

# Iowa Site Inventory Form

State Historic Preservation Office

(July 2014)

State Inventory Number: 92-00805  New  Supplemental

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number \_\_\_\_\_

Non-extant Year: \_\_\_\_\_

*Read the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions carefully, to ensure accuracy and completeness before completing this form. The instructions are available on our website: <http://www.iowahistory.org/historic-preservation/statewide-inventory-and-collections/iowa-site-inventory-form.html>*

• **Property Name**

A) Historic name Sunset Park

B) Other names: West side survey map #WS-145

• **Location**

A) Street address: 915 W Main Street

B) City or town: Washington ( Vicinity) County Washington

C) Legal Description:

Rural: Township Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Township No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Range No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_ of Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

Urban: Subdivision: Northwest Addition; also part of Southwest Addition Block(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Lot(s): \_\_\_\_\_

• **Classification**

**A) Property category:** *Check only one*

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**B) Number of Resources (within property)**

<i>If eligible property, enter number of:</i>		<i>If non-eligible property, enter number of:</i>	
Contributing	Noncontributing		
<u>?</u>	Buildings	<u>?</u>	Buildings
<u>1</u>	Sites	—	Sites
<u>2</u>	Structures	—	Structures
<u>3</u>	Objects	—	Objects
<u>?</u>	<b>Total</b>	<u>?</u>	<b>Total</b>

**C) For properties listed in the National Register:**

National Register status:  Listed  De-listed  NHL  NPS DOE

**D) For properties within a historic district:**

- Property contributes to a National Register or local certified historic district.
- Property contributes to a potential historic district, based on professional historic/architectural survey and evaluation.
- Property *does not* contribute to the historic district in which it is located.

Historic district name: West side residential historic district Historic district site inventory number: 92-00350

**Name of related project report or multiple property study, if applicable:**

MPD Title

Historical Architectural Data Base #

Architectural and Historical Survey of the "west side" residential neighborhood in Washington 92-013

• **Function or Use** *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

**A) Historic functions**

**B) Current functions**

08F01: Recreation / park

08F01: Recreation / park

• **Description** *Enter categories (codes and terms) from the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions*

**A) Architectural Classification**

**B) Materials**

\_\_\_\_\_

Foundation (visible exterior): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

walls (visible exterior): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Roof: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**C) Narrative Description**  **SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED**

• **Statement of Significance**

**A) Applicable National Register Criteria:** *Mark your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria*

- Criterion A: Property is associated with significant events.  Yes  No  More research recommended  
Criterion B: Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
Criterion C: Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
Criterion D: Property yields significant information in archeology/history.  Yes  No  More Research Recommended

**B) Special criteria considerations:** *Mark any special considerations; leave blank if none*

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.  E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.  
 B Removed from its original location.  F A commemorative property.  
 C A birthplace or grave.  G Less than 50 years of age or  
 D A cemetery achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**C) Areas of Significance**

*Enter categories from instructions*

Community planning and development

**D) Period(s) of significance**

**E) Significant dates**

*Construction date*

1899  *check if circa or estimated date*

*Other dates, including renovations*

1904, 1931, 1935, 1962, 1967

**F) Significant person**

*Complete if Criterion B is marked above*

**G) Cultural affiliation**

*Complete if Criterion D is marked above*

**H) Architect/Builder**

*Architect*

*Builder/contractor*

**I) Narrative statement of significance**  **SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED**

• **Bibliography**  *See continuation sheet for the list of research sources used in preparing this form*

• **Geographic Data** *Optional UTM references*  *See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments*

**UTM References (OPTIONAL)**

Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD	Zone	Easting	Northing	NAD
1				2			
3				4			

• **Form Preparation**

Name and Title: Mary Patterson - volunteer Rebecca Lawin McCarley, consultant Date: December 30, 2015

Organization/firm: Washington Historic Preservation Commission E-mail: -

Street address: City Hall, 215 E. Washington St Telephone: 319-653-6584

City or Town: Washington State: Iowa Zip code: 52353

• **ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** *Submit the following items with the completed form*

**A) For all properties, attach the following, as specified in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions:**

- 1. Map** of property's location within the community.
- 2. Glossy color 4x6 photos labeled** on back with property/building name, address, date taken, view shown, and unique photo number.
- 3. Photo key showing each photo number on a map and/or floor plan, using arrows next to each photo number to indicate the location and directional view of each photograph.**
- 4. Site plan** of buildings/structures on site, identifying boundaries, public roads, and building/structure footprints.

**B) For State Historic Tax Credit Part 1 Applications, historic districts and farmsteads, and barns:**

*See lists of special requirements and attachments in the Iowa Site Inventory Form Instructions.*

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

*The SHPO has reviewed the Site Inventory and concurs with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:*

- Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
 *This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.*

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

SHPO authorized signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Narrative Description**

Sunset Park is located at the west end of the west side residential neighborhood. The initial land for the park was rented by the Park Association in 1899, and it became a formal city park in 1905. The park grew with additional land acquired in the 1930s and 1960s. Sunset Park is roughly bounded by W. Main Street on the north and W. Madison Street on the south, and by South Avenue F on the east. The west boundary butts up against unoccupied land and there is no street there. All the boundaries are irregular, with building parcels located within the rough boundary along W. Main, Avenue F, and W. Madison. There is housing in the 700 block of W. Washington Street which faces the park, and two residences on South Avenue F have back yards adjacent to the park. Along W. Madison Street there are several businesses that back up to the park, and two adjacent residences located the north end of South Avenue H are surrounded by the park except on the the north.

Sunset Park is situated on a former ravine, cut from west to east by a Y shaped watercourse. The higher ground is located along W. Madison Street, W. Main Street, and S. Avenue F, and the lowest portion of the park is in the center of the park, and also in an area known as Lower Park, west of the main park (see site plan on page 18 and table of resources on pages 19-20). Final classifications for resources within Sunset Park (contributing or non-contributing) are pending further research to confirm dates of construction, which will be completed as part of a future project, likely the research for nomination of the potential "west side" residential historic district.

There are five entrances to the park, two on the east, one on the south, and two on the north. The W. Madison Street entrance leads north to a large parking area located between the Steele Family Aquatic Center and the skate park, and is marked with a large wood sign accompanied by a smaller sign to the Dog Park. The street at this entrance is a boulevard from W. Madison Street to the parking lot. This road, South Avenue H, continues through the parking lot, jogs east a short distance, and then continues north to W. Main Street. From the east, W. Jefferson Street enters the park heading west, then divides shortly after entering the park. The right/north roadway follows the contour of the hilltop and loops around to the right where it joins W. Washington. The left/south branch of W. Jefferson Street turns south and then divides again in a short distance, with the left/south road leading straight south and uphill, then turning right and running beside W. Madison Street toward the Alexander and Mary Young Log House (see #92-00160), where it ends in a small parking area. The right/north branch turns to the northwest and continues northwest along the bottom of the hill to meet South Avenue H. The second eastern entrance, from W. Washington Blvd, is marked with a modern wood sign at the northwest corner of the intersection of W. Washington Street and S. Avenue F. Washington extends straight west into the park, with housing parcels historically and currently located on the north side. After passing both the property at 701 W. Washington Street and east section (1) of the park, it divides. The left/south road curves south to meet the W. Jefferson road while the right/north branch continues straight west to meet South Avenue H. The fifth entrance, in the 900 block of W. Main Street on the north side, leads to the lower park. This road circles around the lower park and connects to the aquatic center parking lot via a road from the south side of lower park.

Road surfaces in the park are a mix of historic narrow, coarse concrete paving one lane wide and modern paving. In the historic road areas, the road has been widened with modern paving added to

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create another lane. Gravel shoulders along the roads are used for parking throughout the park. A 14-foot high concrete retaining wall supporting the west side of the W. Jefferson / W. Washington loop has 1928 written on top of the wall at the south end.

The park can be divided into five sections based on the roads traveling through the park. Section 1, on the east side of the park, is bounded by S. Avenue F on the east, and by the W. Jefferson / W. Washington Street loop. Section 2 is bounded by S. Avenue F on the east, W. Madison Street on the south, S. Avenue H on the west, and Jefferson Street on the north. Section 3 is the center section of the park between W. Washington Street on the north, W. Jefferson Street on the south and east, and S. Avenue H on the west. Section 4, the northwest corner of the main park, is bounded on the south by W. Washington Street and on the north by W. Main Street, and by private property on W. Main and S. Avenue H on the east and west. Section 5 and Section 6 are in Lower Park, land added at a later date, with Section 5 being the north portion and Section 6 being the south portion. The two sections are divided roughly by the roadway from the maintenance building west to the dog park, with additional roads within the north section (5).

Section 1 is located on the east side between the W. Washington and W. Jefferson entrances/loop. It is the smallest section, composed of a single broad grassy hilltop. There is one picnic shelter, S1, in the approximate center of the section. The shelter has a concrete floor and low walls which change from 18 inches to 29 inches high along the length of the concrete walls. The wall supports square wood columns and diagonal wood bracing which support the hip roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles. The floor of the shelter slopes toward the north. This structure was built in 1932 as a wading pool, and was later converted to a picnic shelter.

Section 2 is the south section of the original park, including the land north of Madison, south of the S. Jefferson St entrance/loop, and east of the Madison Street entrance. The east section slopes from the W. Jefferson Street entrance downhill to the south and then rises up to picnic shelter (S2) near the corner of S. Avenue F and W. Madison Street. A concrete sidewalk leads from the public sidewalk at the corner to this shelter and continues to the road leading to the Alexander Young Log House. The shelter sits on a poured concrete foundation and floor, and has square wood posts and diagonal wood bracing to support the hip roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles. A wide wood railing runs around the perimeter of the structure. Just to the west of the shelter is a steel and fiberglass merry-go-round. Across the road to the west of the shelter, there is a playground area with two main sections, swings in the east area and a slide, a merry-go-round, and a swinging see-saw in the west area (P1). The swing set, slide, merry-go-round, and swinging see-saw are made of galvanized pipe, and the merry-go-round deck and swinging see-saw are wood.

The Alexander Young Log House is located further to west on the hillside in Section 2, with the grounds around the house developed as a garden area. The 1840 log house is a one and a half story house of hewn logs which sits on a cut stone foundation some distance away from W. Madison Street (see #92-00160). In addition to the log house, this large shady area has four split rail fence sections, one east of the log house, two sections south of the house, near W. Madison Street, and one section behind the house. There are eleven community gardens in this area, along with a small, roofed well south of the log house, a wood gazebo west of the log house, and a wood wisteria pergola farther to the southwest.

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There are four historic steel park benches placed at intervals among the gardens, and two more such benches in the pergola. There are also two wood Adirondack style double seats among the flower beds. Northwest of the log house is a large concrete planter. The planter, gazebo, and pergola are connected by a sidewalk made of historic brick pavers, and a wood trellis with a bench on each side of it straddles the brick path east of the pergola. At the west end of the gardens, just north of the pergola, is a small, portable wood storage shed.

To the north of the log house in Section 2 is a two level picnic shelter/pavilion (S3). The foundation is poured concrete, and there is a wide brick chimney centered on the north side of the structure. Access to lower level has been closed by cement block installed in the doorways, but a pair of steel doors permits access to the storage area under the pavilion. The hill is steep here, and the upper level of the pavilion is at ground level on the south side. The pavilion has a poured concrete foundation and floor, and iron posts and bracing support the side gable roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles. There is an iron railing around the perimeter of the floor, and a wood fence about 5 feet high has been installed outside the iron railing. There is a fireplace centered on the north side of the pavilion which has been closed with concrete. The ceiling is corrugated steel.

At the west end of Section 2, west of the log house, there is an open area with a large stone marker at the southeast corner of the area, and a plaque on a stone marker which says, "1966 This parcel of land 184 x 243 ft. was bequeathed by Dora Bailey to The Board of Park Comm. as a memorial to her small daughter Anne to be developed as a children's playground. May all of us privileged to enjoy this gift be ever grateful" (M1). In the area to the north of the marker, there is a swinging bridge / slide apparatus, and farther to the north, downhill, there is a play area with three metal spring animals, a slide, a pre-school age climbing and sliding structure, and a small swing set (P2). A cyclone fenced skate park is located just to the north of the playground equipment.

Section 3, the center section of the main portion of the park, lies diagonally from southeast to northwest between W. Jefferson on the south and east and W. Washington on the north, and S. Avenue H on the west. The eastern boundary of this section is the loop road from Washington to Jefferson. This section has the lowest land in the main park. At the southeast end of Section 3, there is a small shelter (S4), with a poured concrete floor and square wood columns supporting a steel covered hip roof. A large wood play structure named New Dawn at Sunset is immediately to the north and west of this shelter (P3). On the south side of the structure, at the entrance, there is a commemorative brick and limestone wall with the names of those who donated to the structure. Beyond the play equipment, farther to the northwest along the Washington / Jefferson loop road, is a concrete block rest room building facing northeast (R1). It has a poured concrete foundation and floor, concrete block walls, and three steel entry doors, one to the left, one to the right, and one in the center. The side gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A patriotic mural is painted on the rear of the building, facing southwest. To the northwest of the restroom building is another small open shelter, which has a poured concrete floor and square wood columns supporting a steel covered hip roof (S5). To the north of this shelter, on the west side of the road, is a landscaped granite stone marker with a bronze plaque which says, "In grateful recognition of Abijah Savage whose benevolence made possible Sunset Park 1899" (M2). From this point the curve on the loop road looking west, two bridges can be seen crossing the grassy gully (B1, B2). The bridges are constructed of galvanized pipe with wood plank flooring. There are concrete

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retaining walls below the approaches to the bridges, with a concrete pier supporting the middle of the bridge. Northwest of the north bridge, close to W. Washington Street, is a stone structure with a grill and chimney (G1).

Section 4 is north of the west half of Section 3 and lies between W. Washington on the south, S. Avenue H on the west, private property on the east, and W. Main Street on the north. This was platted as Out Lot 25 in the Northwest Addition, and it was private property until 1931 when N.F. White sold this parcel to the park commissioners for the City of Washington. There is one larger shelter (S6) along the south edge of this section. It has a poured concrete floor and wood structure with square wood columns supporting the hip roof with asphalt shingles. There is a wide wood railing around the perimeter of the floor.

Sections 5 and 6 are located in Lower Park, with access from the 900 block of W. Main Street, or from the aquatic center's parking lot. A road from the maintenance shed on the east side of Lower Park runs in a generally westerly direction to the dog park, and serves as the dividing line between Section 5, the north half of Lower Park, and Section 6, the south half of Lower Park. At the entrance to Lower Park along W. Main Street, there is a granite marker with a bronze plaque "In remembrance of Jessie B. Dougherty who died April 5, 1957 and whose bequest made possible this ten acre addition to Sunset Park" (M3). This donation is the north half of Lower Park, which falls in the Northwest Addition to Washington, generally Section 5.

Section 5 is the north half of Lower Park, and begins at the W. Main Street entrance described above. The east end of this section is located between the main road to the south and the house lots to the east along Avenue H. A shelter (S7) is located in this east end. It has a poured concrete floor and square wood posts supporting the hip roof, which is clad with asphalt shingles. There is a wide railing around the perimeter of the shelter. South of the shelter, there is a set of swings which includes a tire swing and an infant swing as well as two typical strap swings (P4). Along the south edge of the east end of Section 5, there is a dead end spur goes east to the maintenance building. This is a one-story side gable frame garage facing south, with a slightly smaller addition at the west (left) end (B1). The building sits on a poured concrete foundation, and has a steel roof, with the roof of the addition being slightly lower than the rest of the roof. The façade and both the east and west elevations are clad with vinyl siding, while the north elevation, the rear of the building, is v-groove wood siding. On the façade, there is a wood entry door at the far right, with a small four-over-one-light double-hung vinyl window to the right of the door. To the left of the entry, there are two single-car aluminum garage doors spaced farther apart than typical. Farther to the left, there is another single vehicle aluminum garage door. The east elevation has two four-over-one-light double-hung vinyl windows. There are no fenestration on the west elevation, and none on the north elevation, the rear of the building. There is, however, a protruding section in the approximate middle of the elevation with a steel shed roof which continues the slope of the main roof. East of the maintenance shed, there are two tapered stone columns with a chain between them (C1). These columns sit at the edge of S. Avenue H just south of its intersection with W. Washington Street. They are at the edge of the strip of land on the south side of Out Lot 26 acquired in 1935. A small shelter is located to the south between the columns and maintenance building (S10).

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The center portion of Section 5 is enclosed by a loop in the road. At the northeast corner, there is a concrete block restroom with V-groove wood siding on the front and rear gables of the asphalt shingled roof (R2). There are two steel doors on the east facing façade. The windows are high screened openings in the walls which are covered with plywood in winter. There are four openings on the west wall, the rear of the building, and two openings on the north, south, and east walls. To the south of the restrooms, is the rocket slide playground (P5). The rocket sits as if poised for launch just west of the loop road. It towers approximately 30 feet in the air, and is filled with ladders and stairs. There are two long slides attached to the rocket and the launch tower, and a long enclosed steel ramp leads down to a swinging bridge and a pre-school climb and slide apparatus. At the north end of the rocket slide complex there is another small slide. To the west of the restrooms, there is a small shelter (S8). The shelter is similar to the other small shelters, with a poured concrete floor and square wood columns supporting a hip roof with asphalt shingles. There is a sand volleyball court south of the shelter and two basketball courts to the west. Both athletic facilities are located inside the road's loop with the shelter, restrooms, and playground.

The north portion of Section 5 is across the road to the north. There is another large shelter here (S9), similar to the shelter at the east end of Section 5 (S7), with a poured concrete floor, square wood supports for the hip roof clad in asphalt shingles, and a wide railing around the perimeter. To the east of this shelter, there is playground (P6) with a steel and fiberglass merry-go-round, a small slide, and a set of four swings, including an infant swing. The road between this section and the central section to the south has a dead end spur going west, which leads to the dog park. There is a small gravel parking lot there, and a large cyclone fenced rectangle enclosing a walking path, a trio of concrete sewer pipes for dog play, and a small shelter (S8), which is like the other small shelters with poured concrete floor, square wood support posts, and an asphalt shingle covered hip roof.

Section 6 extends across the southern portion of the west half of the park, west from the north end of the Madison Street entrance. The largest resource in Section 6 is the Washington Steele Family Aquatic Center, located on the west side of S. Avenue H about a block north from W. Madison Street. The zero entry pool has five Olympic size lanes, a two level water slide, and three other water features. The pool house is a one story stone building with hip roof and a shed roof entrance (B2). The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The façade faces east, toward the parking lot, and has a wide entry area with a roll down steel door. The entry roof is supported by two square stone columns. On the left, there is a concession window with a concrete sill and a roll down steel door. The south elevation has two similar size windows, also with steel roll down doors. A large wood pergola is located just outside these south facing windows. The west elevation faces the pool, and has a wide entry opening to the right with a roll down steel door, and farther to the right there is a pair of steel storage doors. There are no fenestration on the north side of the building. Across the parking lot to the northeast of the pool house is a half court basketball court. A road along the north side of the aquatic center travels to the northwest and connects with the loop in Section 5. In the large area of Section 6 south of this road, there is a frisbee golf court. At the north end on the south side of the road, there is a small hip roof shelter (S11) with square wood posts supporting the roof and a poured concrete floor. Asphalt shingles cover the roof. This is the first tee of the nine hole disc golf course which extends across Section 6 to the western side of the park, including the area behind the pool.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance**

Sunset Park appears to contribute historically to the potential “west side” residential historic district in Washington. Initial efforts to develop Sunset Park by residents of this adjacent neighborhood in 1899 resulted in the official donation of the park to the city in 1904 and establishment of the park commission. Earlier promoters became members of the park commission and worked with the city and other prominent neighborhood residents to develop the park over the next decades. Brick paving of Washington Blvd from the west side of downtown to the entry into Sunset Park further connected the neighborhood to the park development. W. Jefferson likewise dead-ended into the park, and W. Main Street stretched along the north edge of the park land, resulting in residences Residential parcels on the edges of the park were partially incorporated with others remaining as residences bordering on the park. As the park grew to the west, additional land was acquired between residential parcels on the north side, further integrating the neighborhood and the park. Residents of the "west side" residential historic district through the middle of the 20th century were prominent businessmen and community advocates, including additional projects to develop and expand the park. Further bequests for park acquisition and development in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in the current boundaries of the park, including the original east half of the park from Avenue F to Avenue H.

Overall, the park is counted as a contributing site within the potential “west side” residential historic district, with further classification of individual resources in the park pending further research to be completed prior to or during the development of the NRHP nomination for the historic district. Based on research completed to date and outlined below, it appears that many features of the park were developed by 1969, the recommended end of the period of significance for the historic district. These resources built by this date would be classified as contributing features of the park within the historic district.

*History / research summary of property (chronological order, by owner/period):*

The original land for Sunset Park was approximately 10 acres that was leased to the park association and later acquired and transferred to the City of Washington. Initial plans for the park were made in July 1899, with H.A. Burrell, Frank Stewart, C.M. Keck (Burrell's son in law), and C.H. Keck (uncle of C.M.) meeting the home of Frank Stewart (603 W. Washington Blvd) for the purpose of obtaining land for a park. A notice in the *Washington Press* from July 26, 1899 says, “An association is forming to open a park in the west end of town; H. & W. Scofield will lease for 20 years the old Melville tract and the old 2d U.P. Site west of Jas. Work's home, and Wm. Fulton will lease ditto his two lots on the Sigourney road, so that the inclosure will run from Frank Ferguson's west to Mahlon Smith's and on the north come up to the Graham line, in all about 10 acres, well wooded. A lake can be formed, with rustic bridges over the “draw”. Entrances from Sigourney road, Gospel Ridge and from the street south of that, and from the north, just west of the Graham place. The tract is capable of being beautified. The Melville house will be torn down, and the Bennett house removed. The small association fee is expected to make an improvement fund.” - Howard Burrell, editor



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The August 2, 1899 edition of the *Press* follows with this information, "H. & W. Scofield and Wm. Fulton and wives, as party of the first part, have signed the leases of the respective ground for 20 years, with option at any time to buy for \$4,000 and \$800 respectively, and Frank Stewart, C.M. Keck, C.H. Keck, A.H. Wallace, H.A. Burrell and J.R. Campbell, as party of the second part, have signed the same on behalf of the park association. The membership is \$1 a year, and it is hoped that many hundreds will sign, inasmuch as their fee goes to the fund to improve that pretty tract only five blocks from the square. A landscape gardener will be employed to lay it out in drives, with bridges, lake, ornamental trees, beds of flowers, &c., and every cent will be expended toward realizing the original scheme of beautification." The men signing for the park association lived in the neighborhood to the west of downtown, between downtown and this park site: Frank Stewart (603 W. Washington) C.M. Keck (522 W. Washington, Burrell's son in law), C.H.Keck (410 W. Washington, uncle of C.M.), H.A. Burrell, (527 W. Washington and editor of the *Press*), and J.R. Campbell (631 W. Washington).

The annual meeting of the park association stockholders was held on November 9, 1899, and reported in the *Washington Evening Journal* on November 11, with the headline: "Transformation At New Park - Sunset Beginning to Look Like a Resort - Much Work Being Done - Before Cold Weather Stops the Work of Filling In." The article outlined five entrances to the park, two on the south (off of W. Madison), two on the east (at Washington and Jefferson), and one on the north along the land of Will Graham (now Avenue H). The annual meeting included election of directors and officers:

Directors Elected by the Members:

First Ward - C.M. Keck, 3 years (530 W. Washington)

First Ward - Col. Scofield, 2 years (this is Hiram, the lawyer, at 633 W. Main – house gone)

First Ward - Geo. F. Ross, 1 year

Second Ward - H.F. Steck, 3 years

Second Ward - J.A. Young, 2 years (302 W. Main)

Second Ward - A.N. Alberson, 1 year (414 W. Main)

Third Ward - H.M. Eicher, 3 years

Third Ward - C.C. Cunningham, 2 years

Third Ward - Ab Anderson, 1 year

Fourth Ward - F. Stewart, 3 years (603 W. Wash)

Fourth Ward - H.A. Burrell, 2 years (527 W. Washington)

Fourth Ward - A.H. Wallace, 1 year

Woman Committee Auxiliary:

First Ward - Mrs. Wm. Scofield (301 W. Main)

Second Ward - Mrs. E.E. Everson

Third Ward - Mrs. F.L. Wilson

Fourth Ward - Mrs. T.T. Keeley

The directors met and elected the following officers for one year:

President - A.H. Wallace

First Vice President - H.M. Eicher

Second Vice President - Geo. F. Ross

Secretary - Frank Stewart

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Cor Sec - C.M. Keck  
Treasurer - A.H. Wallace

Fundraising for the park association quickly followed. The Ladies Auxiliary Committee with Mrs. T.T. Keeley as chairman, organized an apron sale for the benefit of the park fund and cleared \$175.00. (Harry Montgomery's article has the amount; the *Press* has the other information). The *Washington Press*, on November 29, 1899, described the attractions, in addition to aprons, as dolls, oysters, pastry, candy, and popcorn, and a remembrance table. Under the direction of Frank Stewart, there was a ladies home talent minstrel show given which cleared \$78 ("Foresighted Men Gave City Park," *Evening Journal*, October 10, 1952, 1). Frank Stewart was chairman of the tree planting committee, too, and with his brother Charles. N. Stewart, a nurseryman, planted and cared for the new trees and shrubs in the park. Burrell's *History of Washington County* in 1909 notes that Sunset Park was located about five blocks west of the square, just beyond Gospel Ridge. It included about 12 acres, with about eight acres mowed for park land. Abijah Savage had donated \$3,000 toward the cost of acquiring land for the park in 1904 (Burrell 1909, Vol. 1: 433). Land acquired in 1904 included out lots 2-3-4 in the Addition to Southwest Washington and most of Block 2 in the Southwest Addition (except for east 132' of the north corner - lots 1-2).

The 1913 Anniversary Edition of the *Evening Journal* notes that the first efforts to establish Sunset Park were made in spring 1899, with land on a long-term lease with the option to purchase. The directors for the original incorporation were Frank Stewart, C.H. Keck, A.H. Wallace, C.M. Keck, and H.A. Burrell. A number of improvements were made, with money raised from various performances, plays, and ice cream festivals. The Washington band gave weekly concerts in the park, and it became a popular place. However, not all members of the park association were diligent in paying their dues, and the association fell behind on the rent payments. While the owners were lenient in collecting payment, they investigated other options to better fund the park. Some directors met with Abijah Savage, a wealthy public-spirit citizen, and he agreed to donate \$3,000 for the purposes of buying the land for a city park. The owners set \$4,800 as the price for the entire tract, and a subscription for the remaining \$1,800 was successfully raised. The park land was then purchased and deeded to the city in April 1904. Later, a one mill tax was appropriated for the maintenance of the park, and park commission with three members was established. When the park was initially discussed, H.A. Burrell began to refer to it as Sunset Park in his *Washington Press*, and the name stuck, becoming the formal name of the park ("Washington's Beautiful Parks, *Evening Journal*, April 26, 1913, 9).

By 1909, brick paving in Washington extended one block from the square in each direction, north on Marion and Iowa to the railroad tracks, east on Main to H.M. Eicher's residence, and west on Washington to an entrance to Sunset Park. The result was the connection of downtown to Sunset Park, west through the residential neighborhood dubbed as Gospel Ridge by Burrell. Of the latter, Burrell wrote in 1909: "the center of that was street boulevarded, or an island of grass, trees, dandelions, and other choice weeds was washed by brick on either flank." With the improvement, the result was "such a stimulus to driving, automobiling, promenading! Gospel Ridge used to be a silent street, shaded by giant elms....it was like a deserted village, but now the honk-honk and smoke and smell of mobiles keep us alert as a pitcherful of Egyptian viper ( Burrell 1909, Vol. 1: 42).

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By 1913, more than 500 trees were planted in Sunset Park, land was graded, and the park was seeded under the direction of a landscape gardener. A pavilion was built near the center of the park, with money raised by subscription. City water lines were run to the park later, replacing an early well and windmill. Around 150 seats with steel frames and wood slats were installed in the park, as well as garbage cans at frequent intervals. Rustic bridges were built over the ravines, adding a picturesque quality. By 1913, initial concrete paving into the park had begun, with the first being the entrance from W. Washington Blvd. Over the last two years, a lighting system had been installed in Sunset Park, connected to Central Park by lights down W. Washington. A five-foot granite boulder had been uncovered during a sewer project in Washington, and it was used for a memorial to Abijah Savage for his donation ("Washington's Beautiful Parks, *Evening Journal*, April 26, 1913, 9).

Sunset Park continued to be developed through the 1910s. In January 1912, the Daughters of American Revolution moved the Alexander and Mary Young Log House from Cedar Township into Sunset Park, located in a prominent location along the south edge and visible from W. Madison (see #92-00160 for additional information). Further transactions in 1914 brought land on the east edge of the park into the official boundary (Out Lot 1).

The 1926 Anniversary Edition of the *Evening Journal* also recounts the early history of the park. The land was largely a pasture tract owned by H & W. Scofield. Another large lot was owned by William Fulton, and another house and lot was owned by Frank Ferguson. These houses were removed, while the homes of James Work and Daniel Wilde remained at the northeast corner of the park along Avenue F (both still standing). Frank Stewart is cited as the overall designer of Sunset Park, who had visited and studied parks in many other cities. Something had been added and improved every year in the park since the official formation in 1904. A bathing pool was found in the park by 1926, as well as "amusement devices" for children. It was a favorite spot for picnics and drives ("Frank Stewart and Sunset Park," *Evening Journal*, April 3, 1926, 8). Improvements to the main drive resulted in the construction of a concrete retaining wall in 1928.

In the 1930s, Sunset Park was improved with rustic bridges, shelter houses, a bathing pool, a rock garden, and swings. On August 29, 1931, a two-acre tract, known as Out Lot 25, was acquired from N.F. White to the north of the west end of the park (southeast corner of W. Main and S. Avenue H). The 1933 centennial edition of the *Evening Journal* notes that latest addition was made through the efforts and dream of the last chairman J.F. Simpson, who had died a few month ago. A strip of land was later acquired in 1935 along the south side of the Verice Beliel property (Out Lot 26) to the west in 1935 (16.5' strip along south side of lot, 130' in length, and then a 49.5' by 283' strip to the west). Stone gate columns exist currently at the east end of this strip, near the end of W. Washington in the park. A wading pool was built in 1932 at the east end of the park, with a picnic shelter (S1) later constructed over the concrete base. A drinking fountain had been built in the park through a bequest from Warren Mann by 1933. In 1938, improvements included surfacing of west park roads with crushed gravel, additional gravel on roads in the east part of the park, construction of four open air fireplaces, corner posts of rock built on the gateway on the west side of the park, a low place at W. Washington entrance filled with dirt from 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave underpass project and planted with grass, wading pool in main part of park cleaned/painted and a rock walk built around it, tiling near W. Main Street near the rock garden, and the addition of a electrolier at the rock garden. The improvements were overseen

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by the park commissioners: Mrs. Delbert Bailey (Marion Stewart Bailey), chair (603 W. Washington Blvd); Frank Miller (527 W. Washington Blvd); and J.E. Lemmon (200 1/2 S. Iowa Ave) ("Washington has Popular Sunset Park," *Evening Journal*, February 16, 1939, 9).

The October 10, 1952 edition of the *Evening Journal* outlined many of the projects in Washington funded through benefactors over the years. Sunset Park and the donation of Abijah Savage was included on the front page. In addition to recounting the early history of Sunset Park, it also noted improvements to the park, including the addition of about two acres in the northwest corner of the park (likely the 1931 acquisition). Over the years, other donations had funded improvements to the park, such as the drinking fountain (funds from Warren Mann prior to 1933) and playground equipment (individuals and organizations, including the American Legion). A new pavilion was noted as constructed in 1951 to provide more shelter and better facilities for picnickers ("Foresighted Men Gave City Park," *Evening Journal*, October 10, 1952, 1). While perhaps visually part of the park, lots along the north side of the drive into the park from W. Washington Blvd were historically owned as part of the Patterson property at 717 W. Main to the north, not actual park property. They were sold separately in 1942 but not developed until sold in 1951 to contractor Harry Sowden. This set of houses extends along the north side of the W. Washington drive along the north edge of Sunset Park, creating a series of homes developed with view of Sunset Park immediately to the south across the drive. A fourth house was built for new local business owner James and Nancy Lou Seifert at 730 W. Washington in 1954, who opened the first Seifert's clothing store in Washington at this time (bought out Rothchild's, later becoming a chain of clothing stores in Iowa).

The *Evening Journal* noted that 1957 had been a good year for retail businesses, with increased sales tax collected. The municipal swimming pool, approved through a bond issue in 1956, was slated for construction in spring 1958 on the site selected to the west of the boundary of Sunset Park. This addition to town would add an amenity found in other towns of similar size as Washington, though Washington had benefited for many years from the YMCA pool ("Will 1958 Be Good Year in Washington?" *Evening Journal*, December 31, 1957, 7). The pool was completed and land later incorporated into the boundary for Sunset Park in 1962, adding this amenity officially to Sunset Park.

In 1962, an additional 10 acres was acquired from Jay Brewer for Sunset Park to expand the boundary to the west and north. Park commissioners at the time were Ralph Bauer (chair) (415 W. 3rd St), Jay Brewer (703 W. Main), and Hugo Lensch (424 E. Washington). Funds for the addition were bequeathed from Mrs. Jessie Dougherty through her will, leaving \$10,000 to the park board for improving or adding to parks in Washington. Other funds were noted as available from the estate in 1962, which left large sums to other organizations as well. By September, initial grading work had been completed and tile laid. The commissioners intended to still seed the tract and plant trees in the fall. With the purchase, the municipal swimming pool and surrounding ground would effectively incorporated into the park. At this time, it was noted that two residences sat at the east end of the park (extant) and one just outside of the southwest corner of the park (Bailey). The park was regularly used for parties, picnics, reunions. Features of the park included playground equipment, tables, benches, shelter houses ("Much Work is Completed at Park Addition," *Evening Journal*, September 13, 1962, 4). In 1967, the land north of the swimming pool bought by money left by Jessie Dougherty was noted as landscaped with trees planted, shelters built, restrooms added, and a shop building constructed in 1963

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("Sunset Park in the future," *Evening Journal*, July 17, 1967, 7). The city directory in 1964 noted that Washington had three city parks, with two modern shelters and play equipment. A 50 by 110 feet municipal swimming pool was also located near Sunset Park, with room for up to 450 swimmers and an attached wading pool (*Washington City Directory* 1964: 13)

In January 1967, the park board gained possession of land left by the Dora Bailey estate. She stipulated that the land be used for a playground area for children, and new swings and equipment was installed in spring 1967. A total of 22 elm trees had to be removed from the park due to Dutch Elm disease, while more than 260 trees had been planted since 1962. The park board consisted of Hugo Lensch (424 E. Washington), Don Minick (1009 E. Main), and Ray Watson Jr (515 W. Monroe) in 1967. Land west of the swimming pool had been purchased, but the board had no present plan for development. They hoped to plant trees throughout the area, so that it would have shade when it was developed. Improvements to the park were typically only made through special funds, as the tax money only paid for operation and maintenance of the parks ("Sunset Park in the future," *Evening Journal*, July 17, 1967, 7; "Dear Aunt Agatha," *Evening Journal*, July 8, 1967, 5). Two tennis courts were added to Sunset Park in 1968 that were noted to be popular and always in use ("Dear Aunt Agatha," *Evening Journal*, August 3, 1968, 5). The western edge of development of the core of Washington in the late 1960s remained the west edge of the Addition to Southwest Washington (1856) and Northwest Washington (1909). Thus, Sunset Park remained at the western edge of the city in this period and remains as such currently (2015).

In 1976, Sunset Park was noted as the major recreation area for the City of Washington. It was noted as having long attracted local residents and visitors. There was a fine assortment of play equipment, including "Astro City" that had slides and climbing features. Seven shelters, many picnic tables, and several outdoor fireplaces were found in the park, serving picnickers and family reunions in summer months. Restroom facilities were also available, and the municipal swimming pool was located here. Other parks in Washington included Central Park (downtown square), the recently added North Park, and Green Field (baseball diamonds). The park board included Sally Hotle, Ray Watson, Jim Rosien, and Les Dunlap ("City parks popular spots," Bicentennial Edition, *Evening Journal*, July 1, 1976, 8).

In the last couple decades, a new aquatic center was built on the site of the old swimming pool. A new wooden playground was constructed near the east end of the park, built by volunteers of three days and nights (c.1997). Other improvements made to the park have included additional shelters and restroom facilities.

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**Location map**



*2009 aerial photograph (Washington County) – line indicates survey/research area boundary*

*also see site plan on page 18*

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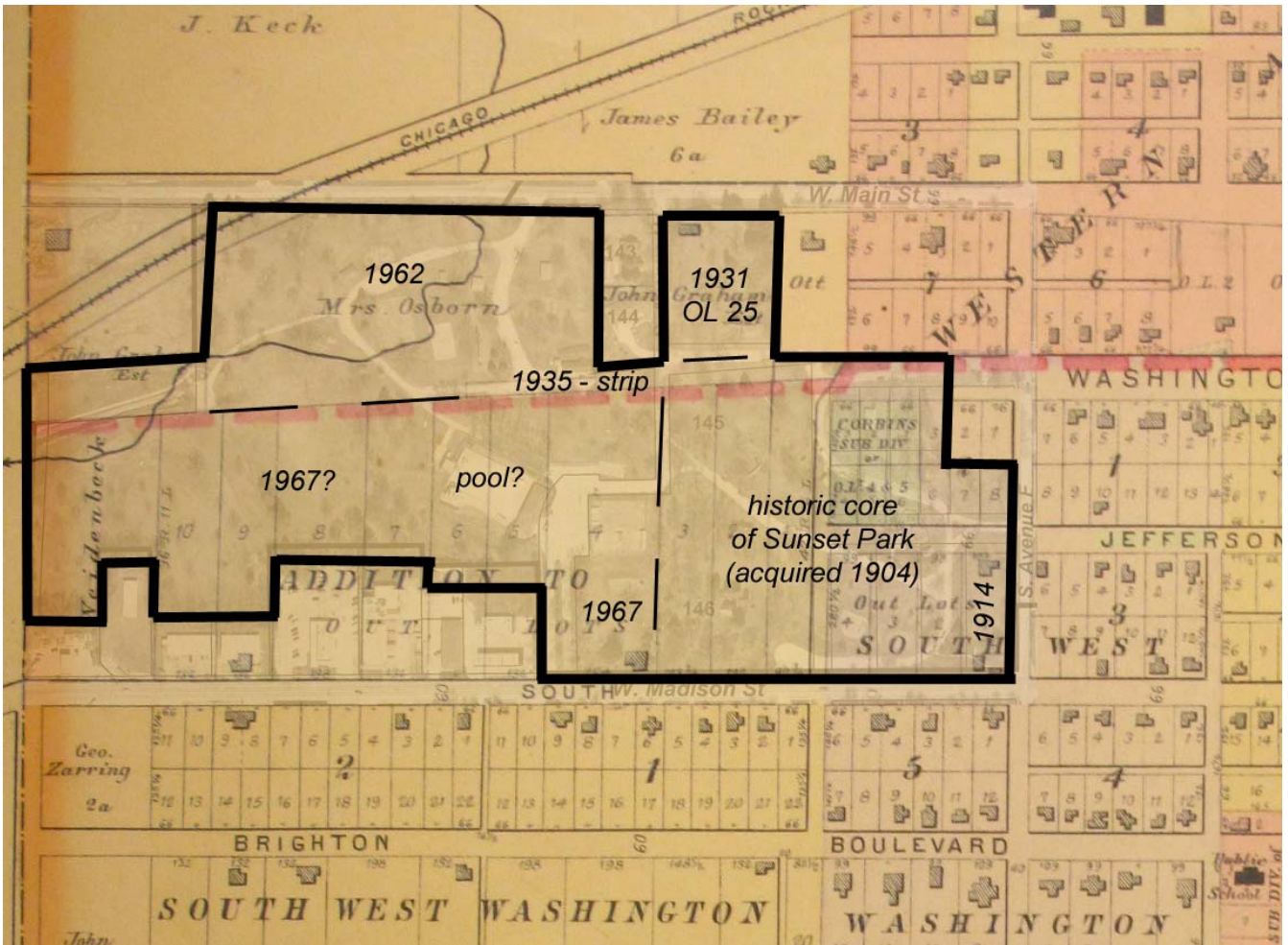
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**Historic images**



1894 atlas of Washington with current boundary of Sunset Park overlaid, aerial layer under atlas.



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1906 map of Washington, with boundary of Sunset Park outlined

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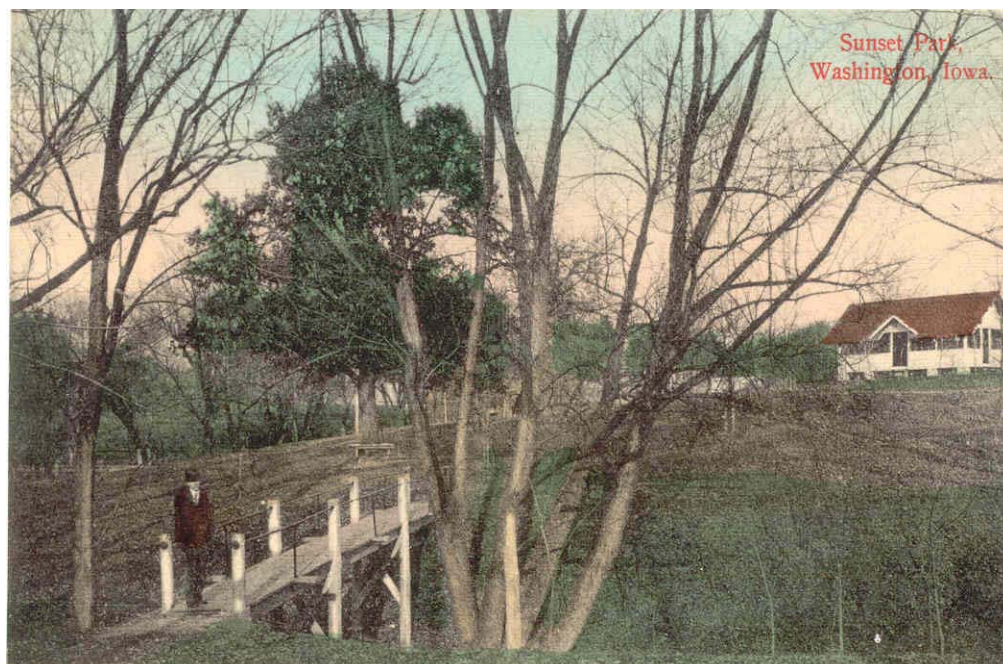
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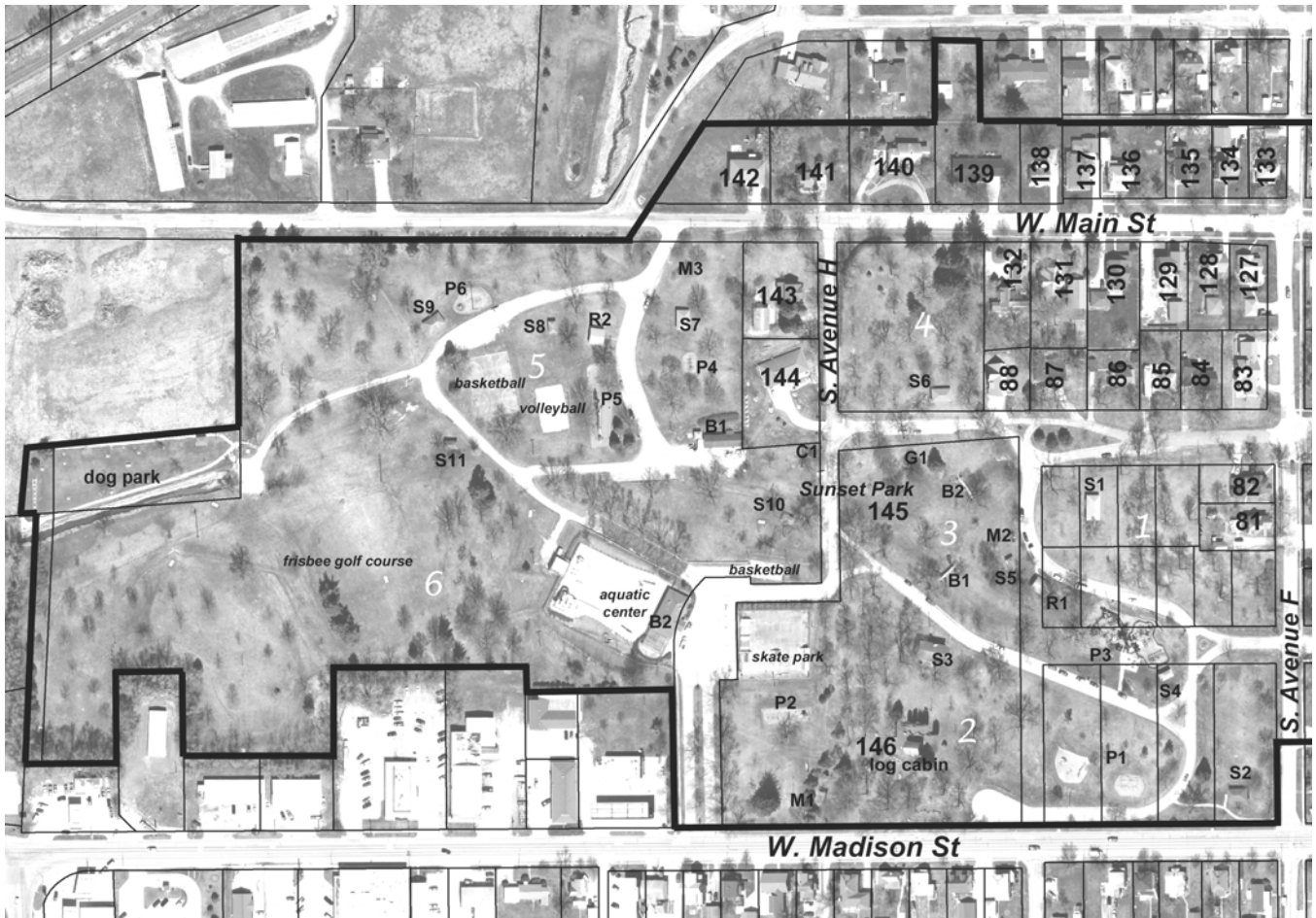
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**Site plan**



*sections of park and resource numbers keyed to narrative description and table on following pages*

*2009 aerial photograph (Washington County) with parcel lines –  
 outer line indicates survey/research area boundary*

*see other file for continuation of form - table and photos*