COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

Official Eligibility Determination (OAHP use only) OAHP1403 Rev. 9/98

Date _____ Initials _____

___ Determined Eligible – National Register
___ Determined Not Eligible – National Register
___ Determined Eligible – State Register
___ Determine Not Eligible – State Register
___ Need Data
___ Contributes to eligible National Register District
___ Noncontributing to eligible National Register District

I. IDENTIFICATION

1. Resource number: **5RT.2457** Parcel number(s): **100303025**
2. Temporary resource number: **N/A**
3. County: **Routt**
4. City: **Steamboat Springs**
5. Historic Building Name: **Werner House**
6. Current Building Name: **Benjamin House**
7. Building Address: **844 Aspen Street**
8. Owner Name: **Lisa Lee Benjamin**
   Owner Organization:
   Owner Address: **P.O. Box 771567**
   Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**
    Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**

II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **6th** Township: **6N** Range: **84 W**
NW ¼ of **NW** ¼ of **SW** ¼ of **SE** ¼ of Section **8**

10. UTM reference (Datum: NAD27)
Zone: **13** **344710 mE** **4483500 mN**

11. USGS quad name: **Steamboat Springs, Colorado**
Year: **1969** Map scale: **7.5'**

12. Lot(s): **Part of Lots 25-27, Block 3**
Addition: **First Addition to Steamboat Springs** Year of addition:

13. Boundary description and justification:
This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.
Metes and bounds?: Describe:

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Rectangular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **1763 square feet**
16. Number of stories: **1 1/2**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Wood/Shingle**
18. Roof configuration: **Gabled Roof/Front Gabled Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Metal Roof**
20. Special features: **Porch**
Chimney
Roof Treatment/Dormer

21. General architectural description:
This is a historic, 1½-story, front gabled, Craftsman style dwelling, with some Rustic style attributes. A single-story gabled addition has been built onto the original northeast (rear) elevation. The original Craftsman style house measures 51' NE-SW (deep) by 27' SE-NW (across), while the addition measures 40' NE-SW by 26' SE-NW. The original house is supported by a concrete foundation, faced with river rock, which ranges from approximately three feet above grade at the SW end to approximately one foot above grade at the NE end. The house's lower exterior walls are clad with stained dark brown board-and-batten, while the upper walls are clad with stained dark brown square-cut wood shingles. Decorative false half-timbering appears in the upper gable ends on the SW and NE elevations. The front gabled roof is moderately-pitched, and is covered with silver metal roofing material. Stained dark brown rafter ends are exposed beneath widely-overhanging eaves, and there is a large gabled dormer on the NW-facing roof slope. There are two chimneys: one is a red brick chimney located near the NE end of the NW-facing roof slope; the other is a river rock and concrete fireplace chimney on the SE elevation which has been capped and is no longer in use. The house features a symmetrical, full-width, Craftsman style front porch on the SW elevation, facing toward Soda Creek. This 8' by 27' porch is recessed under the front end of the house's main gable roof, is approached by five concrete steps, and features a tongue-in-groove wood floor, board-and-batten knee walls, river rock and concrete pedestals, and stained dark brown wood piers. A stained light brown wood-paneled door, with eight small upper sash lights, enters the center of the façade from the front porch. The front entry door is flanked on either side by a small 8-light window, and by a large 6/ single-hung sash window, with stained dark brown wood frames and surrounds. Above the porch, a band of three 1/1 double-hung

sash windows, covered by a small shed roof with knee braces, penetrates the façade's upper gable end. Windows on the original dwelling's secondary elevations also feature stained dark brown wood frames and surrounds. A rectangular bay, with three single-hung sash windows, is located on the SE elevation. Two small square windows flank the fireplace chimney, also on the SE elevation. Windows elsewhere are primarily 1/1 double-hung sash. A non-historic 1x1 horizontal sliding glass bypass door enters the NW elevation from a wood deck.

The 40' by 26' addition to the NE elevation is supported by a low concrete foundation, faced with river rock. The addition's exterior walls are clad with stained dark brown board-and-batten, while its low-pitched gable roof is covered with silver metal roofing material. Stained dark brown rafter ends are exposed beneath widely-overhanging eaves. Two painted white, 8-light, glass-in-wood-frame doors, with 8-light sidelights, enter the SE elevation. A painted white, 8-light, glass-in-wood-frame door, with an 8-light sidelight, enters the NW elevation. A wood deck, with a pergola covering, is also located on the NW elevation.

22. Architectural style: **Late 19th And Early 20th Century American Movements/Craftsman**

    Building type:

23. Landscape or special setting features: **This spacious, well-maintained, property is located northeast of the intersection of Aspen and 9th Streets, on the northwestern bank of Soda Creek. A long gravel lane leads generally north from the intersection of Aspen and 9th Streets, across a bridge over Soda Creek, and to along the southeast side of the house. A spacious planted grass lawn, with numerous fir and spruce trees, borders the southwest, northwest, and northeast sides of the house. A garage is located southeast of the house.**

24. Associated buildings, features or objects:

    Garage

    A 1.5-story garage, which measures 14' NW-SE by 20' NE-SW, is located SE of the house. This building is supported by a concrete and river rock foundation, and has a wood plank floor. The garage's exterior walls are clad with stained dark brown horizontal weatherboard, with 1" by 4" corner boards, and it is covered by a moderately-pitched front gable roof with silver metal roofing material. Stained dark brown rafter ends are exposed beneath the eaves. A set of paired vertical wood plank garage doors, side-hinged with metal strap hinges, are located on the southwest elevation. 1x1 horizontal sliding windows penetrate the upper gable ends. Two wooden signboards are fastened to the garage's northwest elevation. One of these signs features the name "HAZIE'S" printed in red block letters on a painted green ridged background, above the five inter-locking circles symbolic of the Olympics. The other wooden signboard features white letters on a stained brown background, and is inscribed: "STORM HUT INC. SKI AND SPORTS SPPORTING GOODS."

IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Date of construction: Estimate: **1920** Actual:

    Source of information: **"Routt County Assessor/Treasurer Parcel Detail Information."**

26. Architect: **Unknown**

    Source of information: **N/A**

27. Builder: **Unknown**

    Source of information: **N/A**

28. Original owner: **Unknown**

    Source of information: **N/A**

29. Construction history:

Routt County Assessor records list 1920 as this house's year of construction. The original rectangular-shaped, Craftsman style home measured 43' by 27'. A 40' by 26' gabled addition has been built onto the original northeast (rear) elevation.

30. Original location: ☑ Moved: Date of move(s):

V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): **Domestic/Single Dwelling**
32. Intermediate use(s): **Domestic/Single Dwelling**
33. Current use(s): **Domestic/Single Dwelling**
Commerce and Trade/Business
34. Site type(s): **Single family dwelling/ Landscape design business**

35. Historical background:

By the 1950s, this property at 844 Aspen Street was the home of the Werner family, Steamboat Springs' First Family of skiing. The patriarch of the family was Edward B. Werner. "Pop" Werner, as he was known as an adult, was born in Hastings, Nebraska on June 8, 1905, the son of William J. and Theresa Werner. The family moved to Routt County when Ed was four years old, and established a ranch along the Yampa River east of town. By 1920, four additional children had joined the family: brothers Glenn and Ralph, and sisters Christiana (Mrs. Cullen) and Gladys. At this time, the Werners were living near Sidney, approximately six miles south of Steamboat Springs. While attending a dance at the Grass Creek Grange Hall, Edward met his future wife, Hazel Ralston, the daughter of another Routt County pioneer family. Born February 23, 1911, Hazel was the oldest of ten children of Wallace and Neva Ralston. (Only half the children reached adulthood; sadly, five of Hazel's siblings died in childhood from diabetes.) Hazel Mae, or "Hazie" as she was known, was born in a one room log cabin at the foot of Yellow Jacket Pass, on a dryland farm her parents had homesteaded. The family later moved to a ranch at Grass Creek. It was a difficult life. In addition to the ranch chores, Hazie's father, Wallace, drove the stagecoach from Wolcott to Hahn's Peak, and her mother, Neva, ran the stage station. Hazie attended a one-room schoolhouse, skiing to school on homemade skis during the winter months. Despite the economic burden, as the Ralston children grew older, Hazie's mother took a place in Steamboat Springs so the children could continue their education. Hazie attended high school in Steamboat, but left before graduating, working instead at the family's ranch or cooking and cleaning for other families.

On June 15, 1931, following a long courtship, Hazie and Ed Werner eloped to Fort Collins to get married. (Interestingly, Ed Werner's obituary states that the couple were married in Steamboat Springs on August 25, 1931.) The depression years were difficult for the young couple, as jobs were hard to come by. Edward went to work at a Civilian Conservation Camp on Cameron Pass, and later in Texas. During this time, Hazie moved back to her folk's ranch, where, in 1933, her daughter Gladys "Skeeter" Werner (Walker) was born. Gladys was followed by brothers Wallace "Buddy" in 1936, and Loris "Bugs" a couple of years later. After two years of employment with the CCC, Edward returned, and the family struck out on its own. After several years of moving from place to place, Ed and Hazie found a small dirt covered shack above Clark, on the Elk River, where they established a small ranch. Determined to give their children the best opportunities, during the winters Hazie moved into Steamboat so that the children could attend school. In Steamboat, they lived with Hazie's mother

Neva, returning to Ed and the ranch in the summer. In 1943, when Loris was three, the Werners moved into town permanently. They moved into this house at 844 Aspen in 1950, and lived here for the remainder of their lives.

In Steamboat Springs, Ed was employed by the Larson Transportation Company for nearly twenty years, and later, worked for the Yampa Valley Electric Association. Hazie supplemented Ed's earnings. At various times, she worked for the town's laundry, grocery store, or dry cleaning shops, and also sold hot dogs at the stand on Howelson Hill. With three children heavily involved in competitive skiing, times continued to be difficult for the family, but the couple managed to keep their kids in skis and get them to races all over the west.

Somehow, the Werners also found time to give to the community. Ed Werner was a member of the Steamboat Volunteer Fire Department for 20 years, and was an active member of the Kiwanis Club and Masonic Lodge. Vitally interested in Ski Club activities, he devoted a tremendous number of hours to fund-raising, and also served on the board of directors of the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club for 10 years. A Routt County resident for 60 years, Edward "Pop" Werner died on February 18, 1970, at the age of 64. Hazel died on February 16, 1993, one week shy of her 82 birthday. In 1994, local artist Jack Finney created a bronze sculpture of Hazie Werner, the "Grand Lady of the Valley." Fittingly, it is located at the Bud Werner Memorial Library, a tribute to both mother and son.

Edward and Hazel Werner's oldest child was daughter Gladys, or "Skeeter," as she was known by all. She grew up to become the first of the family's Olympians, qualifying for the United States in the 1952 Olympics. Among the top American women skiers in the 1950s, she began skiing as soon as she could walk, and was competing at the age of five.

During her career, Skeeter won numerous championships, including national titles in downhill and slalom. She was named an alternate to the U.S. Olympic team in 1952, but couldn't raise the money to accompany the team to Oslo. Instead, she became the youngest member of the American women's team to compete at the alpine world championships in 1954, and appeared on the November 1955 cover of *Sports Illustrated*. (That same year, brother Bud and future husband Doak were also featured on *Sports Illustrated* covers.) In 1956, Skeeter represented the United States in the Olympics in Cortina, Italy. She placed 10th, the best American showing in the 1956 Olympics. She retired from international competition in 1958, and began a career as a model for the Madame Eleanora Garnett Fashion House in New York. She also designed and marketed upscale sportswear for Gordon Ford Showrooms. Tiring of New York, Skeeter Werner returned to Steamboat Springs in 1962, where she moved back into her parent's Aspen Street home. In Steamboat, Skeeter organized the first ski school at Storm Mountain (later Mt. Werner) and opened two Storm Hut ski shops with Buddy and his wife, Vonda.

In 1969, Skeeter married football legend Doak Walker. Inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1986, Ewell Doak Walker, Jr. was born on January 1, 1927, in Dallas, Texas. Walker demonstrated his athletic talent even while attending Highland Park High School in Dallas, where he excelled at several sports simultaneously. Following graduation, Doak Walker attended Southern Methodist University. In 1948, as a junior, he won the Heisman Trophy as the best college football player in the nation, and was two-time Cotton Bowl MVP in 1948 and 1949. Drafted in 1949 in the first round, Walker played professional football for the Detroit Lions, from 1950 through 1955. He was recognized as the NFL Rookie of the Year, and was voted All-Pro and Pro-Bowl five times each. During his career he helped lead the Lions to two National Football League championships, in 1952 and 1953. During his career, he appeared on 47 magazine covers, including *Sports Illustrated*, *Life*, *Look* and *Collier's*. In honor of his achievements, the Detroit Lions retired his #37 jersey. To this day, Doak Walker's

legend continues, and in 2007, Walker was ranked #4 on ESPN's list of the Top 25 Players In College Football History. Doak Walker and Skeeter Werner were introduced when Colorado Ski Country held a contest called "Learn to Ski with Skeeter." Doak was a celebrity winner, and traveled to Steamboat to take skiing lessons from Skeeter. The couple eloped to Las Vegas in May 1969, after a whirlwind romance. Hazie and Pops met their new son-in-law for the first time after the wedding. The famous couple became Steamboat Springs' royalty.

Capitalizing on their celebrity status, Skeeter and Doak actively promote Steamboat Springs, enhancing its reputation as a winter sports center. The couple also raised funds for many community facilities, including the non-profit Doak Walker Care Center, opened in 1979. Sadly, Doak Walker died September 27, 1998, eight months after he was paralyzed in a ski injury on Mount Werner. Skeeter Werner Walker passed away on July 20, 2001 after a long illness, at age 67.

Wallace Jerold "Buddy" Werner was the second child of Ed and Hazie Werner. A legend in skiing circles, Buddy was among the finest skiers the United States has ever produced. Traditional competitive skiing comprised four events: downhill, a steep descent in a race against time; slalom, racing on a sharply twisting course marked off by flags; the ski jump, in which contestants leap from specially prepared jump slopes, and are judged on both distance and form; and cross-country, in which skiers race over a long course (ranging from 10 km/6 mi to 50 km/31 mi in the Olympic games) on which the terrain and obstacles test stamina and maneuverability. As a youth, Buddy excelled in all four events, and won numerous national competitions. However, he chose to focus on alpine racing. In 1954, at the age of 18, he won the prestigious Hahnenkamm event, the first American male to win a major European downhill. He went on to make the Olympic team three times, in 1956 at Cortina, Italy; the Squaw Valley, California, Games in 1960; and the third time for the Innsbruck Games, in 1964. He was also voted "Ski Athlete of the Year" in 1959. Shortly after announcing his retirement from international competition after the Innsbruck games, Buddy joined several notable skiers in filming a movie directed by Willy Bogner Jr., son of the famous German ski fashion mogul. Tragically, while filming, the skiers were caught in an avalanche near St. Moritz, Switzerland, and Buddy and a second skier were killed on April 12, 1964. Recognizing his outstanding achievements, Bud Werner was elected posthumously to the National Ski Hall of Fame in Ishpeming, Michigan in 1964, and the Colorado Sports Hall of Fame in 1967. Closer to home, Steamboat Springs has two enduring reminders of Buddy Werner. In February 1965, Storm Mountain was renamed Mount Werner in his honor, and two years later, the Bud Werner Memorial Library was opened, funded from grants and memorial contributions.

The youngest member of Edward and Hazie's family was Loris E. Werner. Like his older brother and sister, Loris "Bugs" Werner learned to walk and ski at the same time. Loris was only six when he began competing, entering the downhill race at the Steamboat Winter Carnival. While attending Western State College in Gunnison, Werner competed in all four traditional competitive ski disciplines - ski jumping, cross country, downhill and slalom. He twice won the NCAA Skimeister Championship, then went on to represent the United States at two different Winter Olympics, first at Innsbruck, Austria, in 1964 as a ski-jumping alternate, and then at Grenoble, France, in 1968 in alpine skiing. He returned to Steamboat Springs, becoming director of the Steamboat Ski School, and helped his mother and sister operate the family ski shop, the Storm Hut, which opened in 1962-63, at the same time as the Steamboat Ski Area. As with the rest of the famed Werner family, Loris Werner has also played a vital role in the development of the Steamboat ski area. For more than four decades, Werner has served the ski area, first as the ski school director, then mountain manager, and finally its vice president of operations. Loris Werner's accomplishments, combined with the rest of the Werner family's successes, have proven instrumental in promoting Steamboat Springs as a winter sports destination.

In May 2004, following more than fifty years of ownership, the Werner home at 844 Aspen Street sold to Lisa Lee Benjamin. A native of Colorado, Ms. Benjamin is a noted landscape architect, and owner of Evo Design LLC.

36. Sources of information:

"Buddy Werner's Fame Spans 20 Years." *Steamboat Pilot*, April 12, 1984. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Ed Werner Services Here February 20th." *Steamboat Pilot*, February 26, 1970. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Hazel Ralston Werner: 1911-1993." Typewritten manuscript located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Hazie Werner, Grand Lady of the Valley, Dies at 81." *Steamboat Pilot,* February 25, 1993. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Hazie Werner Sculpture Unveiling Bud Werner Memorial Library September 4, 1994 Dedication Remarks by Rod Hanna." Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph/ Mountain Bell Telephone Directories for Steamboat Springs, 1956 – 2007. On file at the Denver Public Library, Western History Department.

"Mt. Werner Dedicated at Impressive Rites Sunday." *Steamboat Pilot*, February 18, 1965. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Paying Tribute to Skeeter." *Steamboat Today*, July 6, 2001. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Routt County Assessor/Treasurer Parcel Detail Information."

"Routt County Assessor, Residential Property Appraisal Record."

"Routt County Burial Index." http://yampavalley.info/history

"Skeeter Injured in Ski Fall." *Steamboat Pilot*, February 12, 1987. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Skeeter Werner Named Alternate On Olympic Team." *Steamboat Pilot*, March 22, 1951. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Skeeter Werner Walker Dies." *Steamboat Today*, July 21, 2001. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Steamboat Says Goodbye to its 'Queen'." *Steamboat Pilot and Today*, Jul7 27, 2001, p. 1. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Swiss Avalanche Kills Colorado Star Skier." Rocky Mountain News, April 13, 1964, p. 1. Located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

"Wallace 'Buddy' Werner." Typewritten manuscript located in clipping file at Tread of Pioneers Museum.

VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: Yes No ☑ Date of designation:
Designating authority:

38. Applicable National Register criteria:

☑ A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;

☑ B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

☑ C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction;

D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).

Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

Steamboat Springs Standards for Designation:

☑	A. Its character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of Routt County, the State of Colorado, or the United States.
Not Applicable	B. Its location as a site of a significant historic event.
☑	C. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of Routt County.
☑	D. Its exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historic heritage of Routt County.
Not Applicable	E. Its portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.
☑	F. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.
Not Applicable	G. Its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of Routt County.
Not Applicable	H. Its embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, and/or craftsmanship that represent a significant architectural innovation.
Not Applicable	I. Its relationship to other distinctive areas that are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on an historic, cultural, or architectural motif.
☑	J. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, a community, or Routt County.

39. Area(s) of significance: **Architecture**
Community Planning and Development
Entertainment/Recreation

40. Period of significance: **1920; 1950-1958**

41. Level of significance: National: State: Local: ☑

42. Statement of significance:
This building is architecturally significant as an excellent local example of a Craftsman style house, which with its stained dark brown square-cut shingle exterior walls, and stone porch pedestals, also displays some elements of the Rustic style of architecture. The house is also historically significant for its association with Steamboat Spring's residential development, dating from the time of its construction circa 1920. Perhaps most notably, the house is significant for its association with the Werner family, which began in 1950 and lasted until the early 2000s. The Werners made significant contributions to broad patterns of regional history over the course of two generations, while siblings Gladys "Skeeter," Wallace "Buddy," and Loris "Bugs" Werner were nationally-prominent Olympic quality skiers. Gladys, Wallace and Loris were respectively 17, 14, and 11, when this house became the Werner family home in 1950, and it then remained under ownership by members of the family until the early 2000s. Despite some loss of integrity, this property may be considered eligible for individual listing in the National and State Registers, based on its association with the Werner family, and on its architectural significance. The property also qualifies for local listing in the Routt County Register of Historic Places.

43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:
This property displays a somewhat less than optimal level of physical integrity, relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation - setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The integrity of the original dwelling has been diminished by the construction of a rear addition, and by the alteration of some door and window openings. A sense of time and place of a 1920s Craftsman style residence remains largely in evidence, however.

VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**
Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Eligible**

45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes No ☑
Discuss: **Historic buildings within the survey area do not collectively possess sufficient historical or architectural significance, and/or display sufficient physical integrity, to comprise a State or National Register historic district.**
If there is National Register district potential, is this building: Contributing Noncontributing N/A: ☑

46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it: Contributing Noncontributing N/A: ☑

VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

47. Photograph number(s): **CD #1, Images 6-14**

CDs filed at: **City of Steamboat Springs**
137 10th Street
Steamboat Springs, CO
80477

48. Report title: **Old Town Steamboat Springs Residential Survey Phase V**

49. Date(s): **05/10/08**

50. Recorder(s): **Carl McWilliams**
Karen McWilliams

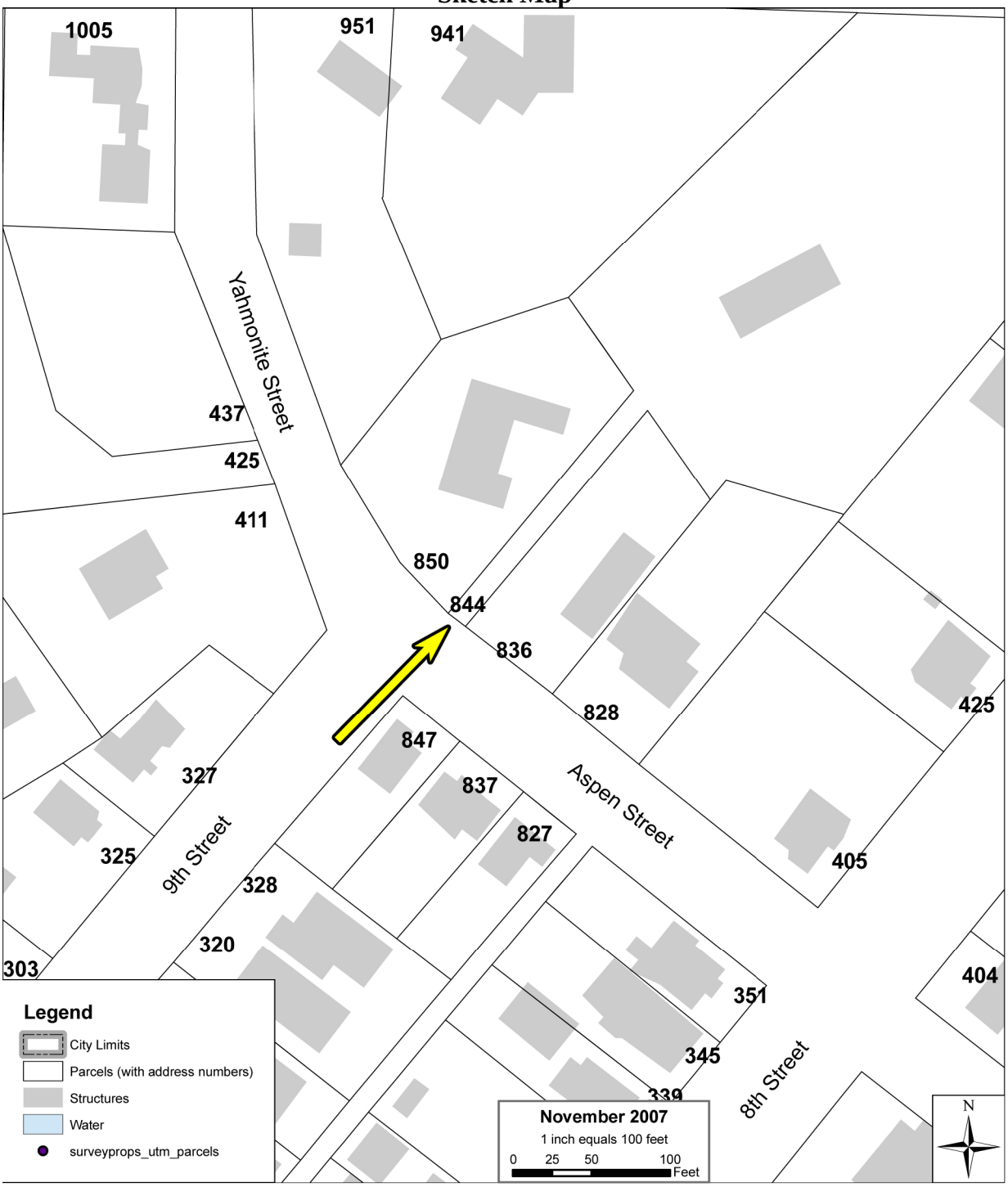
51. Organization: **Cultural Resource Historians**

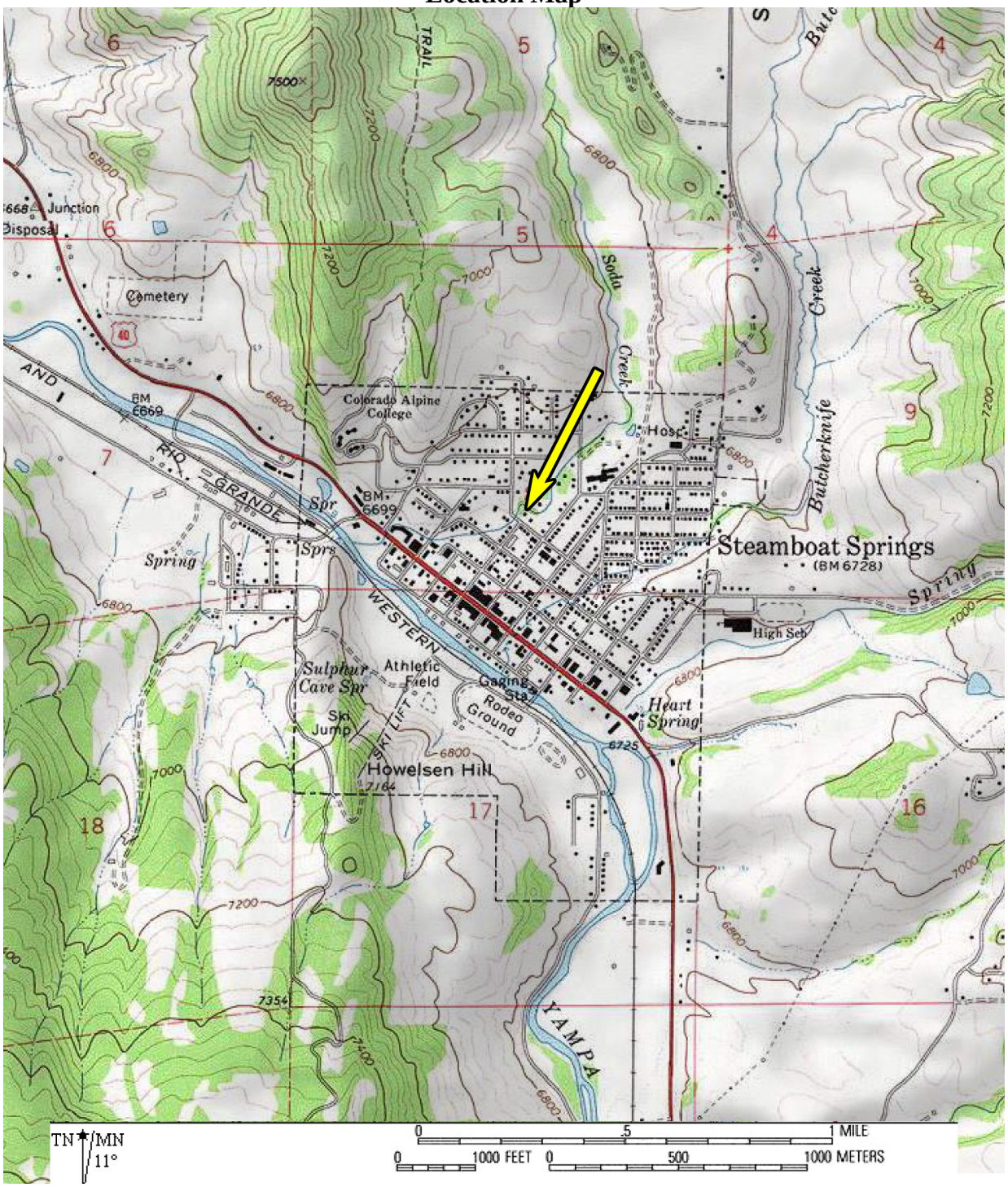
52. Address: **1607 Dogwood Court**
Fort Collins, CO 80525

53. Phone number(s): **(970) 493-5270**

Architectural Inventory Form

Sketch Map



Architectural Inventory Form

Location Map