, they had expanded into a former drug store on South Avenue, which gave them a second entrance to the store, and by the early 1940s, they had also added a modern storefront facing McDaniel Street, to the south.

Two years later, in 1954, F. W. Woolworth's, located just north of Newberry's, also chose to build an all-new facility. Like the Kresge Company, the Woolworth's Store has two main entrances, one on the square, and one on the nearest side street. The new Woolworth's store is L-shaped, to wrap around an existing corner store, and still allow for two prominent street elevations. The matching design of the two elevations reflects the company's desire to capitalize on their L-shaped lot and to maximize their exposure to vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic.

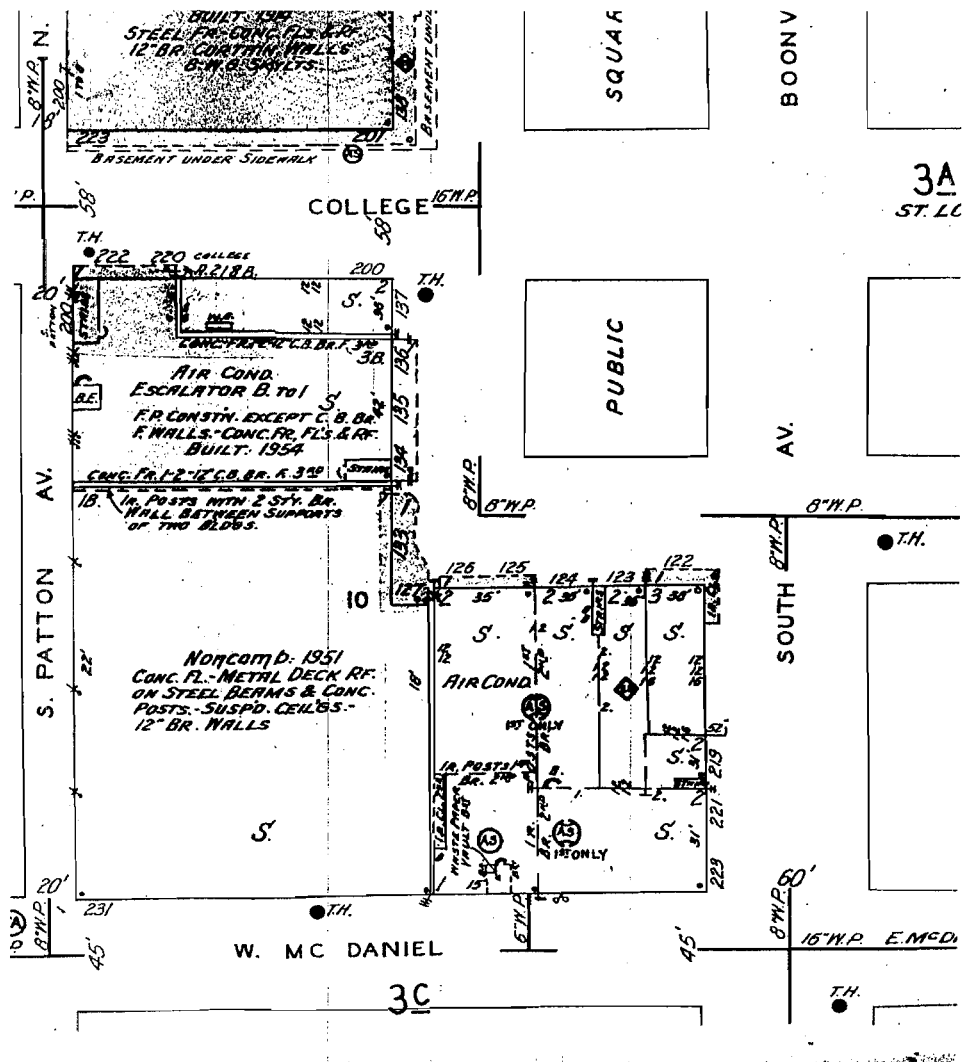
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Figure Seven. 1963 Sanborn Map of the southwest corner of the square.



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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 18

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

Those three companies were among the top chain stores in the nation at the time. The square was, in fact, home to branches of four of the top ten chain stores in the nation during the period of significance.⁸ (The fourth was the W. T. Grant Company, which had a store where the 1970s bank building is now.) The three stores in the district came to Springfield during a period of intense development and expansion for national chain stores.

One study of chain stores in America estimated that nationally, those three companies alone added more than 1,500 stores between 1920 and 1930.⁹ The stores on the Springfield square were established as part of that national expansion; Woolworth's and Kresge had stores on the square by 1922, and Newberry's opened there between 1928 and 1932.

The oldest chain store company of the three was F. W. Woolworth, which was the original "5-and-10-cent store" in the United States. That chain began in 1879, when Frank W. Woolworth opened a store in Lancaster, PA, and the company eventually became the largest chain in the nation, with more than 2,500 stores in the United State by 1962.¹⁰ Woolworth is often credited with the invention of the discount store; as one scholar put it, his early stores provided "the pattern and inspiration for an entirely new field in retail merchandise."¹¹ The Woolworth Company was also one of the longest-lived chains in the nation. They lasted a total of 117 years; the company closed the last of its stores nationwide in 1997. The branch on the Springfield square lasted almost that long; they were the last of the chains to operate on the square, staying open there until 1986.¹²

The second oldest of the chain companies in the district was the S. S. Kresge Company. It was founded by Samuel S. Kresge in 1899, when he bought half ownership in a pair of 5-and 10-cent stores for \$8,000.¹³ By 1920, Kresge was second only to Woolworth's in the number of stores they had in operation, a position they maintained for decades. By 1962, they had 821 stores, and total sales of more than \$450 million.¹⁴ In 1962, the Kresge Company opened a new type of discount store, under the now well-known name of Kmart. The Kmart format was an immediate hit, and although the company kept operating Kresge stores, Kmart eventually took prominence. By 1977, nearly 95% of the company's sales were generated by Kmart. The Kresge company changed its name to the Kmart Corporation

⁸ Godfrey M. Lebharr, Chain Stores in America 1859-1962, (New York: Chain Store Publishing Corporation, 1963) A table on p. 56 lists the top ten variety store chains in the nation, 1920-1949.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Lebharr, pps. 36-41.

¹¹ Lebharr, p. 36.

¹² "Store a Fixture on the Square," Springfield News Leader, July 18, 1997, p. 10A.

¹³ "History of the (Kresge) Foundation." <http://www.kresge.org/about/index.htm>, October 25, 2005.

¹⁴ Lebharr, p. 399.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 19

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

in 1977 to reflect that change, and in 1988 sold the last of their Kresge outlets.¹⁵ The Kresge Store on the Springfield Square was the first of the chain stores there to close; it closed in the 1960s.

J. J. Newberry was the newest, and smallest of the three chain store companies with an outlet on the square. That company was founded in 1911, when J. J. Newberry opened a store in Stroudsburg, PA. He had learned the business while working for another chain store giant, the S. H. Kress Company, which was a new venture when he started working there in the late 1890s. After 12 years with Kress, Newberry went out on his own, and by 1962, there were 570 Newberry's in operation in the United States. In 1946, the local Newberry store published a full-page ad to celebrate the company's 35th anniversary. The ad included a history of the company, as well as a preview of the chain's plans for the future: "The Company plans for a large post-war program of expansions, enlargement, and modernization of many existing stores throughout the country which will be carried out as rapidly as building restrictions, imposed by the government as well as by the scarcity of materials, are relaxed."¹⁶

The Newberry Company and its competitors were all following national trends when they decided to expand and upgrade their properties on the square in Springfield. By the 1940s, consumers and retailers were beginning to favor larger stores of all types, and most national chain store companies of the period focused on expansion of existing facilities, rather than the creation of all new stores. One study noted that the average chain store in 1950, for example, was typically two to five times larger than they had been in 1930, and noted that "where existing locations permitted enlargement and modernization, the chains followed that course. As soon as the restrictions on civilian construction were lifted after World War II, the chains proceeded to modernize their stores as fast as they could."¹⁷ The chain stores in the public square district were exception to that rule, and the fact that they were right next door to each other no doubt moved the process along as well. Once Newberry had their large new building open, the other two had little choice but to follow suit.

The completion of the new Woolworth's Building in 1954 marked the end of the post-War construction boom on the square, and only one building, the 1970s bank on the east side, has been constructed since that time. Although the 1950s renovations helped keep the businesses on the square competitive, as shopping centers began to pull business away from the traditional commercial districts of the community, sales gradually declined, and

¹⁵ "Corporate History," at <http://www.kmartcorp.com>, November 1, 2005.

¹⁶ "History of the J. J. Newberry Co." Springfield New Leader, May 16, 1946, p. 9.

¹⁷ Lebharr, p. 61.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 20

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

storefronts across the square began to empty.

A check of 1970s city directories shows numerous “vacant” entries in the area around the square, a condition which led civic leaders to implement a major redevelopment plan for that commercial district. That plan included renaming the area around the square to “Park Central Mall,” and reworking streets to direct through-traffic away from the square. The present large fountain and plaza were installed at that time as well, as were the metal canopies along all of the storefronts on the square.

Many of those 1970s changes have since been reversed, and the district today looks much as it did during the period of significance. Most of the canopies are gone from the square, and the traffic once again follows the routes laid out by John Polk Campbell in the 1930s. A renewed interest in economic development through historic preservation is laying the groundwork for substantial reinvestment in the area. A major rehabilitation of the Heer’s Building is just beginning, and large-scale rehabs are also planned for several of the buildings in the southwest corner of the square. The Springfield Public Square continues to serve as a focal point for area business, and the buildings of the historic district are important reminders of Springfield’s long commercial history.

Appendix: Notes on Individual Buildings, in order of construction date. Non-contributing buildings are listed last.

123 W. Park Central Square. Springfield Cigar Company, ca. 1890 [c]

Sanborn maps indicate that this building was built between 1886 and 1891. This is the only reasonably intact 19TH Century building on the square today. The early or original wood windows on the second floor are of special note. Sanborn maps show it was a shop for boots and shoes in the 1890s, and it had the words “Springfield Cigar Company” painted on the façade in ca. 1900 and ca. 1907 photos. A city directory for 1905 listed both J. R. Kearns Cigars and the O’Day Book Store as tenants. By 1922, it was home to Olympia Candy Co., who may have applied the coat of white paint which shows up on the facade in a ca. 1912 photo. The building was home to the Learner’s Vogue women’s clothing store from at least 1933 through 1955. It was during that period that the building at 219 South Avenue was used as the side entrance to this shop.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 21

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

221 W. South Avenue. Stancill Drug Store. ca. 1890 [c]

This building was definitely built by 1890, and could have been constructed as early as the 1870s. Sanborn maps seem to indicate this structure replaced a similar one on the site between 1886 and 1891, but a photo of the street taken in 1876 shows a building at this location that is very much like this one. Business directories also indicate that early shop owner, Dr. Ruel M. Stancill, was in business at this location from an early date; see the summary of entries below.

1884-85 business directory; Stancill, R. M., M.D., Druggist, 209 South Ave.

1884 and 1886 Sanborn maps show a druggist and grocery at this site, in a two-story building with two ground floor shops. (Address numbers were different, 1400s and 800s.)

1886-87 State Gazetteer; Stancill, Ruel, Druggist, 209 South

1891 Sanborn shows stairs in different spots, and current addresses. Could indicate a new building in the old footprint. Drug store and barber were occupants.

1893-94 and 1898-99 State Gazetteers; Stancill and Morin Drugs, 223 South.

1905 business directory; Stancill and Denton retail druggists, 223 South.

ca. 1912 photo, painted two different colors, like it had two stores.

1922 and 1932 directory, Denton's Drugs 221-223 South.

1937 directory, 221-223 vacant, and Denton's Drugs had moved across McDaniel to 300-302 South. The second floor housed a Drs. Office in 1932 and an accountant in the late 1940s.

1940-into the 1950s or later, East entrance to S.S. Kresge. Current storefront probably dates to that change of use. It is still part of that parcel today.

149 W. Park Central Square. Landers Building. 1915 [c]

The 10-story Landers building is the largest intact historic office building in Springfield today. It was built for D. J. Landers, and was named in honor of his father, John Landers. An article about the pending opening of the building boasted that "one hundred new offices and stores will be open to the public in the new building. The rooms by that time will be finished up to the fifth floor."¹⁸ The Bank of Commerce was a tenant in the ground floor when the building opened, and Evan's Cut-Rite Drug Store occupied much of the ground floor for decades later in the century. The basement housed a billiard parlor, and a cigar store occupied the lobby for many years when the building was new. The offices on the upper floors housed a wide variety of businesses and professionals, including everything from podiatrists to the Springfield Board of Trade. The Landers served its original function

¹⁸ "Landers Building Will Be Opened Next Saturday," Springfield Leader. April 2, 1915, p. 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 22

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

as a commercial office building into the late 1970s, and around 1980, was remodeled to serve as the Missouri State Office Building for Springfield.

138 W. Park Central Square. Heer's Building. 1915 Individually listed 10/24/2002 The Heer's Building was built for Heer's Department Store, after an earlier building they had on the square was lost in the fire of 1913. The tall section of the building dates to 1915; for many years the company used older buildings to the north of that section as well. In 1951, the older buildings were razed for a major new addition, and at the same time, the exterior ground floor and mezzanine levels of the 1915 section were remodeled to present a more streamlined street level façade. The interior of the building also received a major overhaul, which included the installation of the region's first escalator. The building served as the home to Heer's Department Store until 1995. It is currently in the early stages of a major rehabilitation.

132 W. Park Central Square. J. J. Newberry Co. 1951 [c]

J. J. Newberry first opened a store at this location between 1928 and 1932. Like the Woolworth Company, they operated in an existing building for many years, and chose to construct an all-new building during a flurry of improvements to the square and its building which started in the late 1940s. The present building was erected in 1951, and the company stayed in business there into the 1970s.

124 W. Park Central Square. S. S. Kresge 1953 front on ca. 1880s buildings. [c]

S. S. Kresge also started out in an existing building, and they came to Springfield about the same time as the other chain stores on the square. They opened a store at this location between 1912 and 1922, and over the years they expanded their holding to include several contiguous buildings. The ca. 1890 Stancill Drug Store Building, at 221 South Avenue, began serving as Kresge's east entrance around 1937. Unlike their competitors, however, they chose to remodel rather than start completely from scratch when they upgraded in 1953. The current front was installed across two existing buildings in 1953 by the Johnson Construction Co. The building also had an entrance on its south wall, facing McDaniel Street, to the south, from at least 1948 on. The store operated as a Kresge until 1966, when the Kresge Company converted it to a Jupiter Store. The Jupiter Store stayed at the location into the 1980s.

134 W. Park Central Square. F. W. Woolworth Co. 1954 [c]

Woolworth's first moved into an existing building at this location between 1912 and 1922.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 23

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

The company erected the present L-shaped building in 1954. The new building also boasted of an escalator, along with a lunch counter that is said to have kept "15 waitresses so busy, they didn't get a lunch break."¹⁹ The store was a popular stop on the square for decades, and it remained open until 1986. It was the last of the national chain stores to leave the public square.

122 W. Park Central Square. Marx Clothing Co. (In 1932). [nc]

This building, which has all new finishes and fenestration, may have been constructed in the 1880s or before; a building of this general form is visible in several 19th century photos of this corner. The building was home to Marx Clothing in 1932, the Bargain Corner in 1940, and Betty Gay Shops from ca. 1946 through 1955 or later.

219 W. South Avenue. H. D. Chin Cigars (In 1932). [nc]

This small building was probably built about 1890, and the current façade was installed in 1988, after the old one collapsed. This building served as the side entrance to 123 Park Central Square, when that building housed Lerner Vogue, in the 1940s. There was a beauty shop on the second floor. It is currently part of the property at 124 Park Central Square.

137 W. Park Central Square. Royal Shoe Store (In 1922). [nc]

This small corner building housed a variety of stores over the years, including Royal Shoe Store in 1922, United Cigar Store in 1932, and Mrs. Stover's Candies in 1937. It was home to the National Shirt Shop from 1940 into the 1950s, and the words National Shoe are still visible in the sidewalk at the corner entrance. Modern finishes make it difficult to estimate a construction date.

¹⁹ "Store a Fixture on the Square," Springfield News Leader, July 18, 1997, p. 10A.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 24

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 25

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

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

Section number 10, photographs Page 26

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries are marked as a heavy dashed line on the site plan in Figure One. They correspond to the property lines for the buildings of the district, plus the portion of Park Central West (College Street) that runs between 138 and 134 W. Park Central Square.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the district include an intact grouping of properties that border the Springfield Public Square. They include all of the properties on the west side of the square, as well as two addresses on South Street. The South Street addresses are currently part of the property at 124 W. Park Central Square, and have been associated with properties facing the square since the mid-1940s or before. The district is bounded on the north by Olive Street, on the west by Patton, and on the South by McDaniel Street. The north boundary of the South-McDaniel-Patton Commercial Historic District (listed 3/7/03) is just across McDaniel, to the south of this district. Although the two districts have some common historic themes, the commercial history of the square was judged to be important enough to merit a separate designation. It is likely that the square was excluded from that listing due to the presence of modern canopies, which have since been removed from properties in this district. The east side of the square has been excluded here due to integrity issues. There is a large 1970s bank on the southeast side of the square, and the one-story buildings at the northeast are currently fronted by a ca. 1970 canopy that partially obscures their facades. The east side of the square does feature the Holland Building, however; it is a large, intact, historic office building which was individually listed 11-15-00.

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

Section number photographs Page 27

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Springfield Public Square Historic District
The complete west side of the Springfield Public Square
Greene County, Missouri
Debbie Sheals
September, 2005

List of Photographs

See photo key for description of camera angle.

1. Northwest corner, left to right: Heer's, Landers.
2. In front of Woolworth's, looking north to Heer's.
3. Woolworth's façade.
4. Newberry's, southwest corner of the square.
5. South end, right to left, Newberry's, Kresge, Springfield Cigar.
6. Detail, second floor window in the Springfield Cigar Building.
7. Looking down South Ave. from the square, right to left: 122 W. Park Central Square (nc), 219 South Avenue, (nc), and 221 South Avenue, Stancill Drug Store.
8. Looking west on McDaniel along the southern boundary of the district. Right to left: Stancill Drug Store (side) South Kresge storefront, south elevation of the Newberry Building.
9. Looking north on Patton, along the west boundary of the district. Right to left: Newberry Building, Woolworth's, College Street, Heer's Building.
10. North Storefront of the Woolworth's Building.
11. Detail, terrazzo flooring, north entrance to Woolworth's.
12. Base of Landers, looking east to the 1970s canopy on the northeast corner of the square.
13. Looking south, from north of the district. Back of Landers,, and north elevation of Heer's.
14. Upper portions of Landers, from the center of the square.

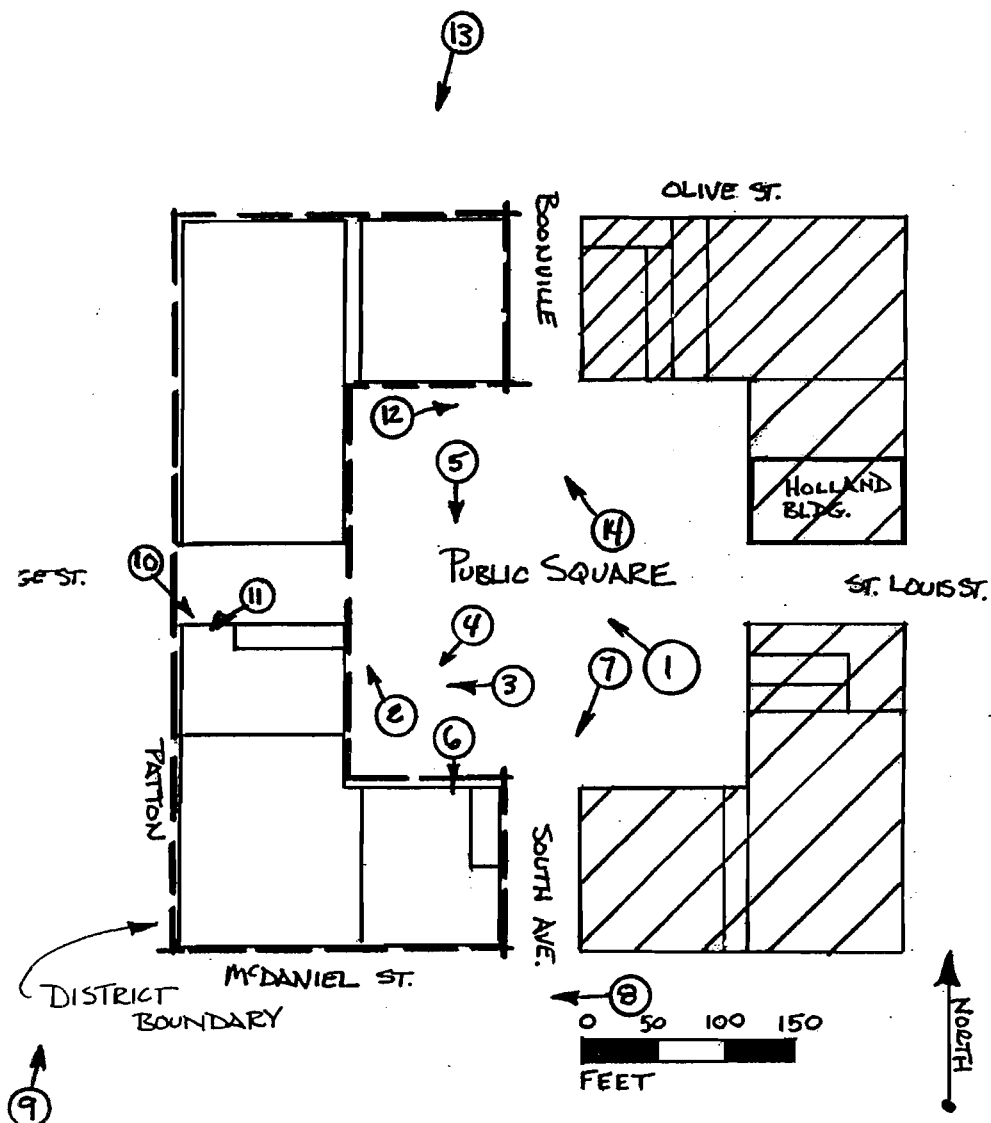
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number photographs Page 28

Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Photo Key.



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

Section number owners Page 29

**Springfield Public Square Historic District
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri**

Property Owners

149 W. Park Central Square. [c]
State of Missouri Office Building
Attn: Rich Looten
149 W Park Central Square
Suite 822
Springfield, MO 65806

138 W. Park Central Square. [c]
Springfield Office Building LLC
PO Box 1727
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1727

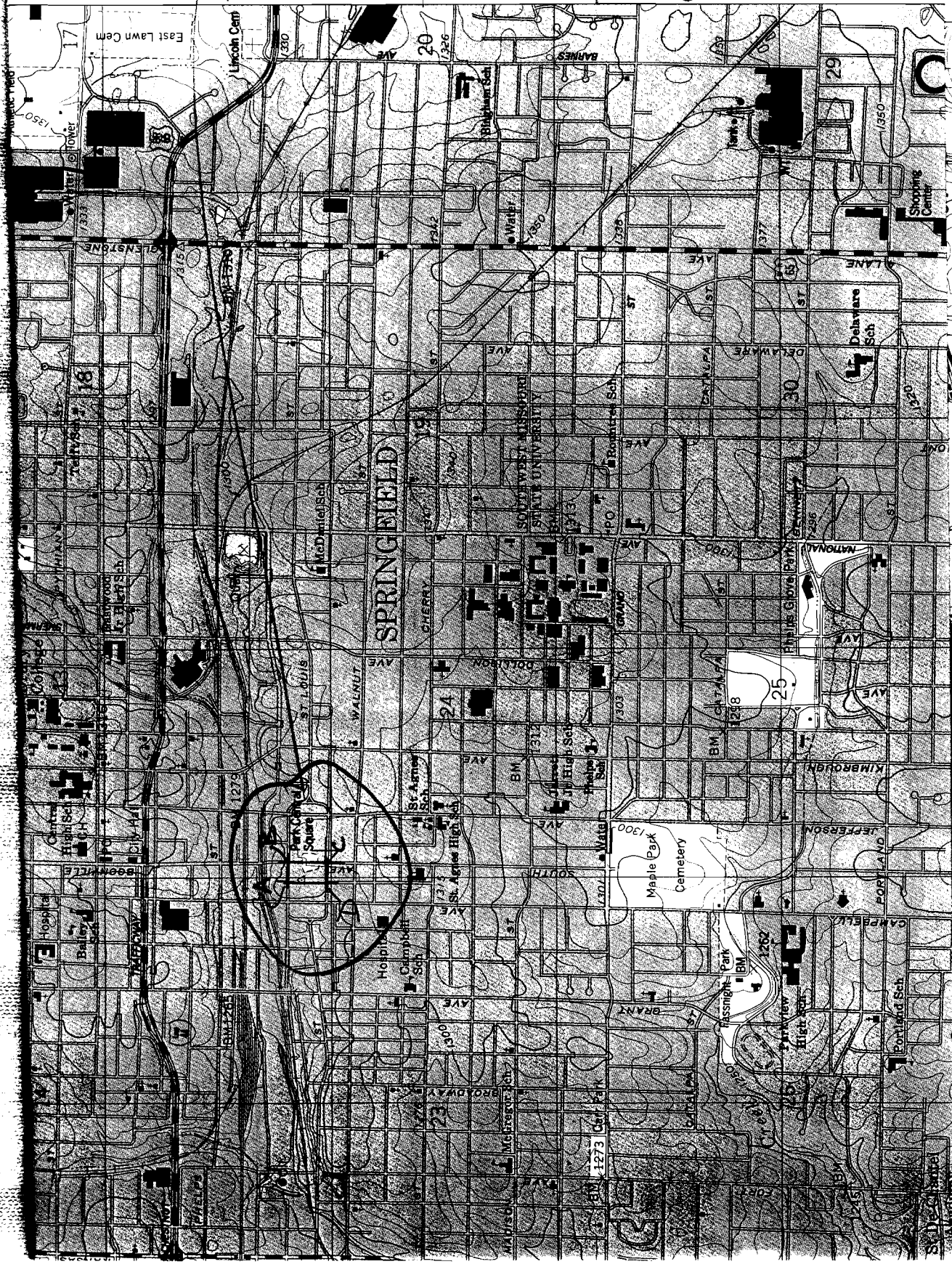
137 W. Park Central Square. [nc]
Samuel F. Freeman II
1339 S. Pickwick Ave.
Springfield, MO 65804-0251

134 W. Park Central Square. [c]
Byron V. Thomas
134 Park Central Square
Springfield, MO 65806-1311

132 W. Park Central Square. [c]
Lore LLC Et al
2023 Glenstone Ave S
Springfield, MO 65804-2427

124 W. Park Central Square. [c]
**123 W. Park Central Square (now part of
124 W. Park Central Square) [c]**
**219 South Avenue. (now part of 124 W. Park
Central Square) [nc]**
**221 South Avenue. (now part of 124 W. Park
Central Square) [c]**
Square Guys LLC
1010 E. Elm St.
Springfield. MO 65806

122 W. Park Central Square. [nc]
Park Central Real Estate, LLC
122 Park Central Square
Springfield, MO 65806-1311



PUBLIC SQUARE
HISTORIC
DISTRICT
12'30"
SPRINGFIELD,
GREENE COUNTY,
MO

UTMS
A. 15/473905E
4118197N
"17
B. 15/474003E
4118197N
C. 15/473970E
4118031N
D. 15/474058E
4118026N
"16
UTMS PER
ELECTRONIC
GIS SYSTEM







MISTER FURNITURE

MISTER FURNITURE

skateboards body jewelry
clothing & more hip stuff ...
THE CULTURAL HUT

NO STOPPING
OR PARKING
ANYTIME









N DELI

SLIPUP RAYFIELD
SPIN 1702MAS
HURRICANE BENEFIT
ZZORY KILL LOGIC

DAVID ALLAN



HEERS

LAMA
CHARLESE. WA
4
Own your own
NO CR

DO NOT
ENTER

ONE WAY

to
BER
1-886-2199
A woman in a green jacket and white skirt is walking.



QUALITY NAME BRANDS
**MISTER
FURNITURE**

V. & W. WOODWORTH CO.





STATE OF MISSOURI
SPRINGFIELD STATE
OFFICE BUILDING



At dusk
July 8 -
August 27
864-1400

HEERS

HEERS

Thinking of a
hand-dipped
Milk Shake?

No Parking

