

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name N/A

Other names/site number Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number 50-54 W. Moody Ave.

N/A	not for publication
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City or town Webster Groves

N/A	vicinity
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State Missouri Code MO County St. Louis Code 189 Zip code 63119

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:   X   A     B   X   C     D



Signature of certifying official/Title

9/20/18  
Date JP 09/17/18

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

    entered in the National Register     determined eligible for the National Register

    determined not eligible for the National Register     removed from the National Register

    other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	<b>Total</b>

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

29

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/ warehouse

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/  
manufacturing facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/One Part Commercial Block

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE/ Limestone

walls: BRICK

STUCCO

roof: SYNTHETICS/ Rubber

other: \_\_\_\_\_

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES**

Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

St. Louis County, Missouri

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

GOVERNMENT

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

ca. 1860-ca.1930

Significant Dates

1918

1923

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Harspool, H. J. (builder)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than 1 acre

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates** (see Figure 10)

Datum if other than WGS84:

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>38.593848</u>	<u>-90.359300</u>	3	<u>38.593723</u>	<u>-90.359233</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:
2	<u>38.593731</u>	<u>-90.359311</u>	4	<u>38.593700</u>	<u>-90.359237</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

         NAD 1927 or          NAD 1983

1	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	3	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	4	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>	<u>        </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (On continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (On continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Timothy P. Maloney and Karen Bode Baxter

organization Karen Bode Baxter, Preservation Specialist date August 13, 2018

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

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63109

e-mail Karen@bodebaxter.com

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri  
County and State

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log:

Name of Property: Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)  
City or Vicinity: Webster Groves  
County: St. Louis County State: MO  
Photographer: Sheila Findall  
Date Photographed: October 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 5: Exterior, looking southeast from the corner of N. Gore Ave. and Moody Ave.
- 2 of 5: Exterior, looking southwest at north façade and east elevation of 50-54 W. Moody Ave.
- 3 of 5: Exterior, looking south at 54 Moody Ave. north façade
- 4 of 5: Exterior, looking southwest at 50 Moody Ave. north façade entry
- 5 of 5: Exterior, looking northwest at south and east elevations of 50-54 W. Moody Ave.

## Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

- Figure 1: Map Locating Property
- Figure 2: 1903 Sanborn Map
- Figure 3: 1917 Sanborn Map
- Figure 4: 1924 Sanborn Map
- Figure 5: 1951 Sanborn Map
- Figure 6: 1908 Photo of Building
- Figure 7: 1914 Photo Looking South along N. Gore
- Figure 8: Plot drawing with April 12, 1918 alteration permit
- Figure 9: Site Map
- Figure 10: Latitude and longitude map
- Figure 11: Photo Log
- Figure 12: Old Webster Historic District Map Detail Showing 50-54 W. Moody Ave. Excluded
- Figure 13: Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) Map

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Continuation Sheet

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Summary**

The Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) (See Figure 13) in Webster Groves, St. Louis County, Missouri, expands the Old Webster Historic District to correct the boundary along the south side of Moody Avenue to encompass the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant located mid-block at 50-54 W. Moody Avenue (Photo 2) (between two other properties that are currently within the district's boundaries). The property was incorrectly excluded from the district, presumably because the preparers believed the building had been extensively modified and was no longer contributing. The discovery of new information has determined the alterations took place during the period of significance for the district (ca.1860-ca. 1930). The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant was originally constructed ca. 1903 as a one-story brick feed warehouse.<sup>1</sup> It was modified in 1918<sup>2</sup> with a connecting one-story passage to 24 N. Gore Avenue to serve as the cleaning plant for the retail business and in 1923<sup>3</sup> it was expanded with a second floor addition and stucco façade, still for the use of the cleaning business. The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant retains its historic integrity and should be a contributing building in the district.

**Setting**

The Old Webster Historic District encompasses the Webster Grove's historic downtown and the primary commercial district. The district is roughly bounded by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and Moody Avenue on the north, West Lockwood Avenue on the south, Allen Avenue on the west and Elm Avenue on the east; the original district jogs around the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant and then continues east along Moody Avenue after making this jog (Photo 1). The district boundaries originally jogged around this building while taking in the buildings on the rest of the block. The Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) will eliminate the jog in the district boundaries to include the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant and make the boundary continuous along Moody Avenue (see Figure: 12).

**Narrative**

The Old Webster Groves Historic District consists of 26 contributing buildings and three previously listed building out of a total of 36 buildings. Almost all are commercial buildings although there are three nineteenth century residences (two of which have been converted into commercial buildings) a church, and a railroad depot. The buildings were constructed throughout the period of significance, with the majority constructed between 1900 and 1930. The buildings also represent a variety of architectural styles, ranging from one-story vernacular buildings to large residences and larger commercial blocks and multi-story buildings. In

<sup>1</sup> "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri," Volume 17, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1903) 87.

<sup>2</sup> Webster Groves, Missouri, Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section, "Application for Alteration Permit, 12 April, 1918."

<sup>3</sup> Webster Groves, Missouri, Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section, "Application for Alteration Permit, 25 September, 1923."

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

preparation for the Boundary Increase nomination, the entire district's boundaries were inspected, determining no other boundary adjustments are needed since buildings outside of the district have been heavily modified, are newer construction, or are included in the adjacent National Register listed historic districts (the Marshall Place Historic District and the Central Webster Historic District).

The Old Webster Groves Historic District (Boundary Increase) consists of just one building, the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant, and it continues the architectural continuity of the existing Old Webster Groves Historic District. The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant is a two-story, vernacular commercial building and its design is architecturally consistent with the older, two-story, brick and stucco vernacular commercial buildings in the district. The building is also located along the northern border of the district and the Boundary Increase will eliminate a gerrymandered district line (Photo 1). Although the building was modified in the 1960s (to convert the building to retail spaces after the cleaners closed), on the exterior modifications have not impacted the primary two-story façade and were limited to the mansard awning on the recessed one-story wing (Photo 3). Both of the one-story additions (the connector to 24 N. Gore Ave. and the rear enclosed porch) were completed in 1918 and the second floor along with the stucco wall finish were completed in 1923, all occurring during the period of significance and are part of the historical development of the building. Because the alterations occurred during the period of significance, the additions are part of the history of the building and the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant is a contributing building in the Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase).

**50-54 W. Moody Avenue**

The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant is a two-story, cream-colored, stucco building (Photo 2 and 5) with a one-story section recessed from the main façade that provided an internal connection between the cleaning plant at 50 W. Moody Ave. and the back of the retail shop at 24 N. Gore Ave. Behind the clay tile parapet caps of the main two-story façade, the flat roof steps up another half-story in the southeast quarter to a higher flat roof because of the additional height of the solid masonry walls around the chemical storage room (on the first floor) and the tall second floor drying room where carpets were hung to dry after cleaning. The second-floor façade windows are two-over-two, replacement, wood sashed windows with painted brick sills and non-historic wood shutters. The first-floor window to the west side of the central entry is an original one-over-one wood sashed window (with non-historic shutters) while the window to the east of the entry has been removed and the opening covered with a closed shutter, also with painted brick sills. The recessed central entry has a two-panel, half-light wood replacement door with stained glass surrounding the center pane of clear glass (Photo 4). The door has narrow wood side panels and a carved wood lintel with corner blocks and a circular motif in the center.

The east elevation (Photo 2) has two shuttered window openings and a shuttered freight opening on the second floor. The first floor has one historic, segmental arched, two-over-two steel

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

window<sup>4</sup> and two historic two-over-two wood windows, although the windows are covered with shutters on the exterior.

The west elevation (Photos 1 and 3) is visible above the attached one-story wing on the west side of the building. The roof of the one-story section creates a rooftop terrace with a short, non-historic flight of wood stairs with metal rails leading to the central non-historic six-panel wood door that accesses the second floor. The opening for the door was historically a window opening in the west wall. There are three bays on the west elevation. Each of the two outer bays on the second floor of the west elevation retains one-over-one wood sashed windows that have been enclosed with shutters. The first floor has a single one-over-one wood sashed window in front of the one-story wing.

The south elevation (Photo 5) has three windows on the second floor, the west window is a one-over-one replacement window while the other two window openings are closed with shutters with modified and partial, deteriorated sashed windows visible on the interior. The first floor has a shed roof extending over the one-story porch which was added in the 1918 renovations, although its current enclosure seems to date from a much later time period given the style of windows and the wood shingle siding, most likely done in the 1960s with the other changes to the building after the cleaners closed. The porch has five large picture windows, each flanked by five-light sidelights. There is a shuttered first floor window to the west of the porch. There is a tiny boarded in window opening above the porch roof that originally opened to the interior at the ceiling of the first floor.

To the west of the two-story section of the building and slightly recessed from the façade, there is a small, one-story, painted brick wing with a non-historic wood shingle mansard awning (Photo 3). This was originally a wood frame connection to the building at 24 N. Gore but it was altered between 1918 and 1923 to become a brick room, although the mansard awning and façade alterations were completed in the 1960s to convert this small space into a separate retail space. There is a one-over-one replacement window to the west of paired, two-panel, nine-light, non-historic entry doors. The west elevation abuts the back of the building at 24 N. Gore and originally had a doorway into the building but it has been walled off for more than fifty years.<sup>5</sup> On the west end of the one story façade is a metal, quarter-turn staircase with metal railings leading to the rooftop terrace on the one story wing that was added in the 1960s, at the same time as the Mansard roof. The rear (south) elevation of this wing has been covered in non-historic wood siding and the rear elevation window has been infilled with a stucco-covered insert.

The interior has plaster walls, (except for one small area with exposed brick) and plaster ceilings but many of the ceilings have had acoustical tile ceilings added. The one-story wing has a

<sup>4</sup> This one segmental arched window is indicative of the earlier one-story brick building before the addition of the second floor clay tile walls in 1923 when more window openings were added and all of the walls finished with stucco, using one-over-one wood rectangular window openings.

<sup>5</sup> The door was closed when the building was remodeled as a separate retail location after the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company moved out of the building in the 1960s. This is evident by the interior finish walls and the restroom toilet in front of that door location.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

doorway open into the two-story wing in the interior and the one story wing has exposed wood rafters. The floors have been covered in tile or carpet in most of the building but some areas still have exposed wood floors. The doors and some windows have stepped trim with corner blocks but many of the windows have simple flat wood trim; there are no baseboards. The four panel wood doors were added in the 1960s renovation into a retail shop, except for the paired sliding wood doors into the tall second floor "drying" room on the southeast corner. There is a sliding metal clad fire door on the first floor room. Both of these rooms have solid masonry walls, an indicator of their use with dry cleaning chemicals.

Although the interior was modified to serve as a retail shop after the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company closed in the 1960s, it retains the original chemical rooms from the dry cleaning plant operations in the southeast corner of the two-story wing, including the original metal clad fire door on the first floor and the paired sliding doors on the second floor of this wing. On the exterior, the two-story building retains its historic stucco walls, most of its original windows and historic door, although shutters were added for the retail shop but some of the windows are still intact behind the shutters (1960s or later). The building retains its fenestration pattern and clay tile parapet caps as well. The one-story wing, which is recessed on the façade, has had more alterations, increasing the appearance of the roof height by the addition of a wood shingle mansard, but this is a secondary element on the building but it still retains its historic brick walls and fenestration pattern while the two-story façade still retains its original appearance.

The two-story exterior of the building retains its historic appearance as completed for the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company in 1923. After examining the fire insurance maps and the historic photographs which show the building was originally a brick, one-story building that was altered into a two-story building between 1918 and 1923, a careful physical inspection revealed that the second floor walls were made of clay tile that was always finished with stucco on the exterior, a stucco finish that extends over the original brick walls of the first floor. Historic photos show no windows on the façade of the one-story feed warehouse and the physical inspection also revealed that the window openings were added to both the first floor and second floor at this same time, 1918-1923 (except for one segmental arched opening that was retained on the east elevation) since they all have the same window framing, brickmold, and exterior sills.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Summary**

The Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase), located in Webster Groves, St. Louis County, Missouri is located along West Moody Avenue, the north border of the Old Webster Historic District, midblock east of its intersection with N. Gore Avenue (see Figure 13) and is significant under Criterion A: Commerce for the role the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant played in the economy of Webster Groves and under Criterion C: Architecture as an excellent example of the vernacular early twentieth century architecture in historic downtown Webster Groves. The Old Webster Historic District is also significant under Criterion A: Government and Criterion A: Community Planning and Development. The Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) consists of a single building, the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant located at 50-54 W. Moody Avenue, which was originally excluded from the Old Webster Historic District with the district boundaries specifically jogging around the building. The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant was incorrectly excluded from the Old Webster Historic District, in which it should have been a contributing building, presumably because it was incorrectly believed that additions to the building were made after the Old Webster Historic District period of significance (ca. 1860- Ca. 1930). Based upon the discovery of new information, the additions and the stucco finish were made during the period of significance, making the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Plant a contributing building in the Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase).<sup>6</sup>

**History of Webster Groves**

Webster Groves is located just a few miles west of St. Louis but was not developed until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The delay in development occurred because the land that would become Webster Groves was originally part of a land grant by the lieutenant governor of the Louisiana Territory to Gregoire Sarpy at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but, because the parcel was "L" shaped, the Federal Land Commissioner did not recognize the land grant. The issue was sent to the courts and litigation continued until 1842, when Congress recognized the land grant. Despite the clouded title to the land, Sarpy sold 4,000 acres to John Jacob Astor in 1817 while John Sarpy (Gregoire Sarpy's son) and Pierre Chouteau Jr. acquired 2,000 acres. The border between Sarpy's and Chouteau's holdings became Lockwood Avenue, in the heart of the Old Webster Historic District.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri," Volume 17, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1903) 87; "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri," Volume 14, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1917) 87; "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri," Volume 14, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1924) 87; "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri," Volume 14, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1924 corrected to 1951) 87; Webster Groves, Missouri, Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section, "Application for Alteration Permit, 12 April, 1918;" Webster Groves, Missouri, Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section, "Application for Alteration Permit, 25 September, 1923."

<sup>7</sup> , *Old Webster Historic District*, (Washington D.C.: U. S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service, 4 August, 2004) Section 8, 16.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

In the 1830s, Sarpy sold 800 acres to the John and James Marshall, two brothers from Virginia, who opened a supply store, post office and stage coach shop on the land but the area remained largely undeveloped until the 1850s, after the Missouri State Legislature granted the Pacific Railroad a charter in 1849 to construct a railroad across the state. The construction of the railroad made the area more accessible and in 1852, Artemus Bullard, a minister at the First Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, founded the Webster College for Boys on what he thought would be ideal location for a college away from the city. The Webster College stop was constructed in 1853, by which time the railroad extended west to Kirkwood. The development of the railroad, as well as the completion of Manchester Road, made Webster Groves accessible to people in St. Louis and spurred further development in the area.<sup>8</sup>

The opening of the railroad station, combined with a cholera epidemic in St. Louis in 1849, made the area that was to become Webster Groves a desirable location for a commuter community and in the 1850s a number of businessmen from St. Louis built homes in the area while using the train to commute to downtown St. Louis. These houses include the Helfenstein House, constructed by John Helfenstein, a wholesale grocer and outfitter and the home of Chris Hawkins, heir to the Hawkins Rifle Company, both of which are still intact and in the Old Webster Historic District. In 1860, the process of development increased when John Marshall platted the original Webster Groves subdivision (originally called simply “Webster” but “Groves” was added after it was discovered a Webster, MO already existed), with lots around the Webster College station. As the lots were being sold, the first businesses in Webster Groves opened the following year, when Charles Connon constructed two greenhouses south of the railroad tracks (in what is now the Old Webster Historic District), to supply his floral wholesale business, the first such business in the St. Louis area. He was followed a few years later by his father-in-law, Augustus Moody, who built his house and a general store near the railroad tracks that served as the post office until Moody was killed by a mailbag thrown from a train in 1870.<sup>9</sup> Both of these commercial buildings and Moody’s house are non-extant.

The area continued to develop throughout the 1860s and after the Civil War, four church congregations were formed, two of which have buildings that are still standing, although the Congregational Church, just across the street from the Old Webster Historic District, no longer retains its historic integrity. The Presbyterian congregation’s first wood frame church was destroyed in a fire but the 1891 stone church that replaced it is a contributing building in the district.<sup>10</sup>

Development slowed in Webster Groves in the 1870s, caused by a combination of a general downturn in the national economy, a lawsuit by Jane Morrison, Gregoire Sarpy’s daughter, contesting the land grant, and attempts by the railroad to discourage commuter service by raising prices, changing schedules, and occasionally bypassing the Webster College Station entirely. By the beginning of the 1880s, though, the economy had improved, the lawsuit was settled and the

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, Section 8, 17-18.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, Section 8, 18 -19

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, Section 8, 19.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

railroad had new ownership, leading to an increase in development once again. The growth was such that the first attempt to incorporate the community as a city was proposed in 1883. The measure was defeated in large part because the population had moved to Webster Groves not only to escape the crime and crowding in St. Louis City, but also to avoid the taxes and restrictions that come with incorporation. Continued growth and an influx of saloons accompanied by increased crime, including the murder of Bertram Atwater in January of 1896 inspired a new, push for incorporation that succeed in an election later that year. The newly incorporated city also included the nearby communities of Old Orchard, Tuxedo Park, Webster Park and Selma, further expanding the city.<sup>11</sup>

In the late 1890s, two streetcar lines were constructed leading to the area and, combined with the construction of a railroad line closer to Old Orchard, further spurred development in Webster Groves and as the population grew, so did demands for services and businesses, spurring further construction in the Old Webster Historic District. A police department and a licensing system for merchants and dogs were both soon implemented and by 1906 there were two volunteer fire departments. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Old Webster Historic District saw tremendous growth, with more than a dozen buildings constructed between 1903 and 1917 on Gore and Lockwood Avenues alone (the heart of the Old Webster Historic District). The growth was enough for Webster Groves to be reclassified as a third class city in 1913 and by 1923 the Webster Groves city government became the first community in St. Louis County to enact a zoning ordinance and during the 1920s most of the residences along Lockwood were replaced with commercial buildings or converted into commercial use and by 1930, most of the lots in the district were filled. The buildings on the remaining lots were all constructed after 1954.<sup>12</sup>

### **50-54 W. Moody History**

The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Plant was erroneously excluded from the Old Webster Historic District. Based on newly discovered information, it was determined the second story was added and the building was covered in stucco during the period of significance for the district (ca. 1860-1930). The new research has revealed that these alterations were made between 1918 and 1924.

The 1903 fire insurance map shows a one-story building on this property listed as a “Feed Warehouse.”<sup>13</sup> On April 12, 1918, a permit for alterations was issued to property owner, M. W. Warren, with the builder listed as H. J. Horspool to convert the one-story feed warehouse into a dyeing and cleaning establishment, by “separat[ing it] into two rooms with brick partitions and fireproof windows and doors in tumbler wash room.”<sup>14</sup> The plot sketch accompanying the “Application for Alteration Permit” (See Figure 8) clearly shows 24 N. Gore and the feed warehouse as “old” and the connection between the two buildings as “new” along with a “new”

<sup>11</sup>Ibid, Section 8, 19, 22.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, Section 8, 23-24, 27

<sup>13</sup> “Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri,” (1903) 87..

<sup>14</sup> Application for Alteration Permit, 12 April, 1918.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

addition to the back of the old feed warehouse (what is now the one-story enclosed porch-like feature which has grade-level floor drains).<sup>15</sup>

The second story addition was constructed with a building permit issued in September 25, 1923,<sup>16</sup> also still within the period of significance. This permit was issued “to build an additional story to brick and stone building” to be a “2 story stucco on brick and tile at 24 N. Gore Ave”<sup>17</sup> at an estimated cost of \$2,500.00 to be used as the cleaning plant. The permit was issued to the same owner, Webster Groves Realty Co. (M. W. Warren) and listed the builder again as H. J. Horspool. This late 1923 permit clearly shows that both the second floor and the current stucco exterior finish were completed by 1924, within the period of significance.<sup>18</sup> The 1924 Sanborn fire insurance map further confirms that the second story had been completed by 1924.<sup>19</sup> In addition, there is physical evidence to show the second floor was added to the pre-existing one-story brick building (i.e., the switch from arched to flat headed lintels; brick walls on the first floor, hollow clay tile on the second; blocked up window arch split by second floor joists on north elevation).

The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant was constructed sometime before 1903 as a one-story brick building. It is believed Marshall W. Warren, who had constructed the other buildings on the property and was a descendant of the Marshall brothers who were some of the first landowners in the area, had the building constructed and it may have been used by the Fred Straub Hardware Store located next door at 24 N. Gore Ave.<sup>20</sup> By 1917 the building was being used as an upholstery store.<sup>21</sup> Sometime before 1919, the neighboring building at 24 N. Gore Ave. had become the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company with Marshall W. Warren’s son Lyman E. Warren acting as president of the company.<sup>22</sup> By 1924, the building at 50-54 W. Moody Ave. was being used as the chemical cleaning plant for the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company at 24 N. Gore Ave., which was one of the first dry cleaning plants in St. Louis County. The building continued to be used by the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company until the 1960s when it was sold to Robert Moller. By 1970, the building was occupied by the Old Stove Company, followed by a variety of retail businesses.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> “Application for Alteration Permit,” 25 September, 1923.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> “Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri,” (1924) 38.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, Dan Warner, “History of 50-54 W. Moody,” (St. Louis: Unpublished Report. 2017) 2.

<sup>21</sup> “Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri,” (1917) 38.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid; Polk Gould St. Louis County Directory (St. Louis: Polk-Gould Directory Company, 1909) 177-179, 192; Polk Gould St. Louis County Directory (St. Louis: Polk-Gould Directory Company, 1917) 248, 265, Polk Gould St. Louis County Directory (St. Louis: Polk-Gould Directory Company, 1920) 242, 270; Polk Gould St. Louis County Directory (St. Louis: Polk-Gould Directory Company, 1922)500, 873; Polk Gould St. Louis County Directory (St. Louis: Polk-Gould Directory Company, 1926) 586.

<sup>23</sup> Warner, 4.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant is the only building in the Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) and is a contributing building in the district under Criterion A: Commerce. The district was originally the core of the commercial business district for Webster Groves and most of the early businesses were located along Lockwood and Gore, including the Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant. Shortly after the adjacent one story building was constructed at 50-54 W. Moody Ave, it was used by businesses located next door at 24 N. Gore Ave. and was an important part of the commercial development of Webster Groves at the turn of the century.<sup>24</sup> The building remained an important part of the commercial life of Webster throughout the period significance for the district, and after the addition was constructed in 1918, the building housed one of the first dry cleaning plants in St. Louis County, serving the needs of the burgeoning commuter suburb of Webster Groves, further adding to its importance to the commerce of the Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase).

The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant is also a contributing building in the Old Webster Historic District under Criterion C: Architecture. The district has buildings that are architecturally cohesive, with one and two-story flat roofed commercial buildings, with a mixture of vernacular and high-style architecture as well as a few nineteenth century homes.<sup>25</sup> The Suburban Cleaners and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant is an excellent example of the vernacular architecture in the district. The modest design fits in with the older vernacular style buildings in the district, with a flat roof and a simple façade. The building's stucco façade and fenestration pattern fit the district and further contributes to the architectural cohesiveness of the Old Webster Historic District.

### Conclusion

The Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) consists of a single building, the Suburban Cleaning and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant, which was incorrectly excluded from the Old Webster Historic District. New research revealed that alterations to the building were made during the period of significance for the district and the building should be a contributing building in the district for its significance under Criterion A: Commerce and Criterion C: Architecture. The Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) will eliminate a jog in the Old Webster Historic District boundary and include the Suburban Cleaning and Dyeing Company Cleaning Plant within the district's boundaries.

<sup>24</sup> Snider, *Old Webster Historic District*, (Washington D.C.: U. S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service, 4 August, 2004) Section 8, 15.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

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Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase)

Name of Property

St. Louis County, Missouri

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Bibliography**

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\_\_\_\_\_. Webster Groves Historical Society. Photo Collection. “Foil Company.” 1914.

\_\_\_\_\_. Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section. “Application for Alteration Permit, 25 September 1923.”

\_\_\_\_\_. Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section. “Application for Alteration Permit, 12 April 1918.”

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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (continued)**

5	<u>38.593685</u>	<u>-90.359100</u>	6	<u>38.593825</u>	<u>-90.359073</u>
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Old Webster Historic District boundary line will be modified. The line extending south from the north side of Moody Avenue to the point behind the building at 24 N. Gore Avenue will turn directly east to create a continuous northern boundary line on the south side of Moody Avenue, eliminating the jog in the historic district boundary line along W. Moody Avenue and incorporating the building located at 50-54 W. Moody Avenue into the district.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

These boundaries eliminate the jog that was created to incorrectly exclude the building at 50-54 W. Moody Avenue, creating a continuous border along the south side of Moody Avenue to incorporate all of the buildings on the south side of W. Moody Avenue east of N. Gore Ave., including all of the property historically associated with 50-54 W. Moody Avenue.

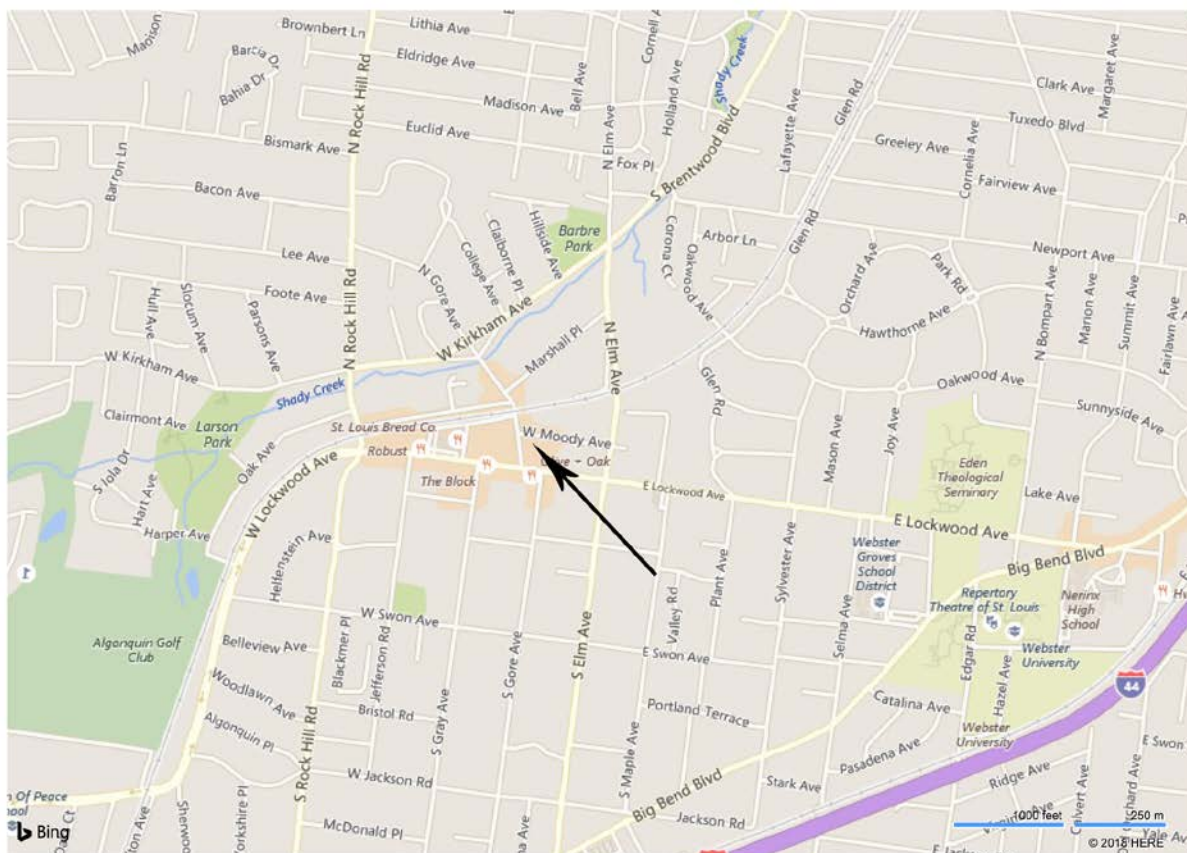
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property St. Louis County, Missouri
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 1: Map Locating the Property**

(Source: "50-54 W. Moody, Webster Groves, Missouri Map." Bings Maps [Website]. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/maps>. Accessed 14 June, 2018.)



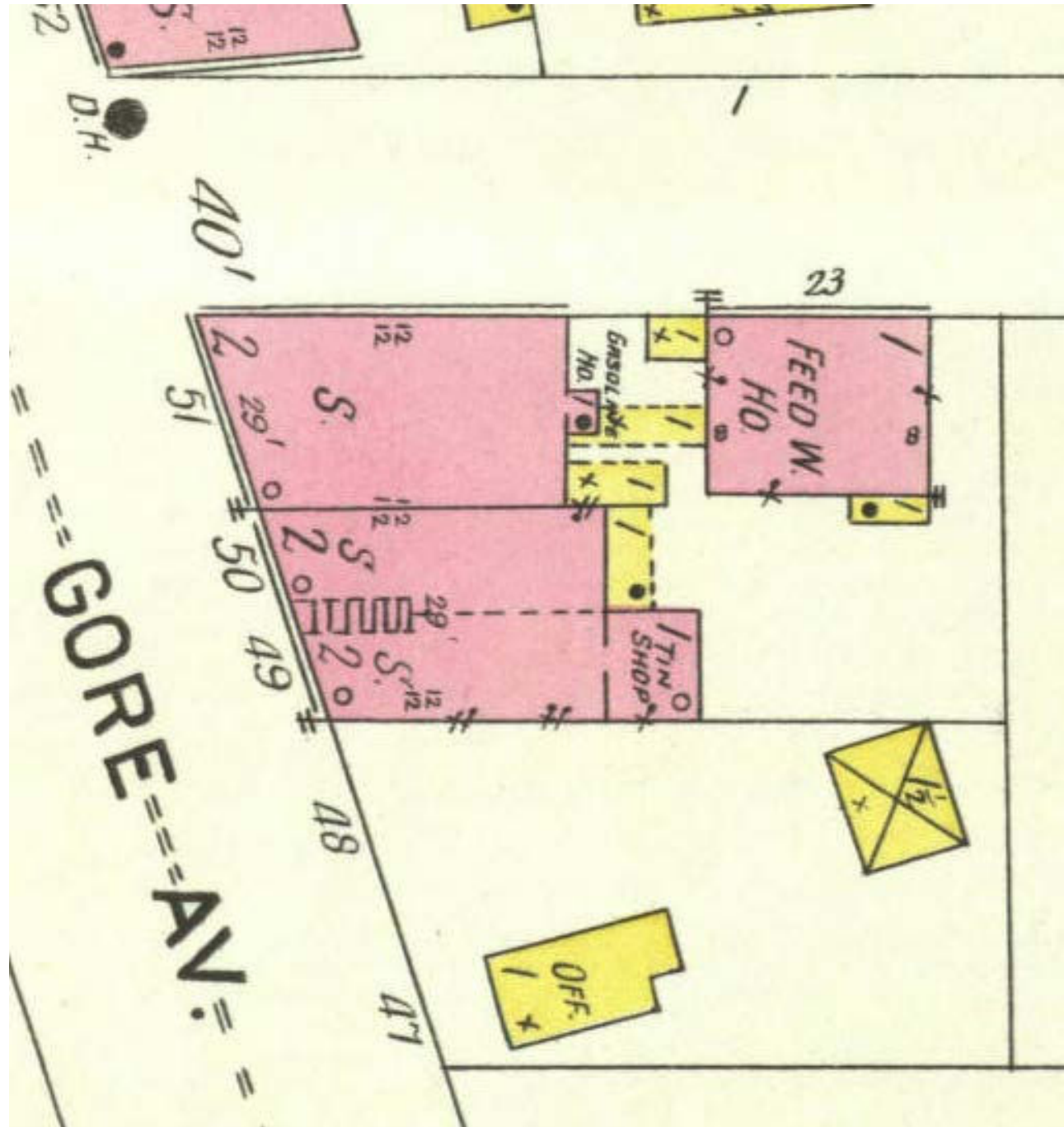
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
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St. Louis County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 2: 1903 Sanborn map showing feed warehouse at 23 (now 50) W. Moody Ave. and connection to 51 (now 24) N. Gore Ave.**

(Source: "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri." Volume 17. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1903.)



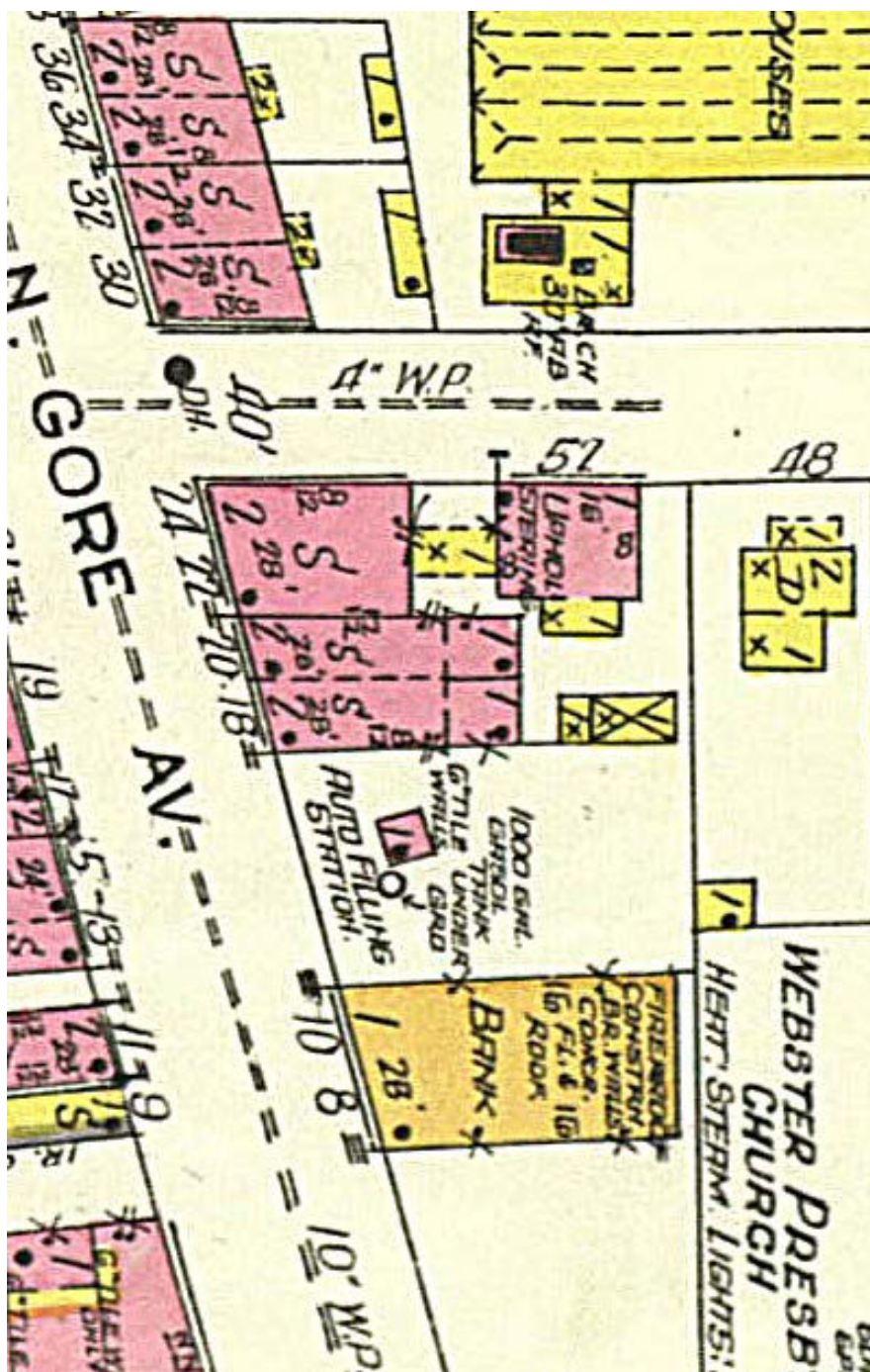
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 3: 1917 Sanborn map one-story brick building at 52 (now 50) W. Moody Ave. in use as an upholstery business connected to 22-24 N. Gore Ave.**

(Source: "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri." Volume 14. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1917.)



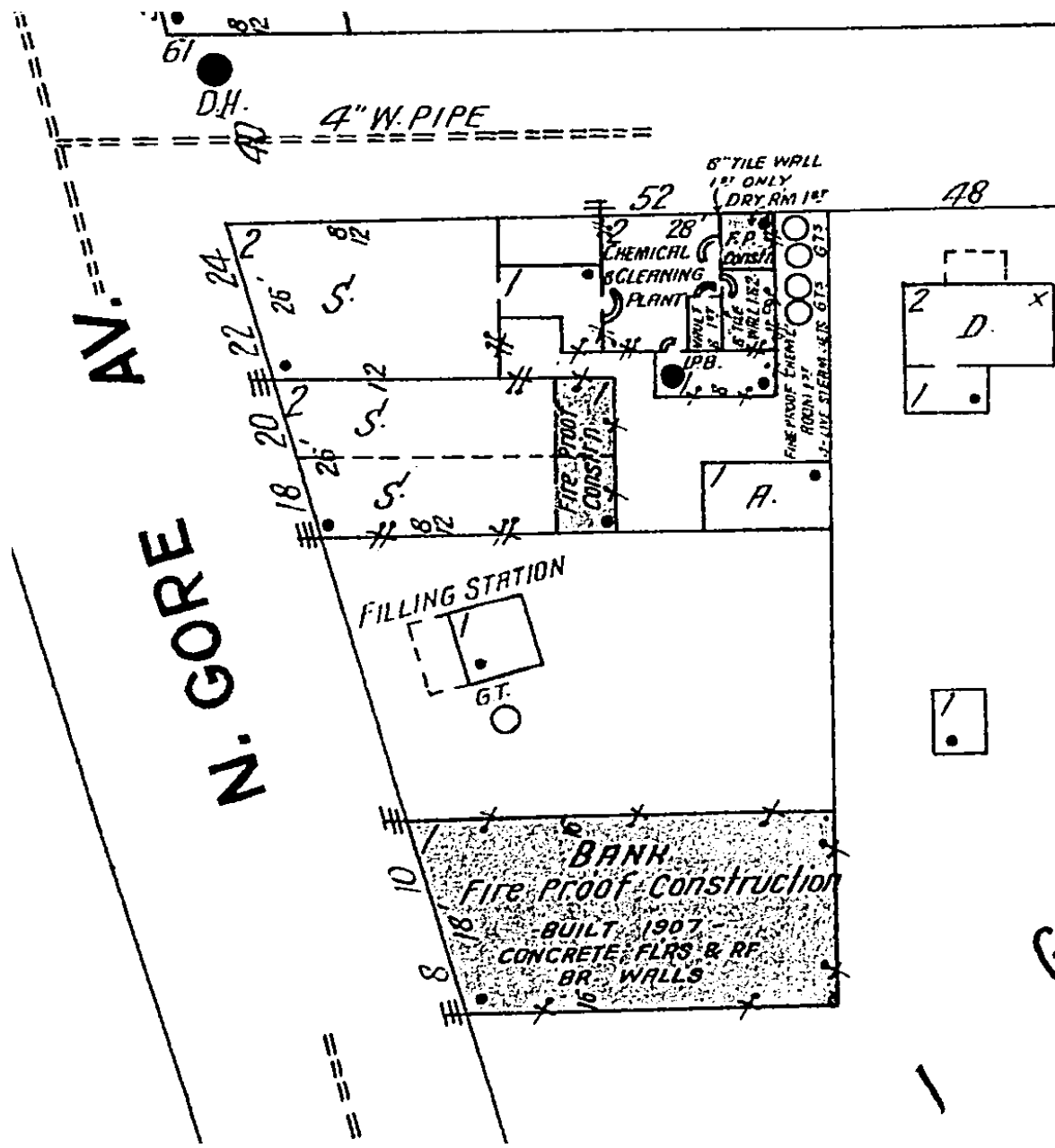
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
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N/A
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**Figure 4: 1924 Sanborn map showing the two-story chemical cleaning plant at 52 (now 50) W. Moody Ave. with the one-story connection to 22-24 N. Gore Ave. This connector is now addressed separately as 54 W. Moody Ave. even though it is still and always was internally open into 50 W. Moody Ave.**

(Source: "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri." Volume 14. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1924.)



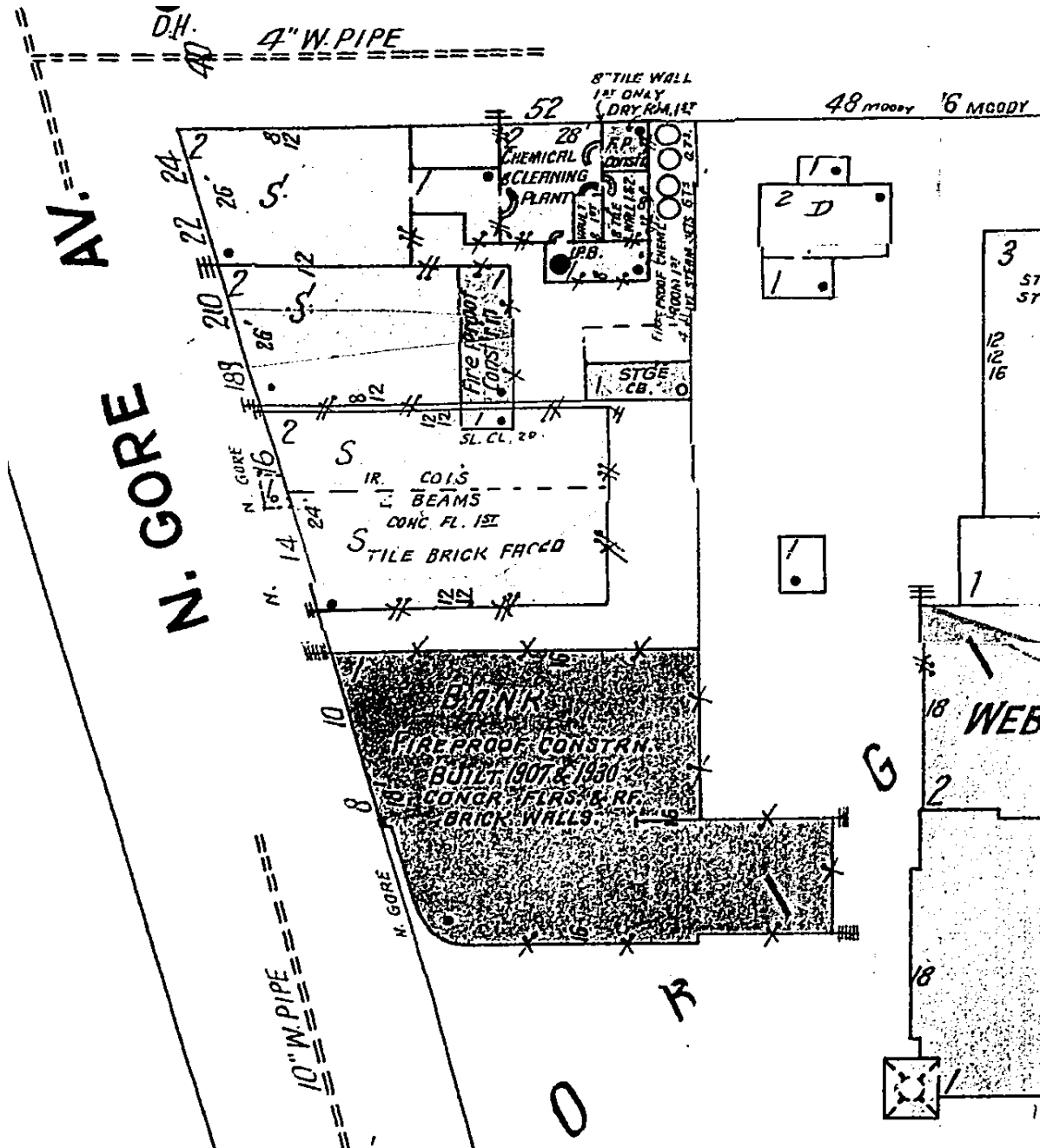
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 5: 1951 Sanborn map shows 52 (now 50) W. Moody Ave. still in use as cleaning plant at back of 22-24 N. Gore Ave.**

(Source: "Fire Insurance Map of St. Louis, Missouri." Volume 14. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1924 corrected to 1951.)



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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))

Name of Property

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**Figure 6: 1908 photo of building when it was a one-story feed warehouse (left in photo)**

(Source: Webster Groves, Missouri. Dan Warner Historical Files. "Post Card." 1908.)



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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))

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**Figure 7: 1914 Photo looking south along N. Gore Ave. showing one-story feed warehouse in the background to the right**

(Source: Webster Groves. Webster Groves Historical Society. Photo Collection. "Foil Company." 1914.)



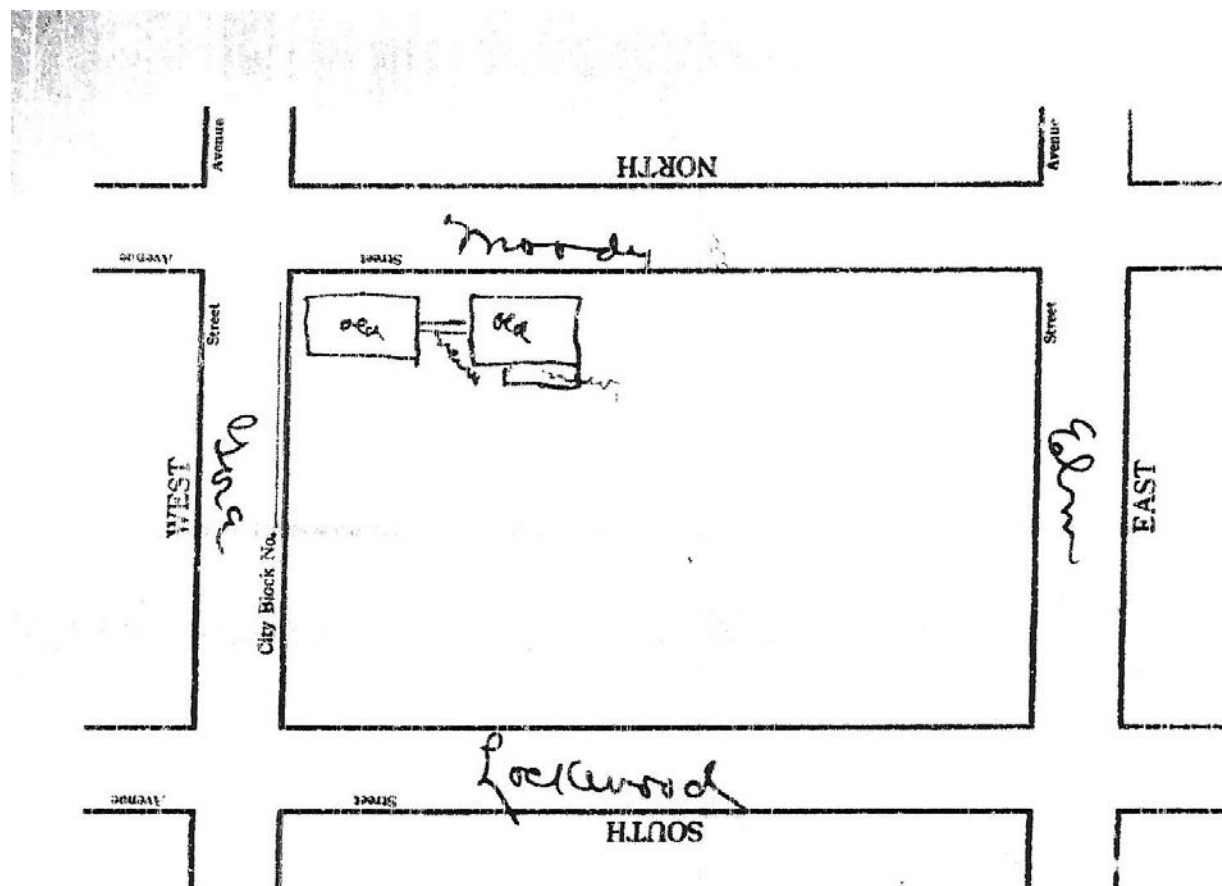
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
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**Figure 8: Plot drawing with April 12, 1918 alteration permit**

(Source: Webster Groves. Webster Groves Public Library, Local History Section. "Application for Alteration Permit, 12 April 1918.")



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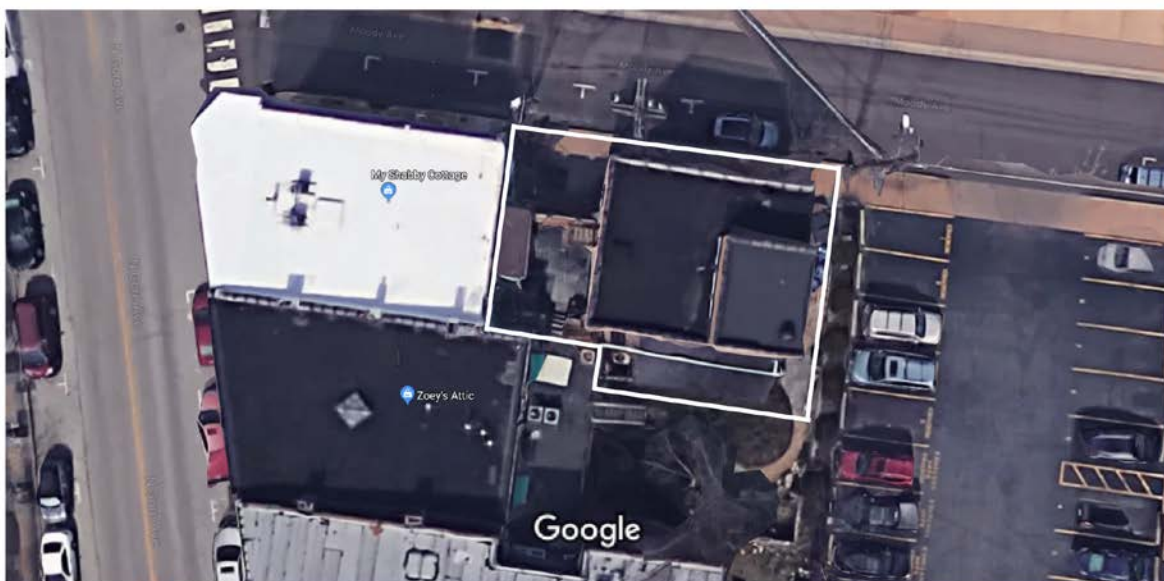
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 9: Site Map**

(Source: "50-54 W. Moody, Webster Groves, Missouri Map." Google Maps [Website]. Available at: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/54+Moody+Ave,+Webster+Groves,+MO+63119/@38.5937974,-90.3614836,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x87d8cb943c1081d3:0x62a1401c2985239f!8m2!3d38.5937932!4d-90.3592896?hl=en>. Accessed 14 June, 2018.)

Google Maps



Imagery ©2018 Google, Map data ©2018 Google 10 ft



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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
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St. Louis County, Missouri
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**Figure 10: Latitude and longitude map**

(Source: "50-54 W. Moody, Webster Groves, Missouri Map." Google Maps [Website]. Available at: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/54+W.Moody+Ave,+Webster+Groves,+MO+63119/@38.5937974,-90.3614836,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x87d8cb943c1081d3:0x62a1401c2985239f!8m2!3d38.5937932!4d-90.3592896?hl=en>. Accessed 14 June, 2018.)



**Output : Current Area**

283.17 m<sup>2</sup> | 0.00 km<sup>2</sup> | 0.07 acres | 0.03 hectares | 3048.06 feet<sup>2</sup> | 0.00 square miles | 0.00 square nautical miles

**Current Perimeter**  
70.053m OR 229.832feet

- A - 38.593848, -90.359300**
- B - 38.593731, -90.359311**
- C - 38.593723, -90.359233**
- D - 38.593700, -90.359237**
- E - 38.593685, -90.359100**
- F - 38.593825, -90.359073**

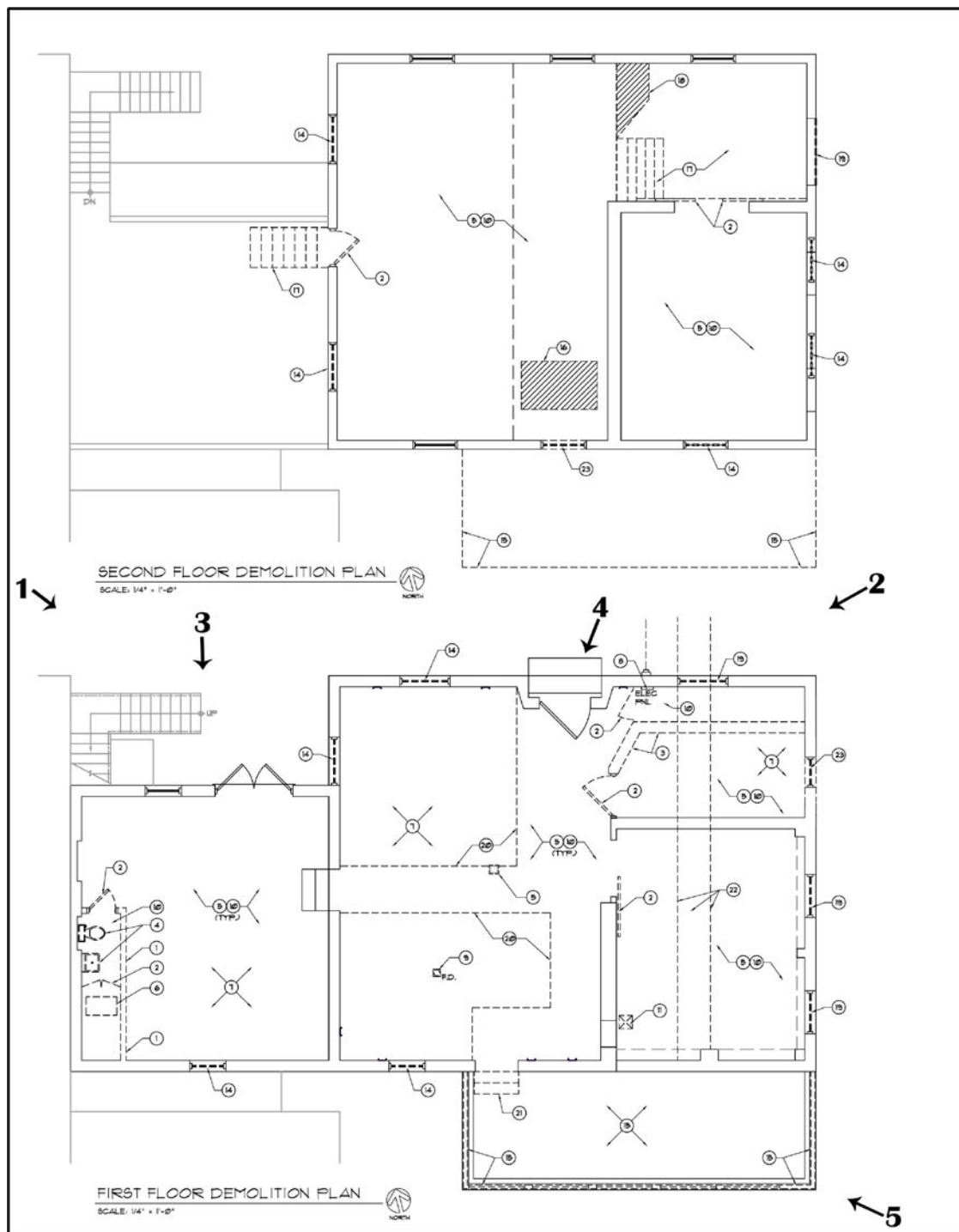


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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 11: Photo Log, on current floorplans courtesy of Kenrick Design (St. Louis)**  
(Source: Kenrick Design. "Floor Plans for 50-54 W. Moody." St. Louis: Kenrick Design, 2018.)



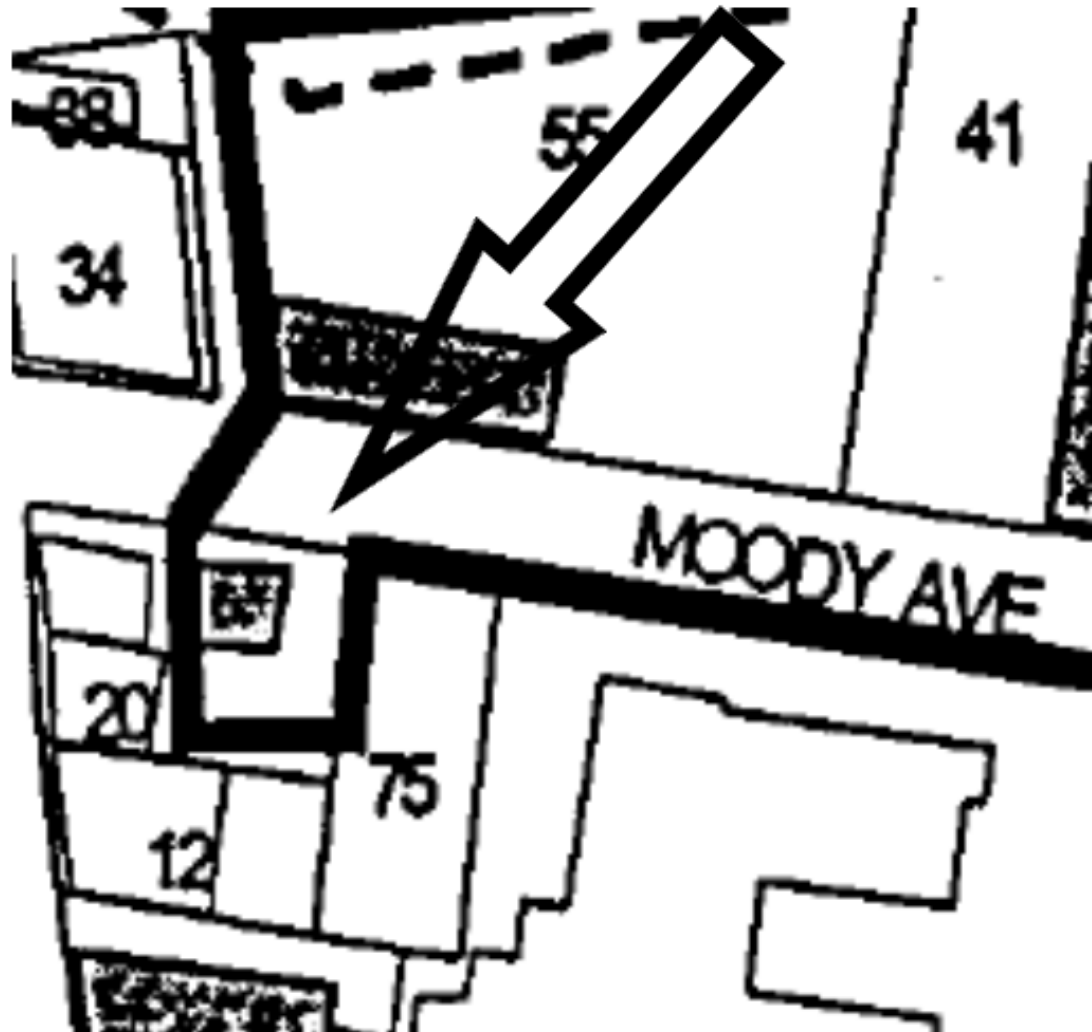
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 12: Old Webster Historic District Map Detail Showing 50-54 W. Moody Ave. Excluded**

(Source: Snider, Becky L. Old Webster Historic District. Washington D.C.: U. S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service, 4 August, 2004.)



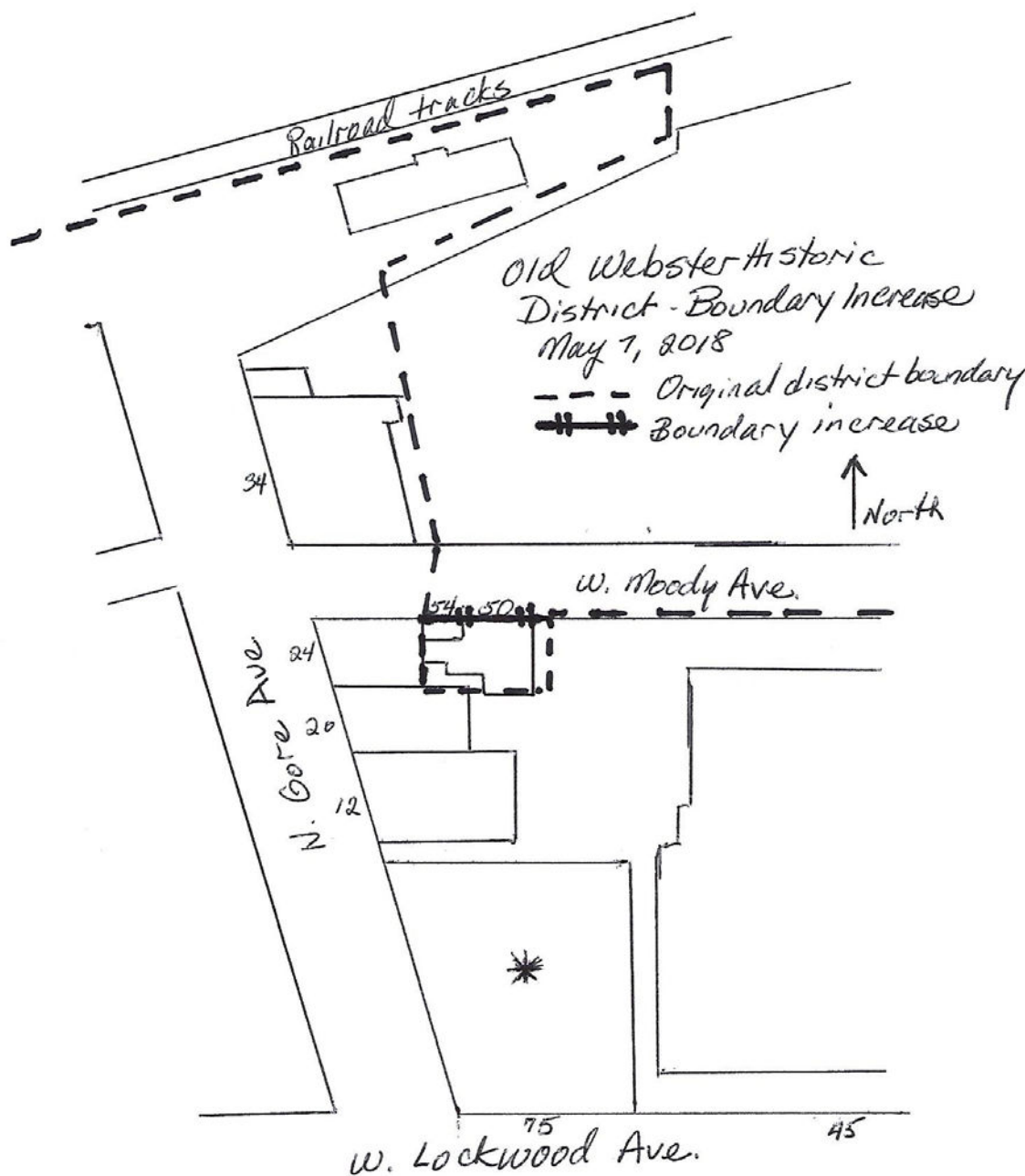
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Old Webster Historic (District (Boundary Increase))
Name of Property
St. Louis County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Figure 13: Old Webster Historic District (Boundary Increase) Map**

(Source: Created by Karen Bode Baxter on 14 June, 2018)









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