

Iowa Site Inventory Form
State Historic Preservation Office
Continuation Sheet

Site Number: 38-00321
Related District Number:

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Frederick Furniture Building	Grundy
Name of Property	County
703 G Avenue	Grundy Center
Address	City

This Iowa Site Inventory Form is being prepared for the City of Grundy Center as part of an Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Downtown Revitalization Grant. The building is located in the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the grant project, and the owner of the building at 703 G Avenue is participating in the Downtown Revitalization Grant. The building is also located in a potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District, and this site form provides an architectural/historical evaluation of the property as a contributing building in that potential historic district.

7. Narrative Description

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

This two-story, full basement, flat-roofed, brick building was constructed in 1879, with additions constructed in 1900 and 1920, according to the Grundy County Assessor's records. The building is located as part of the "Central Block" and sits across from the County Courthouse. The front doors open to the sidewalk on main street. There are currently no windows on the upper level. The current facade/exterior is not similar to other buildings on the block.

The main level and upper façade were completely altered in the early 1960's. The original brick was covered with white brick, metal clad windows, and a metal overhang spanning the front of the building.

The rear/north side exterior is partially brick that has been covered in plaster and painted, as well as cinder block that has been painted

On the interior, the space is divided into two main areas (east and west), with offices in the back (north side). The ceilings are dropped (to approx 7') with integrated lighting. The floors are linoleum (nearly 50 years old), and carpet (unknown if original floor is still there). The walls were originally brick, then plastered over, with some plywood paneling.

There is a mezzanine level with parquet floors and low (7' ceilings). The ceilings are acoustic tile and walls are plaster and the floors are linoleum. This level is not original to the building, but was added during the 1960's remodeling.

The third level (originally second floor) was used for retail display space. The ceilings and walls are plaster and the floors are linoleum.

There is an elevator on the north side of the building.

(Description taken from Downtown Revitalization Grant Survey site form dated January 2018)

8. Statement of Significance

The Frederick Furniture building is locally significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building in a potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District under Criteria A and C. The Frederick Furniture building, originally built in 1879, is associated with the post-World War II modernization and building boom, which gained steam in the late 1940s and culminated in 1963 with the Frederick Furniture unified front remodel. The Frederick Furniture building also reflects the history of the Grundy Center business community as the longtime home of Grundy Center's Frederick Furniture store, which was located in this building from 1938 until 2017.

The building is also a good example of a Property Type V Main Street Commercial Building, according to typologies set forth in the National Register Multiple Property Document, *Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture* (Nash 2002). "These are older buildings that were updated and remodeled through the years in the

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attempt to continue to put a progressive face forward in the community. Usually the remodeling is more substantial than just a storefront update, and generally involves the entire façade for a new look, such as Streamlining in the 1930s and 1940s." These historic remodels, completed during the period of significance, "reflect a continued economic vitality in the community." In 1962, Frederick Furniture expanded into the building next west and began building a new unified front on the 1879 Italianate-style Commercial Block. The new front included a metal and glass store entrance and the rest of the front was entirely covered with a light tan brick veneer from the end piers on the storefront level to the top of the parapet, which was stripped of its ornate Italianate style cornice. Second-story fenestration was also covered, leaving a smooth brick "canvas" for a large FREDERICK FURNITURE sign across the front. The new front was an example of architecture as signage, an idea rooted in the Streamline Moderne style that made the front of a business house its best advertising.

The period of significance is 1879-1963, from the year the Frederick Furniture building was built as the Commercial Block to the year the full front remodel was completed, coinciding with the end of the period of significance for the potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District (see Iowa Site Form No. 38-00318).

9. Major Bibliographical References

- "2440 Attend Frederick's Grand Opening *Grundy Register*, April 4, 1963.
Contractor Sietsema Frederick's Grand Opening Advertisement, *Grundy Register*, March 28, 1963.
"Frederick Furniture Store Will Have a New Front," *Grundy Register*, January 13, 1938.
"Frederick's Grand Opening Friday-Saturday," *Grundy Register*, March 28, 1963.
Downtown Revitalization Survey/Iowa Site Inventory Form, January 2018.
Grundy County Assessor Record online.
Grundy Register, October 18, 1962.
Nash, Jan Olive. *Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture*. Multiple Property Document, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 2002.
"Potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District," Iowa Site Inventory Form No. 38-00318, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, June 2018.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Grundy Center, Grundy County, Iowa, 1894, 1902, 1911, 1916, 1928, and 1928, updated to 1939.

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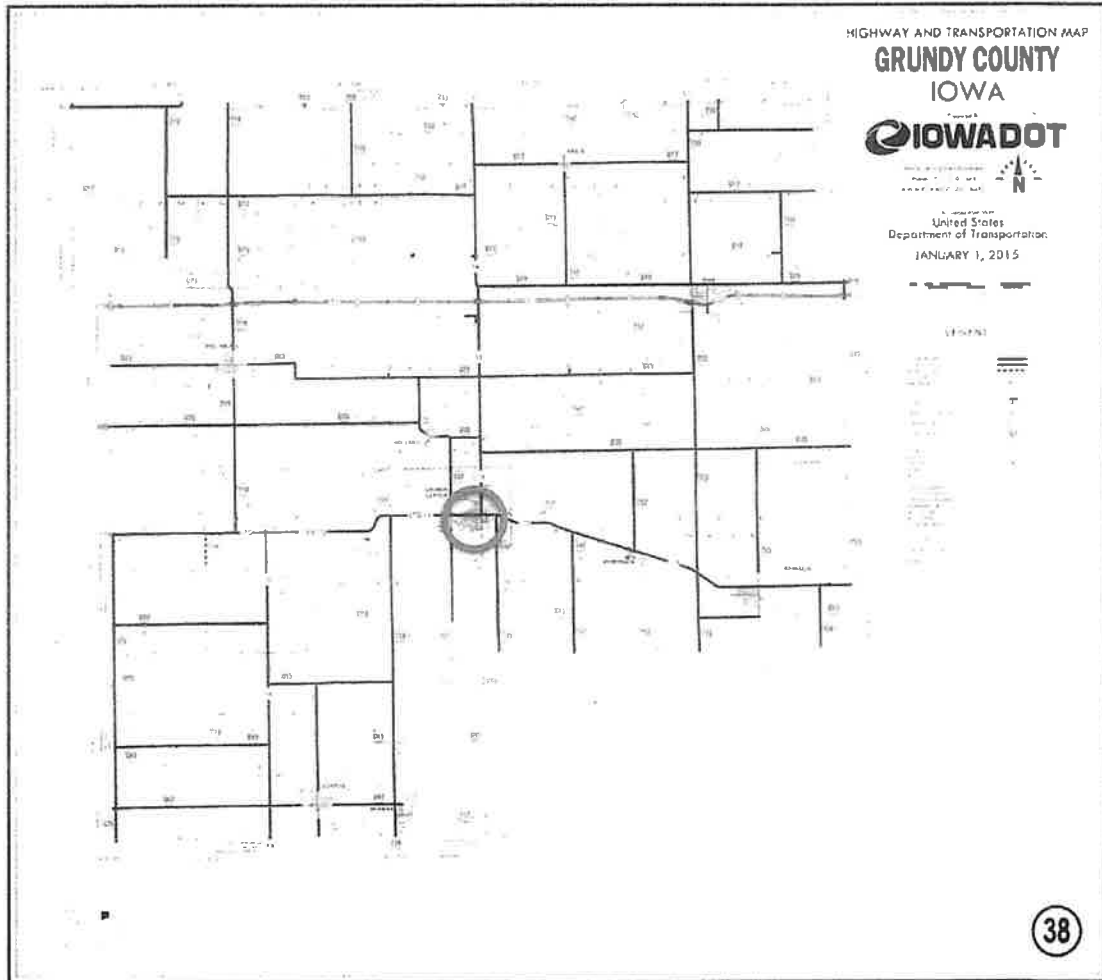
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10. Additional Documentation

General Location Map



Latitude: 42.361732
Longitude: -92.773010

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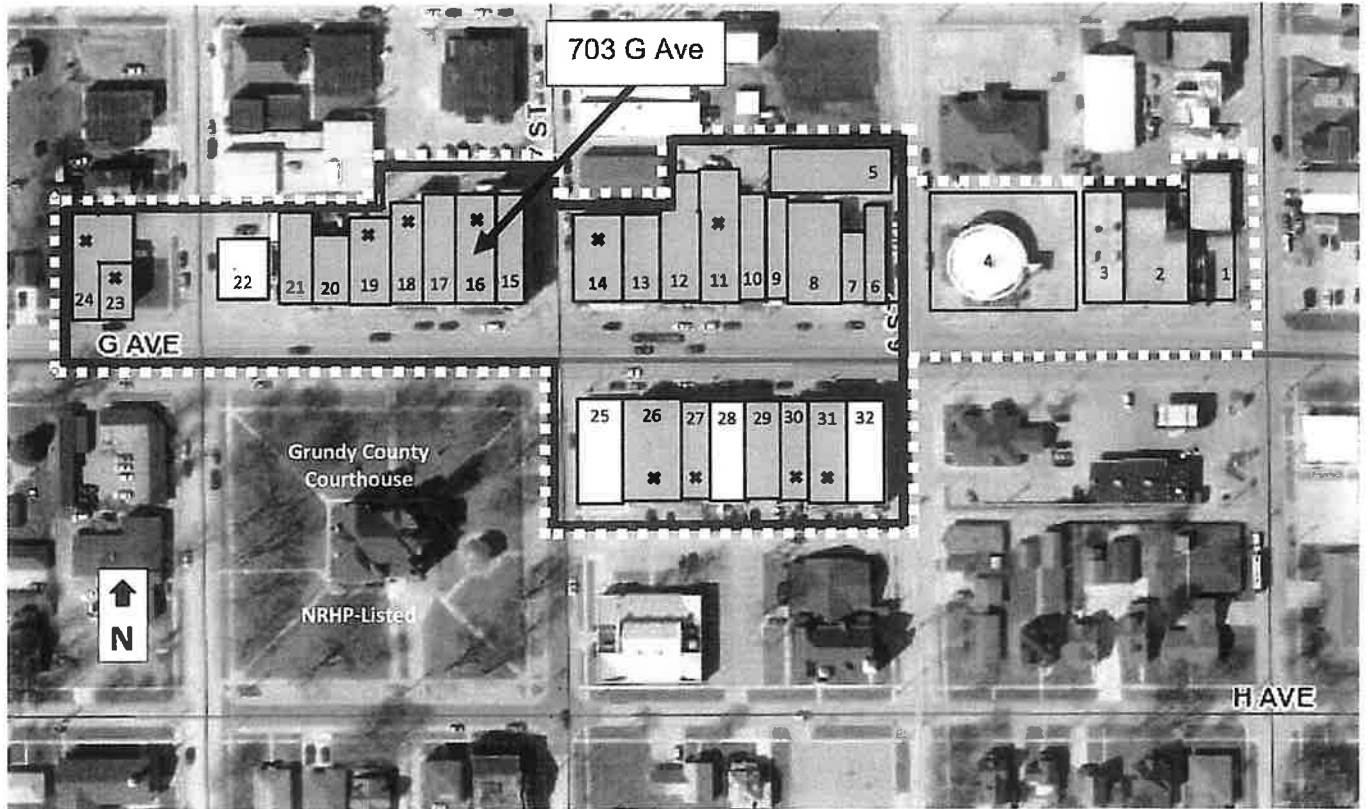
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Location in Potential Grundy Center Commercial Historic District



(dark boundary = preliminary boundary of potential historic district)

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Current Photographs

(photos by Jennifer A. Price, June 20, 2018)



View north

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View northwest

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General view northwest

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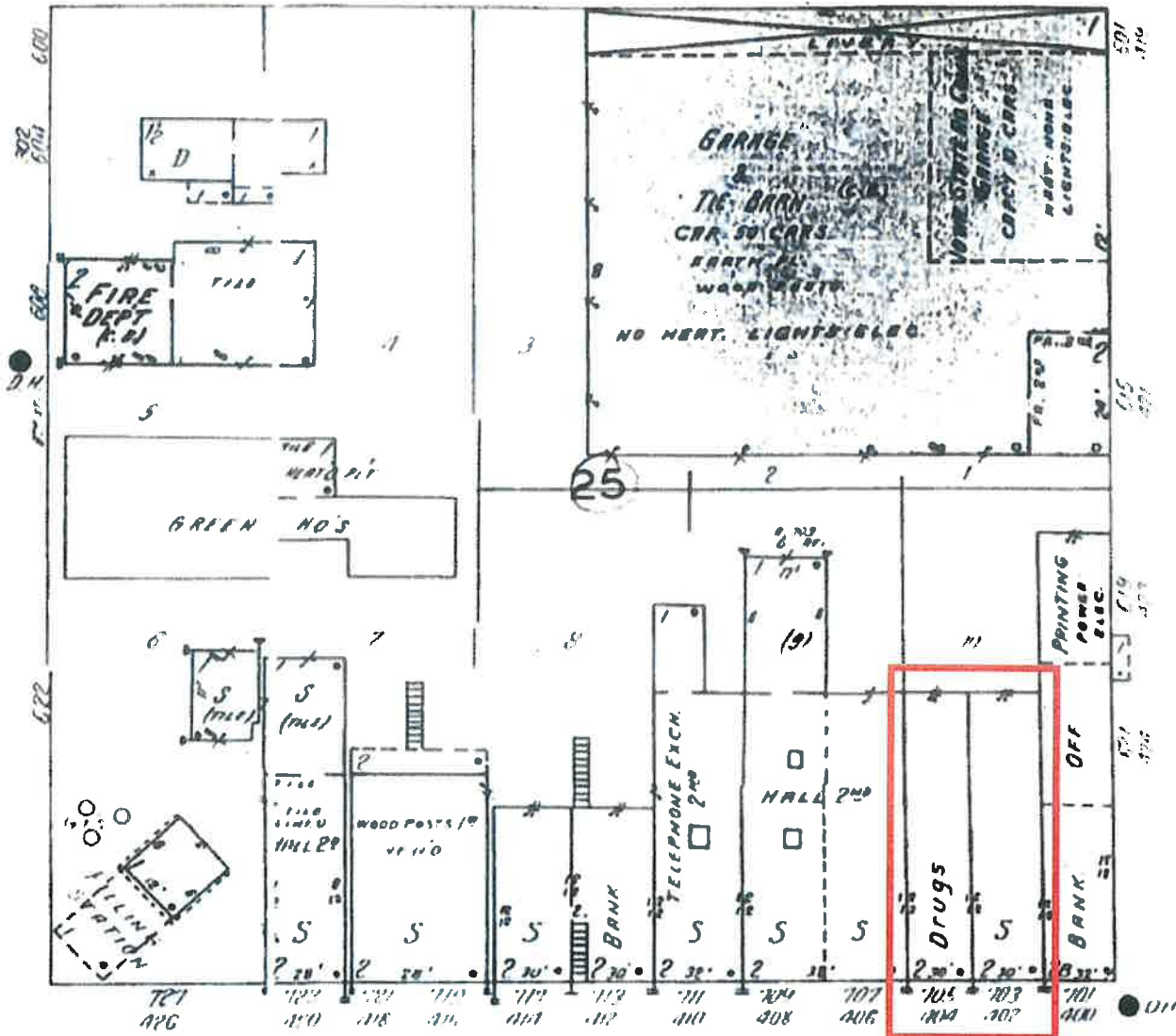
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Historical Documentation



Commercial Block with Frederick Furniture occupying east storeroom and a drug store in west storeroom, as shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1928, updated to 1939



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**Frederick Furniture Store
Will Have New Modern Front**

Work was started Monday morning on the new front for the Frederick furniture store. The new front will be modernistic in design, made of black enameled steel and black vitrolate glass. The window will be installed across the front of the building and the entrance will be placed at the left hand side of the room.

The window will be dropped from the top and will be lower than the present window at the bottom. There will be no background for the window, the entire store furnishing the background.

The building has been recently purchased from the Dalglish sisters by Mr. Frederick, and the contracting work is being done by Willard Brockway.

The store is open for business as usual while the repairing is being done.

First front remodel, 1938

Source: *Grundy Register*, January 13, 1938



View of Frederick Furniture after 1938 front remodel, c.1940

Source: Grundy County IAGenWeb

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The brick work on the new front of the Frederick Furniture building was completed Saturday by Joe Wical. Work on the remodeling of the interior is being done by the Sletsema Construction Co.

Contractors for Frederick's 1963 full front remodel
Source: *Grundy Register*, October 18, 1962

Fredericks Grand Opening Friday-Saturday



THE FREDERICK FURNITURE STORE in Grundy Center is having the Grand Opening of their recently remodeled store Friday and Saturday, March 29th and 30th. More than \$500 in free prizes will be given away during the Grand Opening event. There will be free coffee and donuts, gifts, and special roses for the ladies who visit the store. The joining together of two store buildings into one furniture display and service area on the Grundy Center main street represents the completion of plans that the Fredericks have anticipated for many years. Frederick Furniture was founded by the late Howard Frederick more than 25 years ago. Thru the continued efforts of Bruce and Craig Frederick, the business has now expanded to four complete floors of furniture.

Announcement of Grand Opening, 1963
Source: *Grundy Register*, March 28, 1963

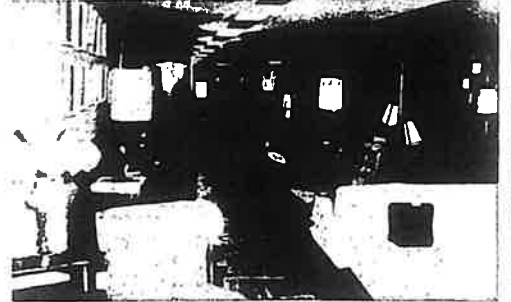
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Congratulations to Frederick Furniture

on the

Grand Opening Friday & Saturday, March 29th & 30th



This is one of the finest Furniture Stores in Central Iowa. We were pleased to have been selected for this extensive remodeling job — the making of one fine modern Furniture Store and the bringing together of two older buildings and remodeling them for this purpose.

FREDERICK FURNITURE has been a pioneer furniture store in our community, serving several generations of Home Owners in this area. After much planning, they decided last summer to go ahead with one of the most complete building projects in the history of their store.

They now have a Store designed to give you—their customers—the finest Furniture and Home Furnishing Service in their history of supplying Quality Merchandise at the Lowest Possible Cost. We hope all of you attend their "OPEN HOUSE" Friday and Saturday.

If you are planning a Remodeling project — or the building of a new place of business or home this spring or summer — let us go over your plans with you. We have the Men, the Skill, and the Experience to give you the type of building you want.

Home Improvement Center

Harvey Sietsema

Phone 824-6414

Grundy Center, Iowa

Contractor Sietsema's Grand Opening Ad for Frederick's Furniture, 1963
Source: Grundy Register, March 28, 1963

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2440 Attend Frederick's Grand Opening

More than 2440 people attended the open house Friday and Saturday at the Frederick Furniture store in Grundy Center.

The store was open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on those two days, and special gifts were available for all adults who attended the opening.

The weather was perfect for people to visit the store, and there was a continual stream of visitors thruout the two days. At 9 p.m. Saturday, the drawing for door prizes was held, there was a crowd of more than 100 present at 9 p.m. Saturday for the drawing. The winners did not need to be present to win.

The drawing of the names was done by six year old Debra Gehaus of Hubbard. The names of the winners and the prizes won are listed in the Frederick Furniture adv. for this week.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Grand Opening, March 29-30, 1963

Source: *Grundy Register*, April 4, 1963



Frederick Furniture in business and sign intact, 2010s

Source: Grundy County Assessor record