



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

11.1 - INTRODUCTION

The preservation of historic buildings and sites located in Independence is a major concern of the City. The restoration and rehabilitation of City owned historic properties is aligned with the preservation of the City's historic content, and is performed on the basis of stabilizing and increasing the positive economic impact to the neighborhood. Where City owned historic sites and future projects are concerned, the main objective of economic impact is to stabilize the neighborhood by preventing the spread of blight and slum development within these specific areas and adjacent neighborhoods. City owned sites are rehabilitated and operated for the benefit of the community.

State and Federal governments have recognized the City of Independence as a Certified Local Government (CLG). This places much of the responsibility for developmental design review of historic properties and the reporting of these plans and any subsequent impact through appropriate governmental agencies for review to the City. The City of Independence Heritage Commission is the main local body responsible for the historical content of the city and has assumed the responsibility for the compliance and enforcement of CLG procedures within the City. This commission was originally established to guide the development of historic properties along with the duties of enforcing the requirements of the Harry S Truman Heritage District.

In 1975 the Heritage Commission hired a consultant to produce the "Independence Historic Survey". This survey was financed in part through a comprehensive planning grant, under the Department and Urban Development, under the provision of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended

The Independence Historical Survey was con-

ducted to identify historically and architecturally significant properties. The survey developed two distinctive components identifying 426 properties in the City of varying historic and architectural significance. The primary list contains 109 properties that were considered historically significant meriting primary initial historical research and includes properties that were considered to have potential for National Register of Historic Places. The second list contains 317 properties of lesser historical significance. These properties were generally considered not eligible for the National Register as individual examples, but significant in their contribution for potential listing on a local register of historic properties or as supporting properties for districts and/or multiple listings. There are currently only twelve properties within the City listed on the National Register and there is no existing register for local designation and protection.

The overall purpose of historic site management focuses on three main elements for the development of City historic sites. This includes the planning, implementation, and coordination of development for historic properties.

Planning for restoration, rehabilitation, and recreation consists generally of research, physical investigation, and interpretation of historical issues involved with specific site goals for development.

Implementation includes physical attributes of each site, including preliminary exploration of the scope of work to be performed on a specific area of a structure or grounds; solicitation of potential contractors; contractual agreements; and direction and supervision of these activities.

Coordination of these activities generally includes special emphasis on work schedules, coordinating special functions of each societal entity involved with the property. All of the activities for site development are done with the intent to comply with the

national and state standards where applicable. Further, these activities are geared for maximum benefit to each respective site, its immediate environment, the resources available, and the community at large.

11.2 - BACKGROUND

In discussing the historical significance of the buildings within various areas of the City, it is important to begin with a synopsis of the historical background of the community to make clear each site or structure's significance in the overall history of the City.

Independence, Missouri, was founded in 1827 as the seat of government for the newly established County of Jackson, State of Missouri (Missouri had been admitted to the union in 1821). The first courthouse for Jackson County, the first west of the Mississippi River, was commissioned in February, 1827, and built under the direction of Daniel P. Lewis for \$150. Sam Shepherd, a slave of James Shepherd and an expert with broad axe, he wed the logs for the courthouse. Samuel Weston, blacksmith, provided the nails and glass in return for two lots in the new town plat. Although a more imposing building was constructed in the 1830's, the original log courthouse still stands as a historic landmark in Independence.

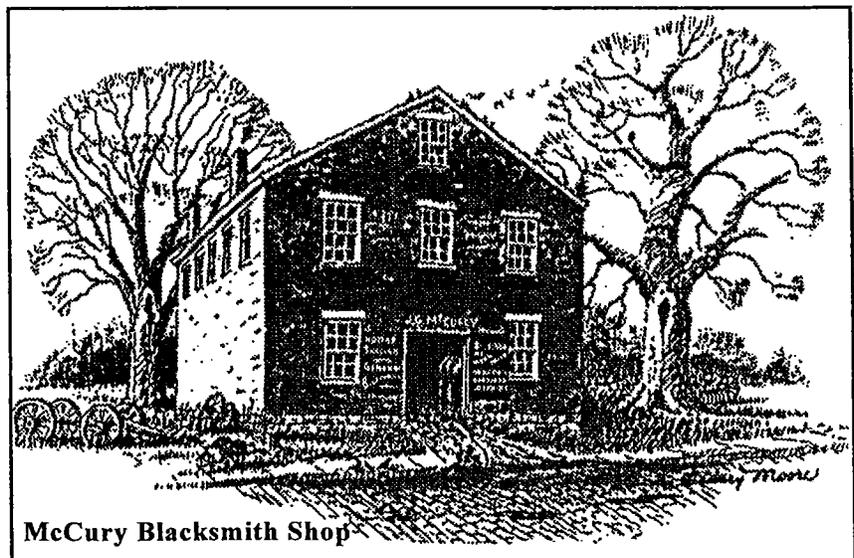
Three matters of extreme importance helped to determine the site of the future town: an abundance of potable water, access to river traffic (two miles north), and the area's location near the eastern terminus of the Santa Fe Road. William Becknell's pioneering freight company proved that wagon traffic was a feasible enterprise along the 800 mile southwestern trail route. Consequently, during the next thirty years, exclusive to Independence for the first seven years, hundreds of entrepreneurs, amateur and professional alike, left In-

dependence for the southwest with hope of making their fortunes on the Santa Fe Road. The Santa Fe Road, more than any other phenomenon, determined much of the present City's early development.

The first substantial trail, following on the reports of the early explorations, originated with the trappers, traders and merchants who, in the 1820's, opened commerce with Mexico via Taos, Santa Fe and Chihuahua. A flourishing overland trade was soon established, and it continued virtually unabated until the Civil War and the ascendancy of rail transport.

The great tide of westward, overland emigration commenced in the early 1840's in response to glowing reports and conditions and opportunities in the Oregon country and California. The tide became a flood with news of gold discovered in California in 1849.

Almost from the beginning, the Missouri River frontier served as the area of embarkation for most of those heading west (St. Louis on the Mississippi had earlier been the principal embarkation town for explorers and trappers and remained an important commercial center). Along the Missouri, a series of small but burgeoning towns grew up to act as "jumping-off" places to the West. Enclaves of civilization and commerce on the edge of an inhospitable wilderness, these towns prospered and ultimately declined over the years in response to changing travel requirements



and the inevitable advance of civilization.

Chief among the Missouri River embarkation towns was Independence, which dominated American commerce and outfitting into the overland West from c. 1830 to c. 1850. Independence enjoyed early prosperity and ascendancy in commerce as the principal eastern terminus for the Santa Fe trade. A recognized center of outfitters, wagon builders and mercantile capitalists, the town gained a reputation which subsequently drew thousands of overland emigrants and gold seekers during the 1840's and 1850's. The town commenced a commercial decline with the growth of other Missouri River outfitting towns to the west and north beginning c. 1847.

The role of Independence as an outfitting and commercial center at the head of the western trails made it a natural embarkation point for the great overland migrations which commenced in the early 1840's. Former trapper-traders, such as William Sublette and Thomas Fitzpatrick, guided the early parties of settlers, which established the overland emigrant trails to California and Oregon. Then followed a flood of settlers and gold seekers who, by the thousands, funneled through Independence between 1845 and 1850. These westward people lent the town a cosmopolitan atmosphere, and enlivened its commerce, far beyond its stable population base.

As a trading town, Independence developed around the constant influx of pioneers, maverick's, and mountain men. Hotels and taverns, sprung up around the public square, along with supply houses and mills, such as, the Overfelt mill that was located on Spring Street, and the Brock mill on Liberty where the Vail Mansion was latter built, supplied travelers with flour and meal. The Overfelt mill was the fore runner to the Waggoner and Gates milling operation, which is now the location of the National Frontier Trails Center museum. The Bingham Waggoner Estate located across the street from the mill and the Overfelt home, located on the southeast corner of Pleasant and Walnut, both date back to these early days.

The period of time between the founding of the County seat in 1827 and 1849 was one of the most colorful periods in the history of the City of Independence.

Phenomenal growth, including the establishment of churches, stores, banks and schools, along with excitement of the westward trails made life in this frontier town far from dull. The 1830's saw the arrival and departure of Joseph Smith and his L. D. S., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon), movement. Animosities forced the religious group to leave the Independence area in 1833. Westport, Missouri, was established in 1832. From this point forward a tug of war developed between the two areas. Westport and the City of Kansas (founded in 1845) ultimately won this economic battle, wresting a large part of the Santa Fe and immigrant trade for their own.

The Bidwell-Bartleson party of pioneers left Independence for the northwest in the 1830's, thus becoming the first immigrant wagon train to set forth on the road to Oregon. John Bartleson had been one of the three Commissioners appointed by the County Court to select the site for the town of Independence.

The 1840's witnessed two national disasters that, coupled with the impending violence over the issue of slavery, would spell economic chaos for the Independence area. The flood of 1844, the worst recorded flood on the Missouri River, wiped out Independence's principal river port, Wayne City, two miles to the north. Five years later, in 1849, cholera created a panic in the whole area of Western Missouri as well.

Independence never recovered from these set-backs; after the Civil War, the economic focus remained in the City of Kansas (becoming Kansas City in the 1880's). Phenomenal as the 1849 Gold Rush were still enough of a stimulus to keep dreamers and visionary developers interested in Independence for some time to come.

Independence became a staid county seat for the remainder of the century, with most of its attention focused on its past tribulations and glories rather than on its uncertain future.

Suburban development and speculation did cause some excitement in the 1880's and 1890's. Willard Winner and his mass transit line and Winner Road developments caused publicity in the area to

refer to Independence as “The Royal Suburb. “A turn-of-the-century attempt to annex Independence proved abortive for Kansas City, however.

Industry began to move to the area. Standard Oil and Portland Cement Company started operations in Independence’s northern outskirts about 1904-09. Due to the 1881 de-annexation of the area annexed by Independence in the 1850’s, these industries located outside of the City limits. Others, such as Gleaners (AGCO) and Waggoner-Gates Milling Company, continued to help the City’s economy from inside the boundaries.

The 1920’s and 30’s continued to see the Independence area develop as an agrarian county seat, becoming more and more involved in its own peculiar political intrigues. Kansas City and the Pendergast machine made its presence felt in the county government and consequently in Independence as well.

The 1940’s and early 50’s saw the focus of the nation turn toward Independence by the virtue of the Presidency of Harry S Truman, a product of the 1920-30 county political structure.

From 1950 to 1970 Independence steadily grew in size and population. From 1970 to the present time Independence annexed an additional 29.7 square miles to the east, which includes the Lake City Ammunition Plant and has stabilized in population growth. Its attention is now assuming a more equalized viewpoint between past and future considerations.

11.3 - HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES

This section contents a brief description of the historical buildings that have either been placed on the National Register of Historic Places or that are maintained by an agency or government for the purpose to preserve the history of Independence. Some buildings or sites have been altered over the years or moved to

help preserve the structure or site, but the importance of the history pertaining to the era of development for this part of the county remains intact.

The map, Figure 11.31 shows the location of the historic structures and sites described in this section, along with the historic Independence Square and the Harry S Truman National Historic Site.

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE

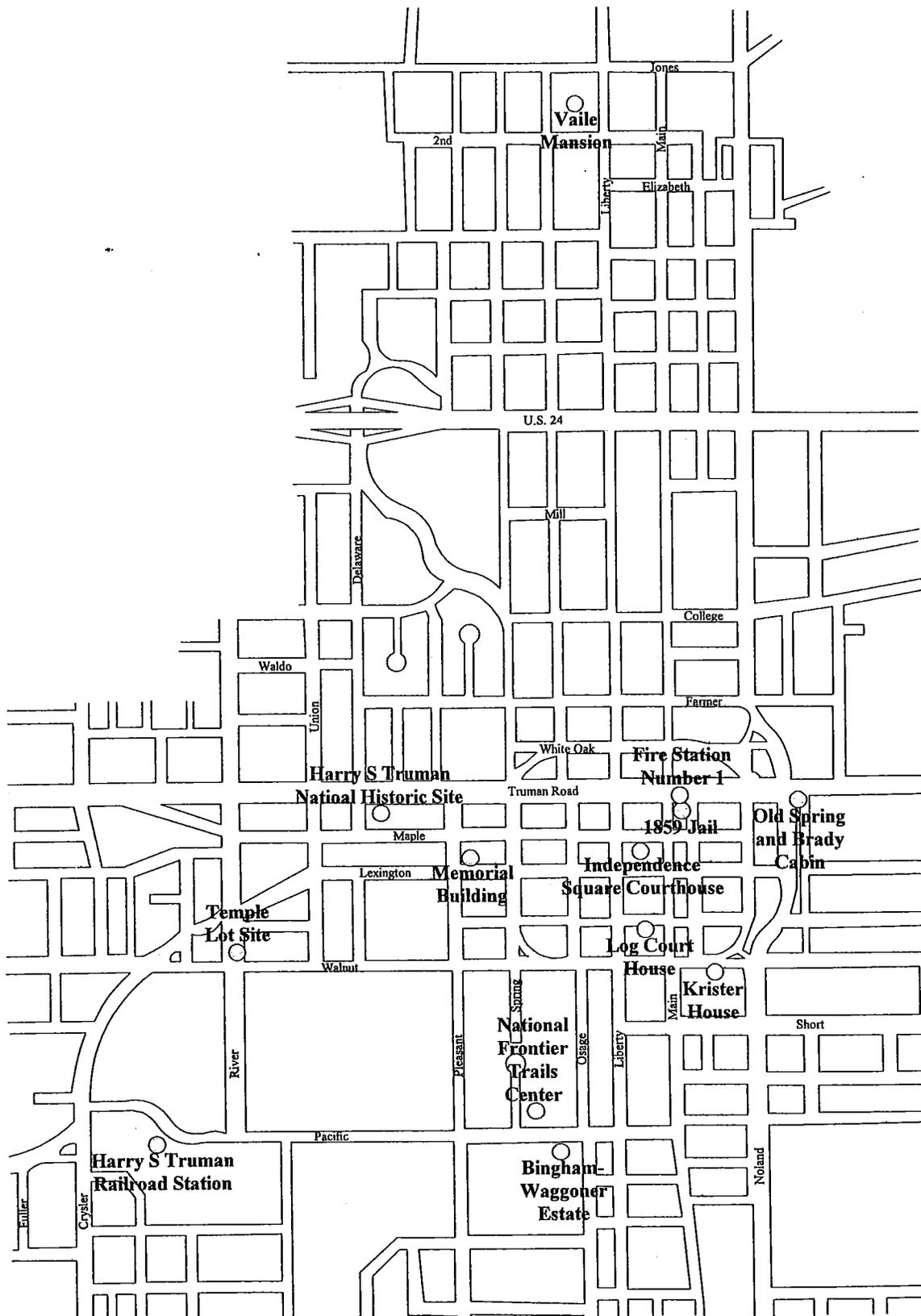
In assessing the significant architectural and historic structures in the Square area, an understanding of one important point concerning their evolution and development is essential: wholesale destruction or demolition of any particular structure was the exception rather than the rule on the Square until about 1930-40. Before this time, buildings were generally pieced together, reusing whatever structural elements could be retained. In the event of “modernization” of structures in the 1870’s, 80’s and 90’s, facade alterations were only substantial changes made, the rest of the building elements remaining generally intact. The Square has been a victim of successive fires (five major ones in the 19th century), which is another reason for its fragmented building elements and structures.

The Square area contains the most concentrated collection of historic sites and structures in the Independence area. The following structures or sites, the 1827 Log Courthouse, 1928 Fire Station Number 1, Brady Cabin, Old Spring, Bingham Waggoner Estate, Vaile Mansion, Kritser House, and the Harry S Truman Heritage District are maintained or regulated by the City of Independence, and are located in or near the Square area.

There are a number of other historic buildings and sites that are maintained by other historic agencies or societies. The Independence Square Courthouse is maintained by Jackson County. The Jackson County Historical Society maintains the 1859 Jail and Marshal’s home. The National Park Service maintains the Harry S Truman National Historic Site, which contains the Harry S Truman home, the Wallace home, and the Noland/Haukenberry home. The RLDS, LDS and Church of Christ-Temple Lot (Hedreckite) Churches

FIGURE 11.31

HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND SITES



maintain the Temple Lot site, which relates to Joseph Smith and his followers. The Missouri Pacific Railroad Depot (Harry S Truman Railroad Station) is maintained by the Union Pacific Railroad company.

1827 LOG COURTHOUSE

The 1827 Log Courthouse was built as a temporary quarters for the government of Jackson County. This two room log structure was originally located at the corner of Lynn and Lexington Streets. Daniel P. Lewis, a relative of Daniel Boone, received the construction contract with the bid of \$150.00. Tradition maintains that the logs for the building were hewn by the slave, Sam Shepard. The building was completed in time for the 1828 Presidential election of Andrew Jackson, when it served as a polling place for residents of Blue Township.

After it was vacated by the Jackson County government, the log structure was put to a variety of uses. Acquired by Samuel Burke in connection with a saddler shop adjacent to the building, the structure soon passed to A. S. Gilbert, Latter-day Saint merchant, as a dwelling house in 1832. After the expulsion of the Latter-day Saints from the Independence area in 1833, the property was leased to one Wynkoop Warner, who had married a granddaughter of Daniel Boone's and who owned a "house of entertainment" in Independence. Other owners over the years included Santa Fe merchant Samuel Owens, a casualty of the Battle of Sacramento during the Mexican War. The structure survived both Civil War battles that passed through the Square in 1862 and 1864. By 1869, the building apparently was used by members of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) until a permanent church structure was finished.

Acquired by Christian Ott in 1905, the structure was offered to both city and county governments in 1911. After various proposals, the City of Independence agreed to move the venerable building to 107 West Kansas, directly behind the City Hall. In 1921, the Community Welfare League of Independence moved into the "restore" courthouse, which had been equipped with stone fireplaces and a veranda that were not part of its original design. Mrs. Harry S Truman

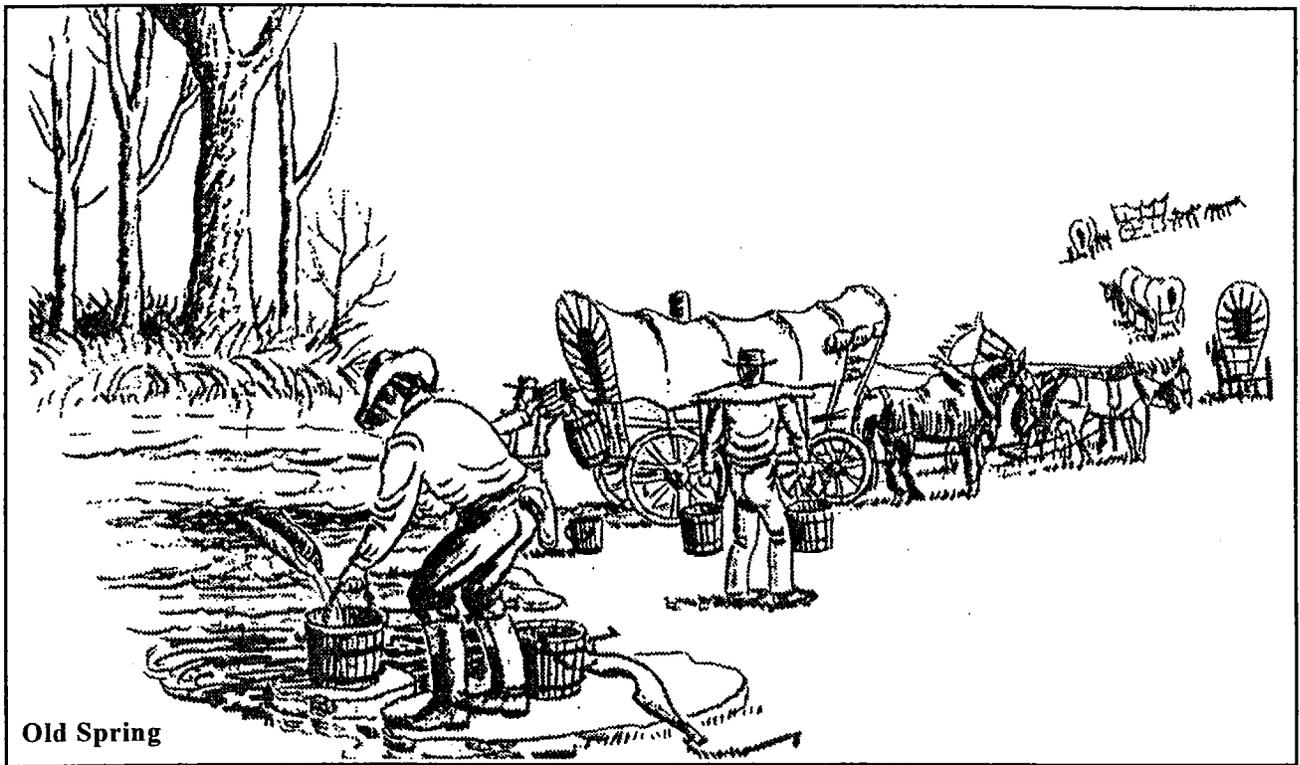
was an active member of the Community Welfare League at this time. During remodeling of the courthouse on the Square in Independence, Judge Harry S Truman moved the county court proceedings back to the building in 1932-33. The Community Welfare League continued to use the building and the adjacent Aikens Cabin (moved to the site in the 1920's) until 1973.

Upon the adoption of a new charter form of government by Jackson County, the last county court held its final meeting in the original log building on November 27, 1972. In 1981, the building underwent an additional restoration with the assistance of Independence Young Matrons and the City of Independence.

OLD SPRING

An abundance of spring water and timber made Independence, Missouri attractive to pioneers of the 1820's and 1830's. This area once known in local legend as "Big Spring" has been an Independence landmark ever since the platting of the county seat in 1827. Located on the Spring Branch Road, it served as a source of pure water for Indians, early settlers, soldiers, and citizens for many years.

Many interesting legends are associated with this area. In 1833 three hundred and sixty Kickapoo and Pottawatomie Indians camped in the area east of Independence on their way to new lands in Indian Territory (Kansas). According to some sources, water from this spring was used to operate a foundry known as the Robison and Crook foundry, credited with the manufacture of the "wind wagon" for a man named Thomas in 1846. The wagon was designed to be propelled across the prairies by sails. During the Civil War, the area immediately east of the original Spring site was developed by Union Troops and local conscript labor into a two and one half acre compound known as "Fort Pennock". Water from this source also was used to power the first light plant for the City of Independence. In 1884, the spring stopped running for a brief period due to a fissure caused by blasting. During the 1930's road improvements obliterated the original spring site and the water was piped under the



road to a new area which was equipped with a natural stone wall and steps.

In 1971, the old spring site was brought to the attention of the citizens of Independence by the Independence Study Club and the site was rebuilt to simulate the spring with piped city water, but the sentiment remains. The City of Independence maintains this historic site.

Another old legend of Independence states that if you drink from the spring in Independence you will always return to the town.

BRADY CABIN

This authentic pioneer log cabin was built around the time of the Civil War and was later moved to the current location adjacent to the "Old Spring". During the time of the Civil War a man named Brady was connected with a development known locally as "Brady Town", an Irish shanty town located south of the Square. The log structure in use at the spring site today was part of this neighborhood.

The Brady cabin, originally located on property belonging at one time to Henry W. and Bersheba Younger, parents of Missouri outlaw Cole Younger, was donated to the old spring site project. The cabin

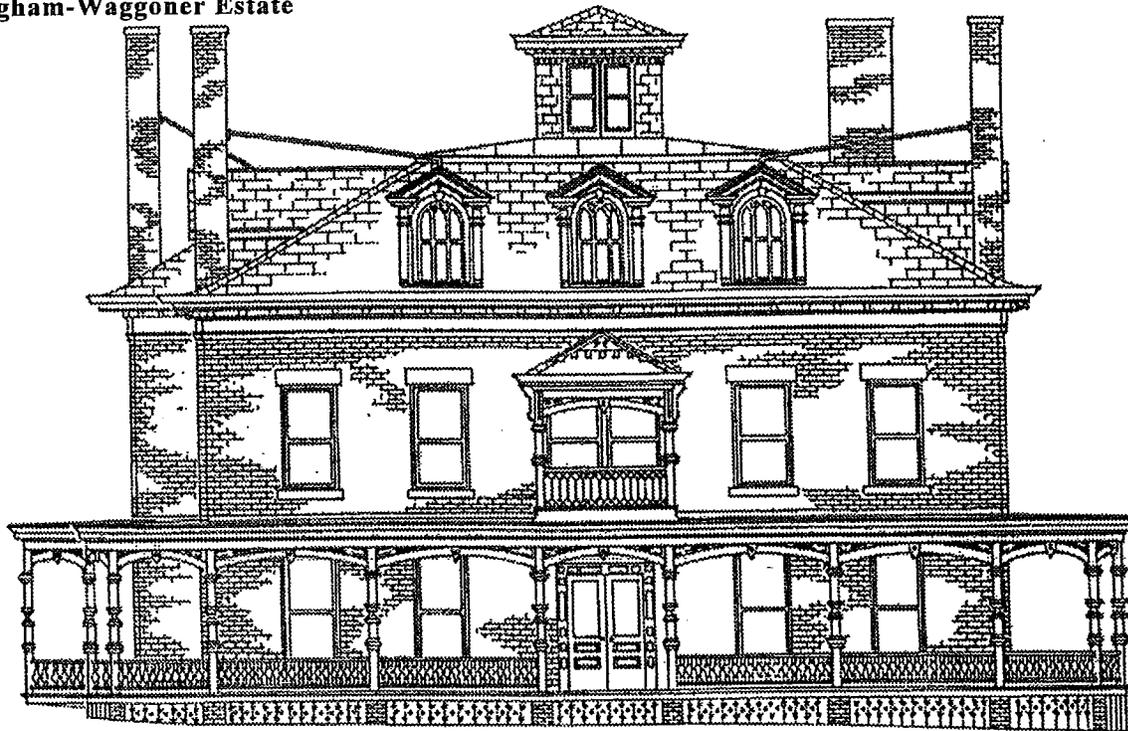
simulates the original cabin of pioneer James Shepard, who allegedly settled at "Big Spring" in the Blue Country in 1821 on the advice of his cousin William Clark.

The property of the "Old Spring Site" and "Brady Cabin" is owned and maintained by the City of Independence. The log cabin is operated as a tourist site by the Independence Study Club.

BINGHAM-WAGGONER ESTATE

This structure was built in 1855 alongside the 1846 alignment of the Santa Fe Trail. The home was first occupied by John Lewis, an Independence pioneer. The house and accompanying nineteen acres were purchased by the Missouri artist George Caleb Bingham in 1864. Active in state and local affairs and a member of the Independence School Board, Bingham

Bingham-Waggoner Estate



and his second wife, Eliza Thomas-Bingham, made their home here until 1870.

In 1862 and 1864 two Civil War battles passed across the northern vista of the estate. Bingham, profoundly affected by the agony and turmoil caused by the Civil War in western Missouri, opposed General Order Number Eleven, the infamous 1863 directive of General Thomas Ewing, that drove thousands of border residents from their homes and farms. Bingham retaliated against this injustice by painting "Martial Law", popularly known as "Order Number Eleven" in a studio on the property. The painting caused violent controversy in post war Missouri between Union and Confederate partisans about the merits and accuracy of Bingham's portrayal.

In 1866, Peter and William Wagoner, Pennsylvania millers, purchased a long-established flour mill across the street from Bingham's home. In 1879, the Waggoner family purchased the former Bingham home and its nineteen acres as their residence. In the 1890's, the Waggoner's extensively remodeled the original structure and added a series of new outbuildings. Kansas City architects Root and Seimans and decorator Henry Ohaus were employed to design and

supervise additions to the house and interior decorative treatments.

In 1883, the Waggoners, together with other associates including businessman George Potterfield Gates (maternal grandfather of Bess Wallace Truman), founded the Waggoner-Gates Milling Company. The firm was regionally famous for their flour products, most notably, "Queen of the Pantry Flour".

In 1979 the City of Independence acquired the nineteen acre tract and home as a historic site and public park. The Bingham-Waggoner Estate continues to be a site of paramount importance in the preservation and interpretation of the historic and cultural resources and background of western Missouri.

VAILE MANSION

A native of Vermont, Harvey Merrick Vaile, arrived in Independence in 1859. The townspeople knew him as a lobbyist in relation with national statesman. A prominent politician of national reputation not only politically, but socially who spent much

time in Washington.

The local entrepreneur and United States mail contractor contracted, Captain A. B. Cross as the architect to work out the general plan and details of construction and Mr. O. S. Street to build the house, after a trip to Europe where Colonel and Mrs. Vaile were inspired by a large French home in Normandy, France. The thirty room mansion is located on the site of Mr. Vaile's extensive farm holdings north of the public square.

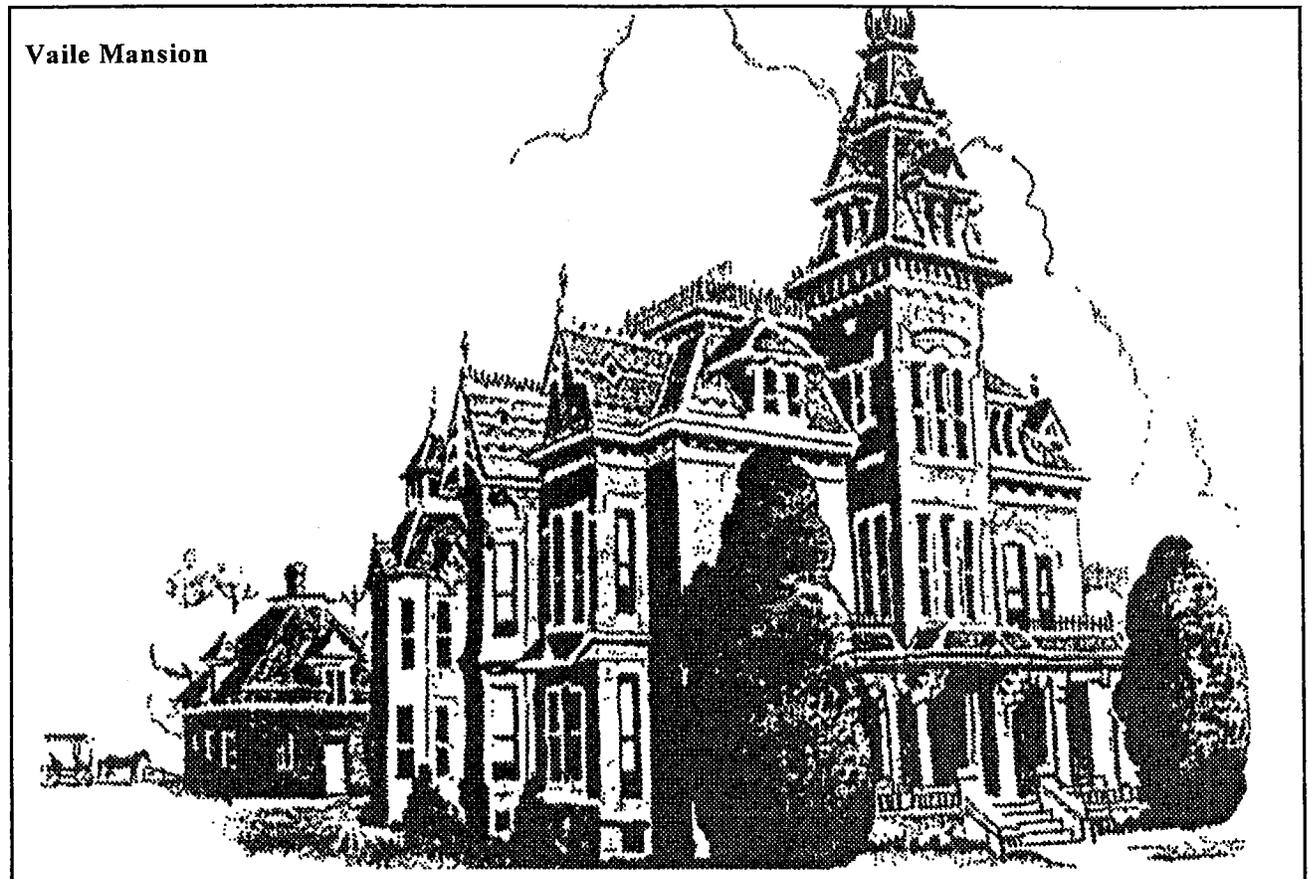
As Vaile's home in Independence was being finished, Vaile and his partner, L. P. Williamson of Independence, were indicted for defrauding the government in the operation of "Star" mail routes. Vaile's wife Sophia took an overdose of morphine during the evening of February 14, 1883, and died early the next morning, leaving a sealed note for her husband. Harvey Vaile was acquitted on June 14, 1883, he returned to his palatial home in Independence, sold his interest in his mail routes, and lived at the mansion until his death on June 5, 1894.

Originally the mansion was built on a 55 acre tract surrounded by hundreds of acres. The grounds around the mansion provided for a brick stable, reflecting lake with gazebos, arbors, fountains, goldfish pond, greenhouse, a wine cellar with a 48,000 gallon capacity with vessels holding 2,000 gallons. Also the gas and water works system, was rare for the period in which the mansion was built.

After Colonel Vaile's death the home became an Inn for a brief period and later passed into use as a private asylum and sanitarium. A mineral water company, the Vaile Pure Water Company, operated from the mansion site and offered the "Queen of Table Waters" to the area soon after the turn of the century. The mansion was donated to the City of Independence, by Mary Mildred DeWitt upon her death in 1983.

KRITSER HOUSE

This structure was built in 1850 and acquired



by the City of Independence in 1989 in order to preserve the historical importance of this building.

FIRE STATION NUMBER 1

The Fire Station has been used for city offices and currently serves as headquarters for the National Parks Service, Harry S Truman National Historic Site. The National Parks Service also uses this structure as a ticket office and information center for the Truman site. The structure also serves as a maintenance garage for the Independence Park Maintenance Division, which is located in the basement. This historic site is owned by the City of Independence and shares the maintenance responsibilities for this structure with the National Park Service. The building also serves as an information center for the City of Independence historic sites.

MEMORIAL BUILDING

This structure was built by private subscription in 1926 as the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial by the American War Mothers Chapter of Independence, Missouri. The structure is typical in style and sentiment of buildings erected by mid-western communities as a tribute to those citizens who lost their lives in the "war to end all wars."

Harry S Truman, World War One veteran and former captain of Battery "D" of the 129th Field Artillery, 35th Division, was active in the campaign to promote the building. The memorial edifice was designed in a Neo-Georgian style by Independence architect Alonzo H. Gentry. The floor plan was drawn in the form of a Greek cross and the brickwork laid in Flemish bond. The building was constructed by M. T. Colgan.

The lobby housed a museum area equipped with artifacts from the great war. The display was complemented by bas-relief bronze profiles of President Wilson and General Pershing located at the east and west ends of the foyer. The foyer also included a list of the war dead on tablets in the center of the north wall.

On June 27, 1945, President Harry S Truman held a presidential news conference on the basketball court of the Memorial Building. It marked his first return to Independence since his assumption of the office of the presidency upon the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

The building also serves as a community and recreation center and houses the Parks and Recreation Department offices. It contains an auditorium/gym with basketball courts, meeting rooms and served as a polling place for over fifty years.

After President Truman return to Independence following his presidency in 1953 the building was used to store part of the papers of his administration until the Harry S Truman Library and Museum was constructed. The death of President Truman on December 26, 1972, caused the Memorial Building to become a central communications point for national and international news media. Many of the phone lines installed by the press and wire service for coverage of the state funeral service at the Truman Library are still observable.

NATIONAL FRONTIER TRAILS CENTER

During America's expansion in the 1800's, three great routes led the pioneers west, the Oregon, California and Santa Fe Trails. All three started in or near Independence, Missouri, known as the Queen City of the Trails.

The National Frontier Trails Center is located near the spring where the settlers filled their water barrels. This facility is the only interpretive center, museum and archives exclusively devoted to the three trails west. The museum contains diary entries of pioneer men, women and children that let you experience what life was like on the trails, including those from the prestigious Paden Collection. The Center is constructed on the site of the Waggoner-Gates Mill which was built in 1883. Part of the original structure contains the offices, archives, research library of the Frontier Trails Center.

The Waggoners, together with other associ-

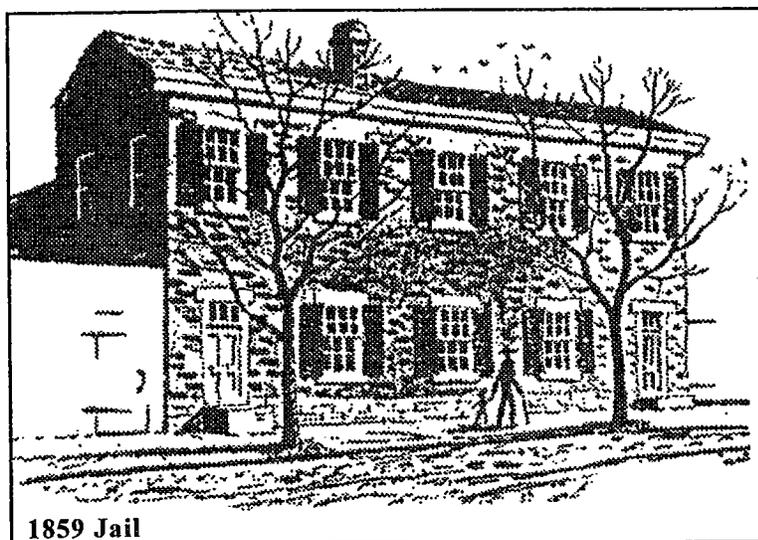
ates including businessman George Potterfield Gates (material grandfather of Bess Wallace Truman, wife of the thirty-third President of the United States, Harry S Truman), founded the Waggoner-Gates Milling Company. The firm was regionally famous for their flour products, most notably, "Queen of the Pantry Flour".

The Archives and Research Library located within the Museum contain rare books, diaries and letters of the pioneers for those wishing to pursue their interest in the westward migration. In conjunction with programs provided by the Oregon-California Trails Association patrons can delve further into America's great westward movement or trace an elusive ancestor who traveled the trails.

The National Frontier Trails Center museum is open to the general public and the historic displays are changed periodically. This facility is operated and maintained by staff personnel of the City of Independence.

1859 JAIL MUSEUM AND MARSHALL'S HOME

This two-story 1859 Jail, with its massive limestone walls, barred windows and double iron doors housed thousands of prisoners, both famous and infamous, including Frank James, brother of Jesse James, and John Younger and William Clark Quantrill, of the famous border-warrior's known as Quantrill's



Raiders. At one time families of Southern sympathizers were imprisoned in these cells by Federal Troops.

Four feet away from the dungeon-like cells and leg chains rises the back wall of a Federalist-style house which fronts on Main Street, Independence. This was home to a succession of county marshals and their families until the late 1920's. It was the Provost Marshall's headquarters during the Civil War. The Marshall's living quarters have been restored with period wallpaper, carpeting and furnishings. The brick facade has been restored to its exact original appearance.

An ante-bellum schoolhouse, which was a private school built for the Howard children on their father's large Jackson County farm in the 1860's is part of this historic site. The school stands exactly as it was when it was in use and has not been rebuilt. The school is a fascinating reminder of the mixture of South and West in Jackson County.

This historic site is located just one-half block from the square, the last jumping-off place for the thousands of settlers heading west on the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California trails. It is operated and maintained by the Jackson County Historical Society.

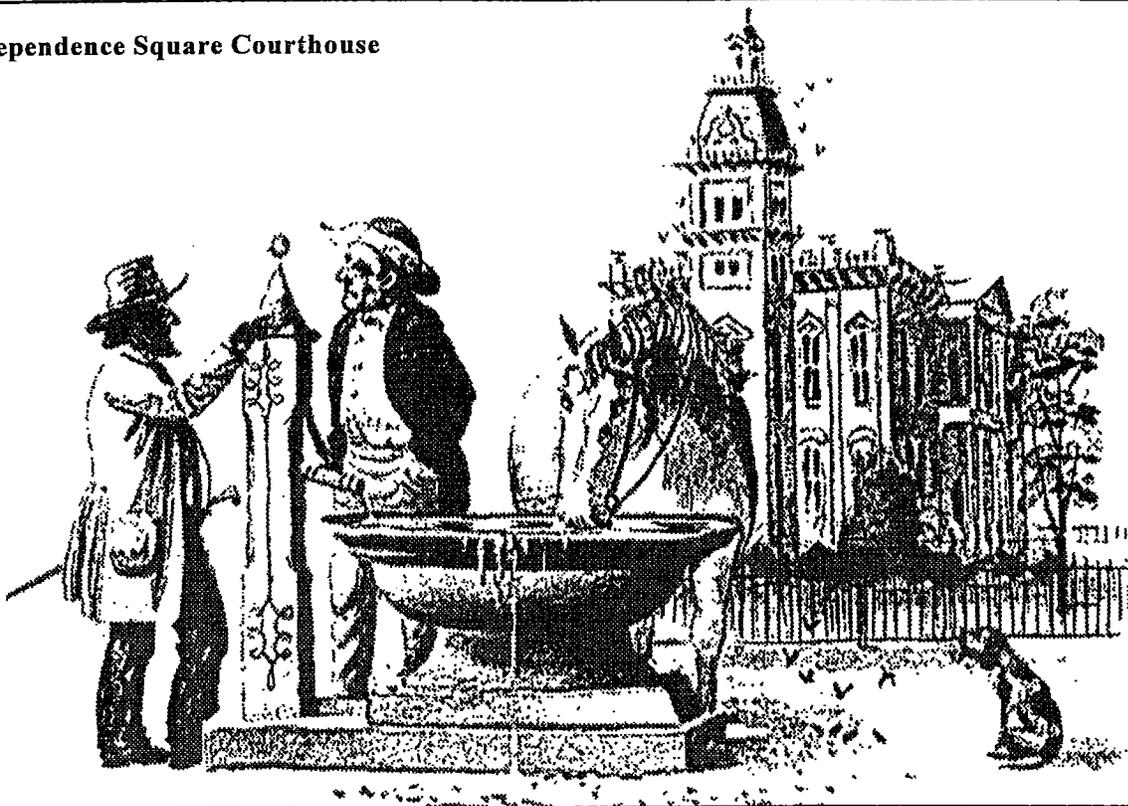
INDEPENDENCE SQUARE COURT-HOUSE

The Independence Square Courthouse is located on the site of the original Jackson County Courthouse, which was constructed in 1828 to replace the Log Courthouse. This building has been remodeled five times since the original foundation was laid.

Harry S Truman began his political career as a County Judge in the courthouse and the original office and court room where he presided has been restored. A multi-media presentation traces Truman's life before his presidency.

The Jackson County Historical Society Archives and Research Library are

Independence Square Courthouse



located in this building and is open for research of the history of Jackson County. Descendants of early day families were eager for a safe depository for diaries of the western trails, for Civil War letters, old photographs and books and records of pioneer businesses. County offices cluttered with old land grants and probate and tax records were transferred to this location for safe keeping and accessibility for the public.

Early newspapers, school records, church histories, rare books, posters and maps have been added to the scope of the collection, now a national treasure trove to historians, writers and genealogists.

HARRY S TRUMAN RAILROAD STATION

The Missouri Pacific Railroad Station was constructed in 1913 as a replacement for an earlier frame depot built after the Civil War, which hosted the homecoming of Missouri outlaw Frank James in October 1882. This depot figured in the presidential career of Harry S Truman and his 1948 “Whistle

Stop” campaign.

Mr Truman returned to Independence by rail following his speech in Saint Louis, making the final address of this memorable presidential campaign from his home on Independence via national radio. Mr. Truman boarded the train at this site for his triumphal return to Washington D. C. following the 1948 election. In 1953 the station was the site of a homecoming for the ex-president attended by 10,000 people on the occasion of his return to Independence following his presidency.

A history of the Missouri Pacific Depot is located in the lobby of the station. The station is currently operated and maintained by the Union Pacific Railroad Company.

TEMPLE LOT SITE

In 1831, Joseph Smith designated Independence as the new site for the city of Zion. Today, his descendants head the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) from Indepen-

dence. The 1830's saw the arrival and departure of Joseph Smith and his L.D.S., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon), movement.

The R.L.D.S. Auditorium is located on the southwest corner of Walnut and River Boulevard and serves as the administrative world headquarters of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The large auditorium chamber has a seating capacity of 5,800. In addition to church functions, including the bi-annual World Conference, this building is used by many groups and organizations for concerts, lectures, civic meetings, etc.

The Stone Church located on the northwest corner of Lexington and River Boulevard is part of this historic site. This R.L.D.S. church was constructed in 1888 for the followers of this religious movement.

The Mormon Visitor's Center is operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and is located on the southeast corner of Walnut and River Boulevard. This Center tells the story of the Mormon Church in early Missouri history. The lower level of the Center features an historic exhibit "Zion in Missouri" showing the role played by the Latter-day Saints in Missouri during the 1830's. Also a Missouri frontier

cabin built more than a 140 years ago, was dismantled at its original site and reassembled inside the Center. The RLDS, LDS and Church of Christ-Temple Lot (Hedreckite) Churches maintain the Temple Lot site, which relates to Joseph Smith and his followers.

HARRY S TRUMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

THE TRUMAN HOME

The Harry S Truman National Historic Site is a relatively new unit of the national park system. The site consists of the Truman home, the George P/May Wallace home, the Frank Wallace home and the Noland home. The national historic site was authorized by Congress on May 23, 1983, to "preserve and interpret for the inspiration and benefit of present and future generations the former home of Harry S Truman, thirty-third President of the United States".

As a nation, we value the homes of our presidents not only as commemorative sites but also as a means of understanding those who gained our country's highest office. And people's homes do, indeed, tell us much about themselves, especially when



Truman Home

they are viewed in their full social context.

President Harry S Truman's home is notable for being a gracious old Victorian house that had been in his wife's family for three generations and for being an integral part of a midwestern, small-town, middle class neighborhood. It is part of a family compound shared with the residences of two of his brothers-in-law and their wives, and it was across the street from the home of his aunt. This environment both reflected and influenced Harry S Truman's values concerning his family, his neighbors, and his community—all of which were inseparable from his concept of "home".

Harry Truman never really went to Washington, he just commuted from his hometown of Independence. Known as the "Summer White House" during Truman's presidency, this 14 room Victorian home was completed by Mrs. Truman's material grandfather in 1885.

This restored house was home for Bess and Harry Truman from their marriage in 1919 until their death's. The Truman home was fully furnished in 1982 at the time of Mrs. Truman's death. It contains an estimated 35,000 objects from the many generations of the Gates/Wallace/Truman families who occupied the home. The National Park Service is responsible for the interpretation of the home with its furnishings and operates and maintains the facility.

WALLACE HOMES AND NOLAND HOME

The Wallace homes and Noland house are part of the Harry and Bess Family compound that served as residents of Bess Truman's brothers and Harry Truman's aunt. The three homes are adjacent to the Truman home. These three structure have been acquired by the National Park Service and are preserved and interpreted as part of the Truman family story.

The significance of these structures to the Truman domestic history warrants the historically accurate preservation and constant maintenance of their facades and grounds.

11.4 - HISTORIC DISTRICTS

HARRY STRUMANNATIONAL LANDMARK DISTRICT

The essential link between Harry S Truman and the neighborhood where he lived has been recognized through the creation of the Harry S Truman National Landmark District. The district, which encompasses an approximately one-block-wide buffer zone surrounding the Truman home and a 0.7 mile-long corridor linking it with the Harry S Truman Library, was established by the secretary of the interior in 1972 under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The designation was based on the historic character of the neighborhood and the fact that the neighborhood environment is important to the Truman domestic history. The official district nomination form described the neighborhood as "the setting which has been the physical nucleus of both Harry S Truman's personal and his long and influential political life." The map, Figure 11.41 shows the area of the City which contains the Harry S Truman National Landmark District.

Together the national historic site and the surrounding national historic landmark district offer the opportunity to interpret the story of Harry S Truman's home life in Independence. By understanding his home life and his relationships with his family and neighbors, it is possible to gain a greater understanding of the Truman presidency, since the resounding theme of the Harry S Truman domestic story is the unity that existed between his personal values, his family life, his citizenship in the community, and his political career.

HARRY S TRUMAN HERITAGE DISTRICT

The City of Independence Heritage Commission is the main local body responsible for the compliance and enforcement of Certified Local Government procedures within the City. This commission was established to guide the development of historic prop-

FIGURE 11.41

HARY S TRUMAN HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT

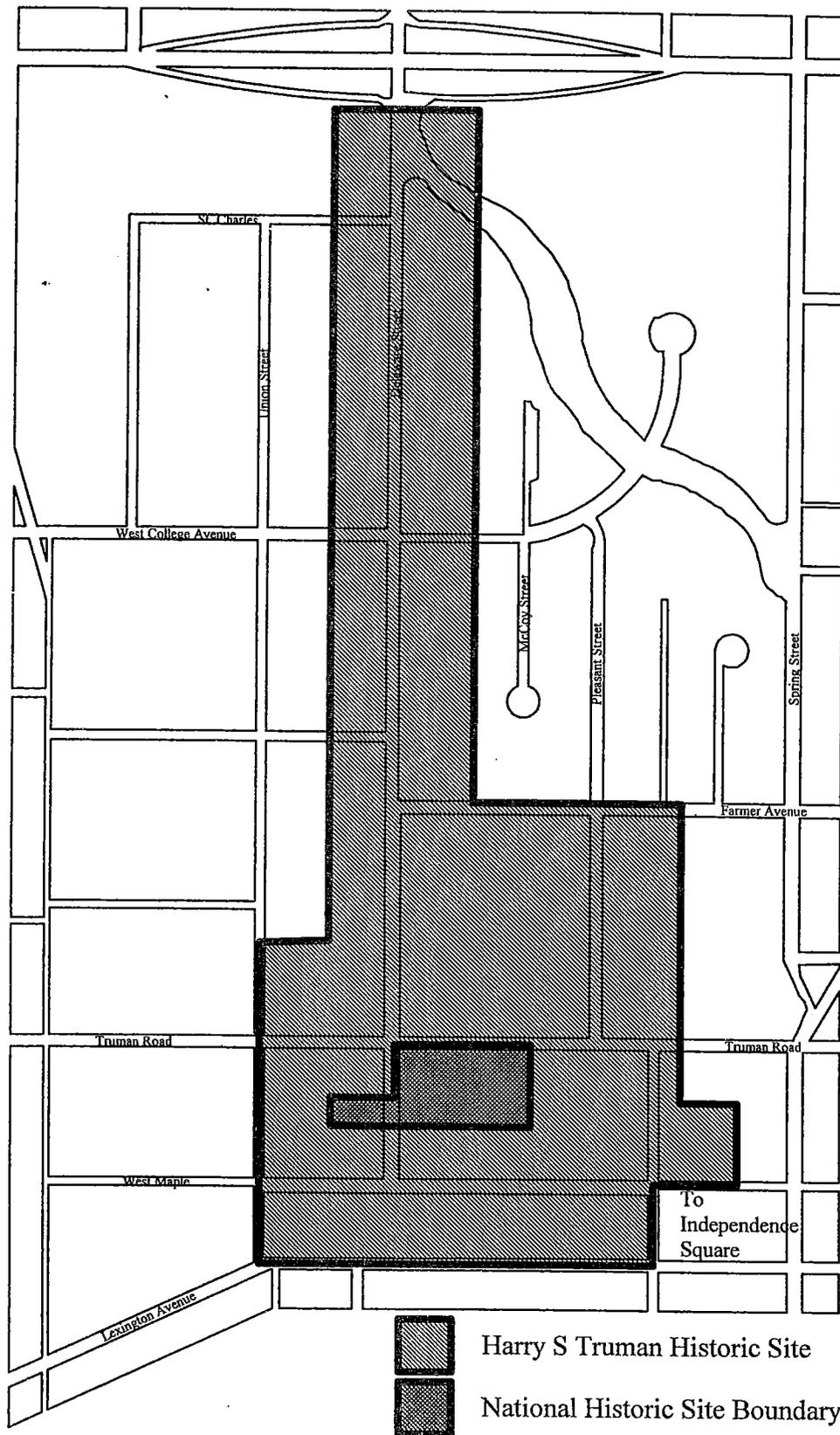
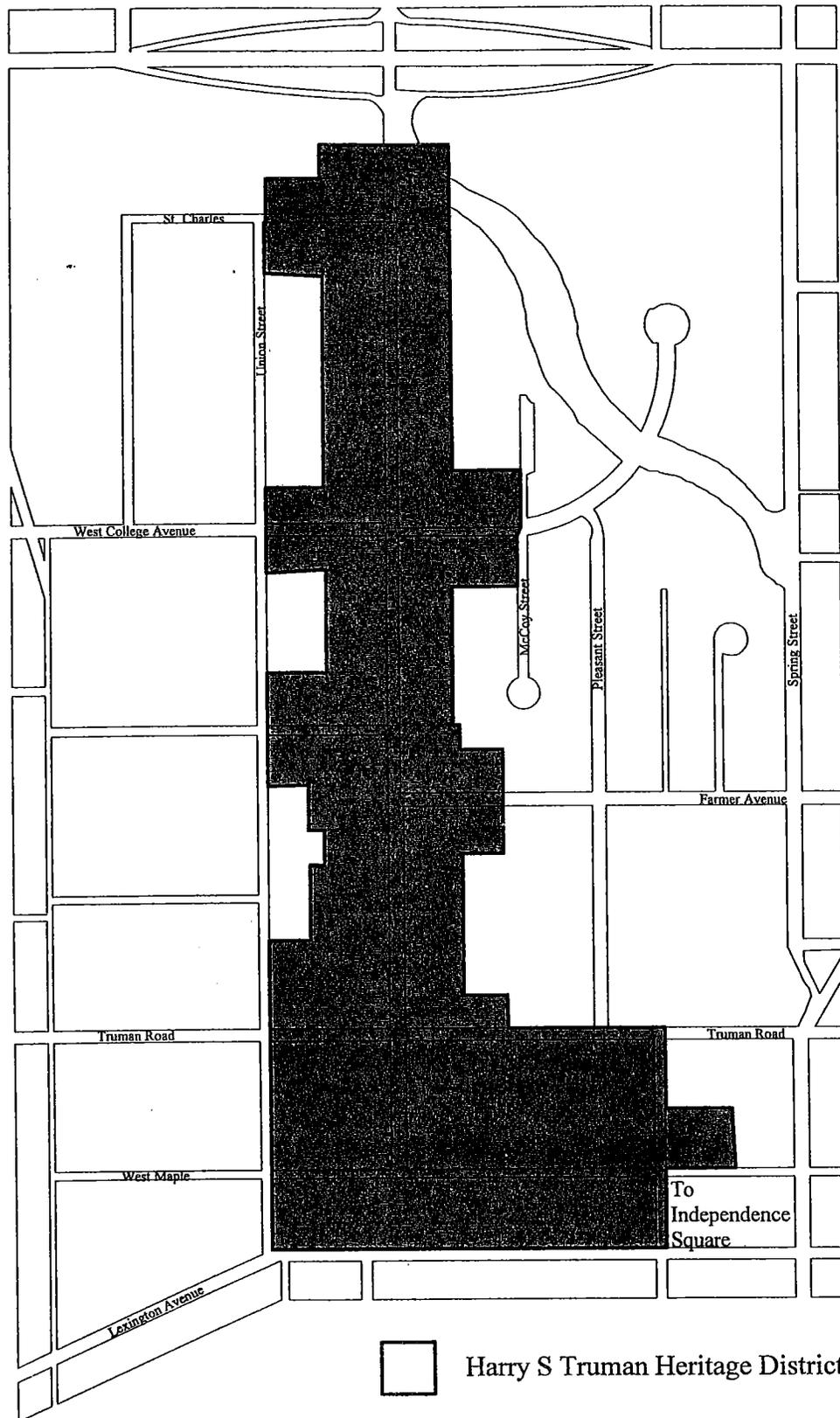


FIGURE 11.42

HARRY S TRUMAN HERITAGE DISTRICT



□ Harry S Truman Heritage District

erties along with the duties of enforcing the requirements of the Harry S Truman Heritage District. They are responsible for the developmental design review of historic properties and the reporting of plans or impact the plans may have to appropriate governmental agencies for review by the City. The map, Figure 11.42 shows the area of the Harry S Truman Heritage District, which was amended from the original district and approved on February 6, 1984.

The current regulations that govern the Harry S Truman Heritage District have been approved by the City Council through Ordinance 7917 on February 6, 1984 and copies of the ordinance are available in the City Clerks' office or in the Planning Department, Historic Preservation Division.

11.5 - GUIDE FOR HISTORIC PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The following outline is a guide for specific site preservation, conservation, and interpretation. The outline is general in nature so that consideration of specific site needs, priorities, and available funds can be addressed in specific situations.

CRITERIA FOR PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

1. History and/or Background of the Property

This section should provide a brief, factual summary of how the property was acquired by the City, the legal conditions under which it was accepted, funding provided (endowment and operating funds if any), past development, property use and the level of current operation.

2. Site Objectives

This section should be a careful analy-

sis and thorough evaluation of each property relationship to its overall purpose and goals. Specific recommendations should be made in each area to improve its value as an historic site, as a resource to the community, and the potential source of revenue for maintenance of the site.

a. Comprehensive Plan for Restoration, Rehabilitation, Recreation and Public Visitation

Along range plan for property development must be considered which will identify historical interpretational needs of the site including the physical, cultural, and adapted use goals to be applied or sought for that particular property. This should provide an interim position for the City to pursue and to use as a working tool for decisions affecting future use of the property. This item should include a phased, long term schedule for completion of the project, or at least the beginning phases of property development, that would be subject to seasonal or annual review.

b. Maintenance

The present condition of building(s) and grounds should be evaluated to determine what work is necessary to bring the property to an acceptable maintenance level in accordance with applicable building codes, public visitational needs and acceptable professional standards.

c. Curatorial

The present condition of furnishings, documents, and works of art should be evaluated at the property. Recommendations should be made regarding the proper display and care of

objects on exhibit or in storage. Proper storage should be made available before any items are placed in storage or additional items added to the collection. Beginning inventory of the collection should be made, donors properly listed and an annual inventory of the collection should be made and presented to all interested parties.

d. Research, Documentation, and Publication

A general analysis of the current status of research on the history of each property should be made. This should include architecture, furnishings, interiors, landscape and general appearance and condition in different periods of its history should be made. Recommendations will be made on future directions and needs for fully documenting and interpreting each property. To accomplish this goal a general property survey and evaluation should be made of available photographs, drawings, and paper materials of relevance at each site. Specific areas should be identified for research reports and publications to supplement the documentation and interpretation of each property. Normally, this will be done as historical issues or areas of concern are addressed in the general course of development.

e. Property Use and Interpretation

This evaluation should include an analysis of any programs being carried out at each site. It should include an evaluation of all site related programs and services, special events, special use and property rental. Each use should be evaluated in terms of its appropriateness to the property, goals of the Historic Preservation Program,

and its effectiveness as an educational experience and attraction to visitors. Recommendations will be made for the elimination, continuation of improvement of current programs. Special programs and property rentals should be evaluated in terms of their appropriateness to a City owned historic property and their effectiveness in producing revenue. The wear and tear on the grounds, buildings, and art collections should be taken into condition.

f. Management and Operation

An examination of current operating budget, staff and management tools of the property should be made in concert with overall program analysis. Management alternatives should be recommended to operate and maintain each property at a maximum level within current authorized funding sources in the budget. Budget projections for staffing and equipment will be made based upon the present and future operational goals and objectives of each property.

11.6 - HISTORIC SURVEY PLAN

The City of Independence has participated in the effort of historic preservation, particularly in management of city owned historic property, with the formation of the Heritage Commission in 1973; the formation of a Historic Preservation function in the Planning Department; and, the formation of the Harry S Truman Heritage District. However, a cohesive management tool identifying and providing the necessary information to establish preservation management of the city's historic resources is lacking.

A plan to preserve the city's historic resources

quent phases of the survey plan should consist of an organized and on going educational aspect of the process, additional registration as needed, protection, and treatment in a logical, sequential fashion.