

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1. Name of Property

historic name East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase)

other names/site number Lockridge, T. F., Harness Company Building, Wichman Nash Service Building

2. Location

street & number 202 E. Columbia Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Farmington [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Francois code 187 zip code 63640

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments .)

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

16 APRIL 2007
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

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
See continuation sheet .

Signature of the Keeper

Date

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

10

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store
COMMERCE/TRADE/Business

Current Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

OTHER/Two-Part Commercial Block

Materials

foundation STONE/Limestone
walls BRICK
STONE/Limestone
roof SYNTHETICS/rubber
other

Narrative Description

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

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.

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE

Periods of Significance

1908-1954

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository: _____

East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase)
St. Francois County, Missouri

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References

A. Zone Easting Northing
 15 727320 4184200

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

[] 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 Timothy P. Maloney, Karen Bode Baxter

organization Karen Bode Baxter, Preservation Specialist date March 27, 2007

street & number 5811 Delor telephone (314) 353-0593

city or town St. Louis state Missouri zip code 63109

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

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

name GEM'N-I Properties, LC, c/o Janet M. Carp

street & number 1723 Carroll St. telephone (314)-436-7757

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63104

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East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase)
Farmington, St. Francois County, MO

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Narrative Description

The East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase) in Farmington, St. Francois County, Missouri expands the current historic district at the east end across Henry Avenue on the south side of the street. It encompasses one property, addressed as 202 East Columbia Street and known historically as the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building. This property is immediately adjacent to the East Columbia Historic District (NR listed 7/14/04) and shares the same flat topography as the rest of the historic district. It was not included originally because at the time the building was covered with metal siding that has since been removed. The building retains much of its historic integrity and is now considered contributing to the district. The district is located in the heart of downtown Farmington with the historic business district extending to the west along Columbia Street. To the north, east, and south are much newer, commercial buildings that developed on the periphery of the business district after 1960. As is characteristic of this entire historic commercial district, the Boundary Increase developed along East Columbia Street, which was historically a plank road, the earliest "paved" road in this part of Missouri. The road connected Farmington with the iron mines and to Ste. Genevieve, and became part of one of the state's early highways, Missouri 32. This resulted in a clustering of commercial development along this arterial street, generally characterized by a series of commercial buildings abutting the public sidewalk. This is also the principle characteristic of the Boundary Increase which has one and two story brick commercial storefronts. Beyond the building to the east, the remaining area consists of an open lot, now paved, which was historically open, part of the same legal property addressed as 202 East Columbia, and provided parking and access to the freight doors on the east side of the building. Since the surrounding buildings, outside the boundaries of the district are much newer, and since this open lot has always served as part of the visual boundary of the commercial district, this serves as a clear geographical division for the historic district. Since the property is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Henry Avenue and Columbia Street, it easily extends west directly across the street to connect to the current district boundary.

The East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase) consists of a single property, addressed as 202 East Columbia Street. It consists of a brick, two-part corner commercial block with its narrow end and façade along Columbia Street that was built between 1908 and 1914. To its south is a one story, flat roofed brick addition finished around 1940 that faces west onto Henry Avenue. This one story addition connects the two story building to the 1914-1927, one story, flat roofed, brick service garage that has always been part of the same business at the south end of the lot, also facing Henry Avenue. The 1940 addition was designed not only to attach internally to the two story building, but also to connect internally to the service garage. As a result, this entire property is identified as one contributing building in the historic district. As elsewhere in the historic district, 202 East Columbia has been modified over the years, in some cases, during the period of significance for the district, and more recently when the entire building was wrapped in a steel corrugated siding (including an addition of a gabled steel roof). However, this turned out to be primarily a cosmetic alteration. The recently exposed building, retains its character defining features, such as the two color brick walls, corbelling at the parapet, original

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Narrative Description (continued)

second floor window openings, and historic display window and entry door openings. While most of the window frames have been removed (or are currently boarded over for security) and the small cornice on the façade is missing, the massing that separates the storefront display windows and street front entries from the upper level windows and parapet details is retained. In addition, as part of the commercial revitalization underway, the display and sashed windows, entries, and the cornice are being carefully repaired, matching the details evident in the historic photograph from 1940 when Wichman Nash Service opened his automobile dealership in the building.

202 East Columbia, 1908-1914

The main building is a flat roofed, brick, two-part corner commercial block that is 4 bays wide by 7 bays deep. The narrow end of the building forms the primary façade on the south side of Columbia with a clipped corner where the main entry was located historically. The elevation facing west along Henry forms a secondary facade. The north (Columbia) façade and the clipped corner were historically capped by a projecting cornice supported by small modillions, all of which was probably made of pressed metal or wood. This was removed when the corrugated metal was applied as a building veneer. The Henry Street elevation was capped with a lighter brick parapet, a brick which was used elsewhere to form belt courses on the building, including one at the base of the parapet along the Henry Street façade as well as one at the sill line of the second floor windows. On the second floor, both street elevations had a series of segmental arched, one-over-one wood sashed windows, with a triple window unit (narrow windows flanking a wide one-over-one wood sashed window) that has a flatheaded opening. These openings are still intact, along with some of the sashed windows, although most of the windows have been boarded in from the outside to accommodate smaller windows (positioned below the meeting rail of the original window sashes). All of these windows have rusticated limestone sills connected by a double row of the lighter brick to form a belt course separating the second floor facades from the first floor level.

Originally, there was a large, transomed display window on the north façade and by the 1940s it had two smaller display windows (without transoms) along the Henry Street elevation, just south of the corner entry. When the metal veneer was added, two more display windows were punched in this side, where originally it had a series of higher segmentally arched window openings with sashed window openings near the rear. There is a secondary entry door in the last bay at the south end of the Henry facade.

The corner entry originally had a large rectangular transom spanning the wood framed opening with paired, full rectangular light wood doors elevated two steps above the public sidewalks. Above, the brick wall forms a narrow frieze with a small projecting cornice below the second floor window sill. This entry had been modified by the late 1950s or early 1960s, based upon one historic photo, with its transom boarded in along with the transoms to the display windows

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to the west (the photo was taken at a time when it appears they were adding a large sign board across these transoms). More recently the corner was converted into a display window when the building was veneered with corrugated metal (although the entry steps and door opening appear to be intact inside the walls).

The east elevation was primarily a common red brick wall (possibly the builders were projecting additional construction to the east that never occurred), with an entry to the staircase leading up to the second floor apartments located near the rear of the two story section of the building. There is a large arched door opening mid-way along this wall that served as a freight entrance, but it has been partially bricked in with the remaining area infilled with a man door. Upstairs, there are irregularly placed window openings, including one that is a large paired casement opening.

Today, ghost signs for Wichman (from the era when it was the Lincoln-Mercury dealership) have been uncovered on both the east and west elevations.

The interior downstairs retains the large open volume and the original cast iron columns are still intact as are most of the original plaster ceilings in the showroom. Upstairs, the interior retains much of the original room configuration for the apartments, as well as some of the original four panel and glass French style doors as well as some of the original trim. It retains the original, enclosed, wooden staircase leading to the second floor level and some of the original wood floors upstairs.

Addition, 1940

Built around 1940, the one story, flat roofed brick addition is attached on the south side of the two story building with a doorway cut at that time to connect the first floor areas internally. The addition has a separate entry, centered in its façade, which faces west onto Henry Avenue, and is flanked by two large plate glass window openings with brick rowlock sills. This addition extends deeper in the lot, to the east than the main building and has an aluminum framed doorway and window on the east elevation, which may be utilizing an historic opening. The interior of the east half is currently subdivided into small office partitions, but the west half retains its original bare brick walls, concrete floor at grade, and high ceilings.

Service Garage, 1914-1927

The service garage and filling station attached to the south side of the 1940 addition, was historically a freestanding building completed between 1914 and 1927, but since 1940 it too has been connected internally to the adjacent section of the building complex. It is a simple, one story, brick and frame building with a flat roof. The main entry faces west onto Henry Avenue, where it historically had a large garage door opening (still evident in the framing and the curb cut), but it currently has a large plate glass window and doorway with an asphalt shingle mansard awning.

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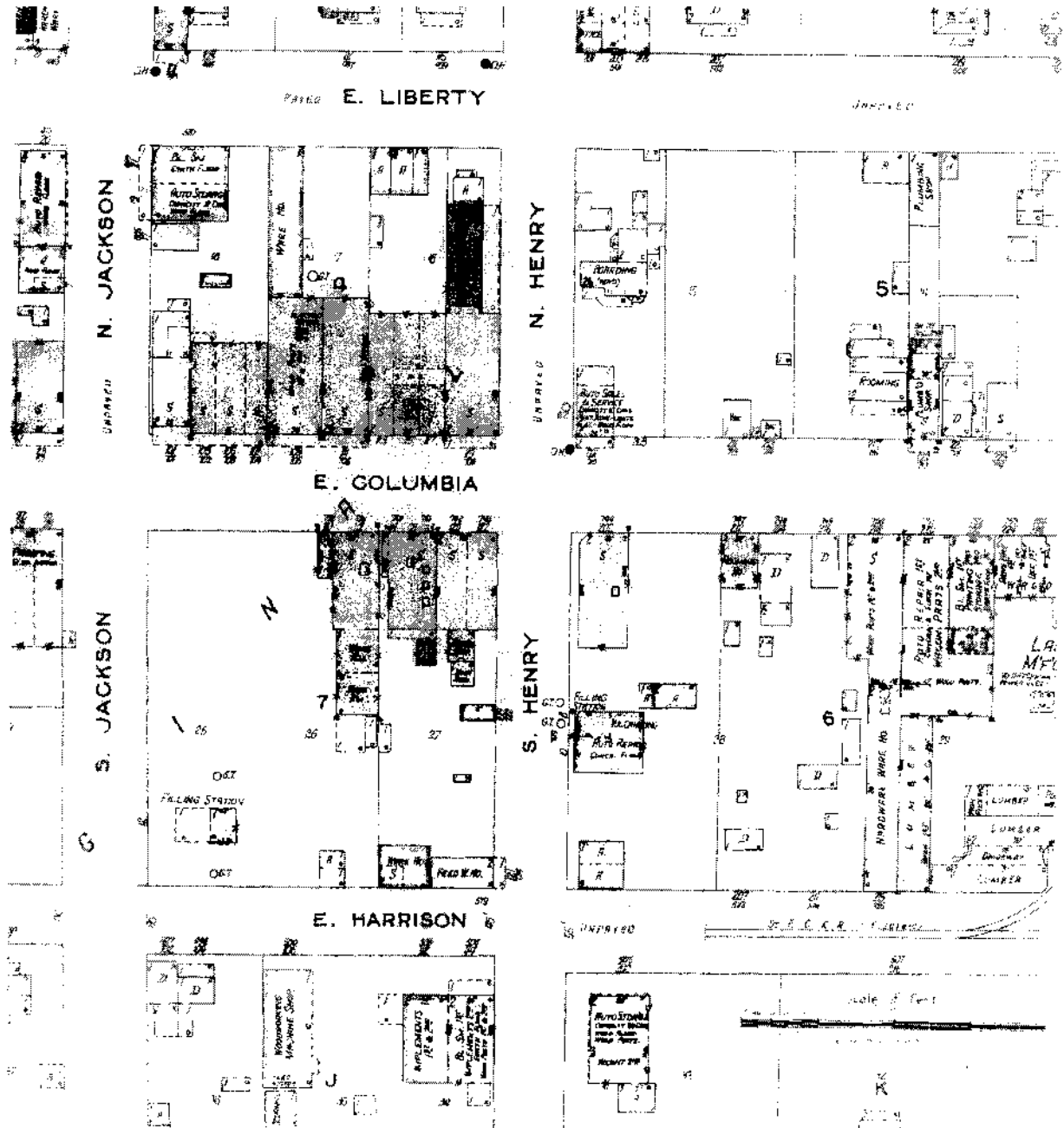
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Fire Insurance Map of Farmington, MO, 1927

Locating Property



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Farmington Public Library Clippings File

Historic Photograph of T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building
Circa 1940



THE NAME IS FAMILIAR — Farmington residents who may not recognize the building will still recognize the name. The Wichman Motors building has moved into another generation, the building above remodeled, and a new building presently under construction. Even the old "Nash" name, a byword in motor cars for many years, is part of the past. You'd have to look closely to recognize this old scrapbook photo as the present Farmington business building.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

SUMMARY

The East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase) in Farmington, St. Francois County, Missouri, is located on the eastern end of the East Columbia Historic District at the southeast corner of the intersection with Henry Avenue and consists of a single building, addressed as 202 E. Columbia Street. The area that encompasses the East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase) was originally excluded from the district because the building was covered in a metal veneer, which has since been removed, exposing the historic building that still retains much of its historic integrity. The building is immediately across the intersection with Henry Avenue (the current eastern district boundary) and has always had an open lot to its east, forming a visual boundary for the historic central business district in Farmington. The East Columbia Historic District (NR listed 7/14/04), which is significant under Criterion A (Commerce and Politics/Government) and Criterion C (Architecture), has a period of significance from 1879 to 1954, the arbitrary fifty year cut off date at the time of listing. The East Columbia Historic District is the historic commercial core of Farmington, which serves as the county seat with those associated government buildings adjacent to this district in the Courthouse Square Historic District (NR listed 6/9/04). The one property in the Boundary Increase was historically the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company, a business that not only provided harnesses, but also automotive accessories and service. In 1940, Wichman Nash Service moved into the building, remaining for many years. Between 1908 and 1914, Lockridge commissioned the construction of the two part corner commercial block for his business and between 1914 and 1925, when state highways being built into Farmington began attracting automobile traffic, Lockridge added to his operations with a filling station and service garage at the rear of the property. From physical evidence, it appears that when Wichman moved his business onto the property he added a large one story garage addition that spanned between the two buildings connecting all three internally. Both of these historic businesses served the transportation equipment that brought consumers to the business district, first the horse drawn vehicles and then the automobile. Because of this important role in the commercial development of Farmington's downtown, the East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase) is significant under Criterion A: Commerce and has a period of significance from 1908 (the earliest year the building in the district could have been constructed) to 1954, the end of the period of significance of the associated historic district.

FARMINGTON'S HISTORY

In 1798, Reverend William Murphy founded Farmington, Missouri. Murphy came from Kentucky with his three sons, each claiming 640 acre parcels of land and founded the town near a spring an Indian helped him find (near the original site of the courthouse). Murphy returned to Kentucky to bring his family back to Farmington, but he died while still in Kentucky. Murphy's wife, Sarah Barton Murphy, still moved to Farmington with her family, arriving in 1804. Once there, she became a civic leader in the new community, acting as the de facto judge in the early settlement as well as starting the first Protestant Sunday School (since that had been illegal under

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

the Spanish government that controlled the territory before the Louisiana Purchase in 1803). By the time of Sarah Murphy's death in 1817, the small community was firmly established.¹

Farmington continued to grow and in 1836 the town was incorporated. By the 1850s the population had grown to over 500 people and Columbia Street had become the main commercial thoroughfare in Farmington.² This period of growth for Farmington, and the business district specifically, was fueled by the fact that Columbia Street (originally the Plank Road) was the main means of shipping iron ore from the nearby mines at Iron Mountain to the mill at Valle Forge. In addition, the stages left town on Columbia Street, transporting people and goods to the nearest railroad line. The town may have grown even quicker, but the Iron Mountain Railroad passed 2 ½ miles west of town in DeLassus, because the people of Farmington would not subscribe to railroad stock. Despite the lack of a railroad line in town, Farmington was still able to benefit by the proximity of the rail line and continued to grow through the 1800s, growing large enough to build a new courthouse in 1856, after outgrowing the original courthouse.³

Columbia Street was not only the main street in town, it also continued to serve as a transportation hub for the people of Farmington. Although the nearest railroad was two and a half miles away at a time when horses were the main means of personal transport, Columbia Street was also a section of the Ste. Genevieve, Iron Mountain and Pilot Knob Plank Road, a forty-two mile plank road connecting Farmington to Ste. Genevieve.⁴ This road actually utilized Columbia Street for the section that passed through town. The plank road was the longest in the United States and had regular stages that left Farmington for DeLassus, a situation that continued until 1904 when local Farmington businessmen started an electric railway providing a direct link for the community to the railroad system in southern Missouri.⁵ The St. Francois County Electric Railroad Company, founded in 1901, began service on July 24, 1904.⁶ The line connected Farmington to Delassus, where the Iron Mountain Railroad had a depot, reducing the need for a plank road, but Columbia Street retained its position as the main street through town.

Columbia Street continued to thrive in part because the electric railroad ran right through downtown, providing provided easy transportation and shipping for merchants and customers to an area that was already established as a commercial district in town. The commercial growth of the area was further aided by the electric railroad because it eventually also connected to ports and connections on the Mississippi River, with the Bonne Terre Railroad in Flat River, and with the Illinois Southern at Esther.⁷

Although the plank road was no longer as important in commercial transport, the invention of the automobile saw the increase in the importance of roads as a means of travel. Starting in the 1910s, Farmington began a program of street improvements, tying the roads into the developing regional and statewide road system. By 1919, Potosi Street became the first concrete road in St.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

Francois County.⁸ By the mid 1920s, Liberty Street, one block north of Columbia Street, was made a part of State Highway 9. Columbia and North Washington Streets were also partially paved at the time.⁹ The Farmington-Flat River Road that was the remains of the Plank Road also became part of Missouri State Route 32. Both highways ran directly through downtown, in part because of the efforts of Farmington businessmen, who lobbied to change the route which originally would have had the highways bypassing the community.¹⁰

EAST COLUMBIA HISTORIC DISTRICT AND THE BOUNDARY INCREASE

The East Columbia Historic District is located in downtown Farmington. The district is significant under Criterion A: Commerce, and Politics/Government and Criterion C: Architecture. The East Columbia Historic District has a period of significance from 1879 to 1954, the arbitrary fifty year cut off date. Farmington's downtown area, which contains the East Columbia Historic District, has been the local and regional commercial center since the founding of the community in the 1820s.¹¹ The architecture of the district includes many of the common styles that developed during the period of significance, including Late Victorian, Craftsman, and Beaux Arts, in addition to two-part commercial block buildings.

The East Columbia Historic District is an important reminder of the growth of Farmington. Columbia was the center of commercial life in Farmington, with the majority of the town's businesses located on the stretch of road leading to the district and in the district itself. This is a historic pattern that has continued since the founding of the community. Some of the oldest remaining buildings in Farmington are the commercial buildings in the district, including the Tetley Jewelry Store, which was constructed ca. 1879, leading through the Farmington Post Office, which was constructed in 1932.¹² Even before the Tetley Jewelry Store was constructed, the area that is now the East Columbia Historic District was the commercial center of the town, although there are no earlier extant buildings remaining. Throughout the period of significance, the district grew as newer buildings replaced the previous generations of construction, a process that has continued, although most of the new construction in recent years has been outside of the district or infill construction. Columbia Street has consistently been the commercial center of Farmington, from its days as a Plank Road to its continued importance as the main street in Farmington today.

As an early plank road and significant roadway in modern times, businesses along East Columbia catered to travelers. All along Columbia Street, including within the district, are a number of buildings that historically housed businesses that catered to the automobile beginning early in the twentieth century. This was an industry that become important to the region, as well as the rest of the country. The automobile's development not only allowed for easier transportation, it also created a new market for not only the automobiles themselves, but also for accessories, services, and fuel. These developments lead to a number of automotive businesses starting in Farmington. By 1925, Farmington had:

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

- the Farmington Motor Company on West Liberty Street, which sold Hudson and Essex automobiles,
- Wells Motor Company on East Liberty Street,
- Wines Battery Service Station, at 223 East Columbia,
- the Economy Tire Works at 8 South Henry Street,
- Land and Brothers Manufacturing and Mercantile Company also sold farm implements, located on East Columbia,
- the Donzi Motor Company sold Chevrolets, Oldsmobiles, and Goodyear tires from a store on East Columbia,
- the H. D. Roberts Service Station on Flat River Road,
- the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company (the Boundary Increase) sold auto tires and suitcases (besides harness, saddlery and horse goods) and had an auto repair department.¹³

The East Columbia Historic District includes many different types of commercial businesses, but only a few auto-related businesses, despite the location of the district on the main street through Farmington, although there are some in the nearby Courthouse Square Historic District. Even so, the existence of these auto-related businesses in town further fueled the development of the East Columbia Historic District, as this new means of transportation, the automobile, became more widespread. People were now able to make the trip into town in less time and more comfort, making trips into town from surrounding communities and farms more feasible. The development of the automobile also led to the development of new stores in the commercial district as it did elsewhere around the country—auto dealerships, as well as the related businesses, including both the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company and its building occupant after 1940, Wichman Nash Service, a Nash dealer. People could now drive their cars to the East Columbia Historic District to buy a new car or parts and accessories for their existing cars. With many dealers and other auto-related buildings located along Columbia, it increased the draw of the already successful commercial district.

The East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase) is at the eastern end of the existing historic district and includes a single building, 202 E. Columbia Street, the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building. This building was an important part of the growth and development of Columbia serving as a transitional business after the invention of the automobile, becoming one of the first companies in Farmington involved in the automotive industry, yet still rooted in horse drawn vehicles. The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company was one of the few examples of this new industry that had its offices in the East Columbia Historic District. The Boundary Increase will include a building that will add an important component in the historic commercial development in Farmington, as people were easily able to travel into Farmington in their new automobiles to do their shopping along the East Columbia commercial strip.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

T. F. LOCKRIDGE HARNESS COMPANY

Between 1908 and 1914, when automobiles were just beginning to gain in popularity and when many were still dependent upon horse power, especially in farm communities in Missouri, T. F. Lockridge completed his new two-part corner commercial building for his harness company in downtown Farmington, with the rearmost section (a filling station and service garage) completed between 1914 and 1927 and the center section completed by the time Wichman Nash Service moved into the building in 1940.¹⁴ Lockridge's store carried a large stock of harnesses, saddlery, and horse goods, but the company also sold auto tires, suitcases, and related items and it also had a repair department. The nature of T. F. Lockridge Harness demonstrates the changing nature of transportation in America generally and Farmington in particular. T. F. Lockridge Harness started life as a business selling equipment for what was rapidly becoming an outdated mode of transportation—the horse and carriage. At the same time, the company was able to survive and prosper anyway, not only by catering to those who still used horses, but also expanding the business, at least by 1920, to take advantage of the new means of transportation—the automobile. Lockridge did not sell vehicles himself, but he performed two other important services. He sold tires and other auto-related products and his shop ran a repair department. Lockridge was able to straddle two types of competing technology and prosper by providing both.

The success of the T. F. Lockridge Harness fit into the commercial development of Farmington in the early twentieth century. Lockridge was able to take advantage of his location in the midst of the business district, because Farmington's automobile dealers were also within blocks of his shop. Lockridge's building was positioned at the end of the main business stretch of Columbia Street, which historically was and still is the central business district of Farmington. Located on a prominent corner in the heart of business district, people entering or exiting downtown Farmington would be sure to notice his building. With the increased use of the automobile, and the proximity of two state highways, T. F. Lockridge Harness contributed to the continued success of the Farmington businesses district and his business demonstrates the changing nature of business and commerce with the changes in transportation, commerce, and society created by one of the most significant technological developments of the new century, namely the automobile.¹⁵

The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company was built at a time when Farmington's population was increasing quickly. This increase in population brought a demand for goods and services in town beyond businesses that supplied necessities such as groceries. The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building not only housed a specialty business, it sold goods that were not yet necessary, an automobile, but the nature of the goods as automobile accessories even required affluent customers who already owned a big ticket item, in the form of an automobile.

The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building demonstrates the changing nature of society in rural Missouri. The business was named for and primarily sold harnesses and other accessories

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

needed for horse drawn forms of transportation. At the time the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building was constructed, horse-drawn forms of transportation were just beginning to be replaced by the automobile. Lockridge's company was able to survive in the midst of transition because the company also sold automobile accessories and luggage. This dual line of business allowed the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company to straddle both sides of the technological advances and the changes made in American society caused by the success of the automobile and it became a successful business in this growing farm community in southeastern Missouri. This combined customer base allowed the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company to survive and prosper as Farmington continued to grow throughout the early twentieth century. As the home to a business that demonstrates the changing nature of commerce brought about by the development of the automobile, combined with its important position at the eastern end of the central business district of Farmington, The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building, was an integral part of Farmington's historic commercial development for more than thirty years.¹⁶

WICHMAN NASH SERVICE

The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building was later home to Wichman Nash Service, one of the prominent automobile dealerships in Farmington. John C. Wichman moved his business into the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building in 1940. Wichman entered business with his nephew, Henry Wichman, working at the Wichman Motor Garage, originally located at 15 East Liberty Street. John Wichman expanded the company and became the first Nash automobile dealership in Farmington. Wichman Motor Garage, the precursor business to Wichman Nash Service, was originally a dealer for Nash and Oakland automobiles and by the late 1950s was selling Lincoln and Mercury Automobiles.¹⁷ As the business expanded, it eventually needed a new and larger building, especially since the company had a service department, in addition to the sales department. The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building became an ideal building for the new Wichman Nash Service location. The building was large and open enough for automobiles to be displayed, repaired and stored as needed while still supplying the business with a prominent location on a corner in the central business district and remained in the building at least into the 1960s.¹⁸

After Wichman Nash Service moved into the building, it continued as one of the prominent businesses in downtown Farmington, one related to the building's original purpose; an auto-related business. Although Wichman Nash Service was a car dealer and the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company sold automobile related accessories (and saddlery supplies), both were selling the people of Farmington automobiles, the products for them, and servicing the cars. The continuation of a service department in Wichman Nash Service meant that the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building even continued to have a garage and mechanics to repair automobiles. The new business not only became an important part of the commercial vitality of the central business district, it also continued the presence of a service garage on East Columbia Street. The transition from a harness company to an automobile dealership further demonstrates the growth and importance of the automobile in Farmington's commerce and society.¹⁹

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

This followed a common pattern in the growth of the automobile industry in towns throughout the United States, at a time when most auto-related businesses adapted existing commercial buildings to their purposes, but even those built and designed for an automobile dealership appeared similar to other commercial buildings, usually with transomed display windows on a two story brick commercial building, with residential or office space upstairs, exacting the situation with the T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building. The T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building was characteristic of the earlier brick commercial building designs that were adapted to the sale of the automobile, with a relatively small showroom with display windows only by the main entry and larger garage bays at the rear of the building that are separated by a masonry "fire" wall. It was only after World War II that automobile dealerships began to design buildings with large expanses of plate glass, but by 1940, that trend had not reached Farmington when the Nash dealership moved into this building, although two large windows had been placed near the corner on Henry Avenue to improve the showroom.

FOOTNOTES

¹ General History of Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri; Debbie Sheals, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: East Columbia Historic District," March, 2004, Section 8, p. 11.

² General History of Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri.

³ Ibid; Sheals, Section 8, p. 11.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ General History of Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri; Sheals, Section 8, p. 18.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ General History of Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri; Sheals, Section 8, p. 22.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Lynn Chris, Committee Chair, *Farmington, Missouri, The First Two Hundred Years, 1798-1998*. Paid for by Farmington Public Library, (Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing Co., 2000), 23.

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Narrative Statement of Significance (continued)

¹² Early Merchants in Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri; Chris, 23.

¹³ General History of Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri; Sheals, Section 8, p. 9.

¹⁴Ibid; "Fire Insurance Map of Farmington, Missouri" (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1908, corrected to 1914 and 1927.

¹⁵Chris, 23; Early Merchants in Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷ Historic Photograph of T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building [c. 1960], General History of Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri.

¹⁸ Early Merchants in Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri; "Wichman Obituary" Early Merchants in Farmington Clippings File, Farmington Library, Farmington, Missouri ; Historic Photograph of T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building [c. 1960].

¹⁹Ibid.

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- St. Francois County. County Courthouse. Land Title Records.
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Verbal Boundary Description

The northern 115 feet of Lot 28, Town of Farmington as shown on a plat of said town and recorded in Plat Book 1, page 1 of the Land Records of St. Francois County, Missouri.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries incorporate all of the property that has been historically associated with this building and the property's legal description. Except for public sidewalks and the parking lot behind the building, the building encompasses the entire lot.

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Photo Log

Photographer: Sheila Findall

April 2006

Negatives with preparer: Karen Bode Baxter, 5811 Delor Street, St. Louis, MO 63109

Photo #1: Corner of East Columbia and Henry Avenue, looking southeast at T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building

Photo #2: Looking southwest across East Columbia toward Henry Avenue at T. F. Lockridge Harness Company Building



East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase)
Farmington, St. Francis County, MD
Photo # 1



East Columbia Historic District (Boundary Increase)
Farmington, St. Francis County, MD
Photo # 2