

**STEAMBOAT SPRINGS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION**

Property Identification

1. Address of Resource: 844 Aspen Street, Steamboat Springs, CO 80487
2. Legal Description of Property: Parts of Lots 25-27, Block 3 First Addition to Steamboat Springs, 6<sup>th</sup> PM, Township 6N, Range 84W

For the purpose of this nomination only the main house is being nominated

3. Historic Name: Werner House  
Current Name: Craig House
4. Historic Use: Single-Family Residential  
Present Use: Single-Family Residential

Historical Data Summary

5. Year of Construction: 1920  
Source of Information: Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457
6. Architect or Builder: Unknown  
Source of Information: Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457.
7. Original Owner: Unknown  
Source of Information: Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457

Photographs

8. Attach at least two (2) current 5x7 or larger photographs (black and white or color) showing the views of the property from the public right-of-way(s) and any important features or details. Polaroid photographs are not adequate. If available, attach copies of historic photographs of the structure.
9. Provide a sketch map of the property that includes the boundary of the property, a basic footprint of the resource, and additional relevant features (such as outbuildings, significant landscape features, etc.)

## Statement of Significance

10. Explain how the resource meets at least one criterion in one or more of the following categories. Please cite specific criteria in the summary.

### **Historic Resource Designation Criteria**

1. **History.** To have historic importance, the resource shall be at least 50 years old and:  
The building, site, structure or object has character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State or Nation; is the site of an historic event with an effect upon society; is identified with a person or group of persons who had some influence on society; or, exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historic heritage of the community.
  
2. **Architecture.** To have architectural importance, the resource shall be at least 50 years old and:  
The building, site, structure or object portrays the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type specimen; is the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the City or contains elements of architectural design, detail, materials and craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation.
  
3. **Geography.** To have geographical importance, the resource shall be at least 50 years old and:  
The building, site, structure or object, because of being part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area, should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or, due to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City.

Include the history of the resource and its associations with important individuals, groups, events, or historical trends.

- a. Provide details about the circumstances of construction including the date of construction, architect, builder, and owner for the original structure and any significant additions.
- b. Describe specific historical associations including why this structure has direct association with the individual, group, event, or historical trend.
- c. Describe other structures that have similar associations and the relationship of this structure to them.

### **Statement of Significance**

The 1920 single-family residence located at 844 Aspen Street is significant to the community of Steamboat Springs for its architectural style and its historic importance. The house is significant under Criteria B in the area of architecture as an excellent local example of the Craftsman style with its stained dark brown square-cut shingle exterior walls, large stone porch pedestals, false half-timbering and overhanging eaves. The house is also significant under Criteria A in the area of history for its association with the Werner family who made significant contributions to broad patterns of regional history over the course of two generations.<sup>1</sup> The Werner siblings Gladys "Skeeter," Wallace "Buddy", and Loris "Bugs" Werner were nationally-prominent Olympic skiers. The Werner family's association with the house began in 1950 and ended in the 2000s.

### **History**

The house located at 844 Aspen Street was built in 1920<sup>2</sup> in the Craftsman style. The Craftsman style emerged from the Arts and Crafts Movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a design philosophy that stressed comfort and utility through the use of natural materials. Exposed rafter ends, overhanging eaves and large porch columns replaced the more delicate detailing of the Victorian period.<sup>3</sup> This house displays the Craftsman design philosophy with its overhanging eaves, large stone porch columns, false half-timbering at the gable ends and the rafter ends beneath the overhanging eaves. This house also displays some rustic style attributes that consist of natural design elements in the setting and materials. The non-contributing 1947 rear addition and garage respect the Craftsman style. Not many examples of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Craftsman style exist today in Steamboat Springs, making this home a notable remaining example of the style.

The Werner house is one of the remaining houses in the Aspen Street area that retains its significance and integrity. The Gossards, another notable local family for the community, constructed 951 Crawford Street, located above 844 Aspen Street on the hill in 1913. Chief Gordon who is associated with the Chief Theater constructed 850 Aspen Street in front of 844 Aspen Street in 1927 in the Rustic style. The remaining surrounding properties were built in the 1940s and 1960s and do not retain high historic integrity due to multiple changes to the properties.

844 Aspen Street provided a home for many families since its construction in 1920. One such family, the Werner family, is not only a prominent local family but also a notable family throughout the country. This historic use by the Werner family is important in the contribution to Steamboat Springs's history.

*The following history is written by Cultural Resource Historians (Carl McWilliams) for the Architectural Survey in May 2008. Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457 844 Aspen Street,*

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<sup>1</sup> Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457

<sup>2</sup> Routt County Assessor

<sup>3</sup> Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering (Craftsman)

*Steamboat Springs, CO Cultural Resource Historians 1607 Dogwood Court, Fort Collins, CO 80525 (970) 493-5270*

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 onerom 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. Vitrally 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 50km/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. In 2014, the property was sold to the current owners, the Craig Family.

### Architectural Description

11. Concisely describe the resource and its surrounds.
  - a. Describe location and setting including physical context and relationship to neighborhood and other historic structures.
  - b. Architectural description including mention of major features, uncommon design features, ancillary structures, and important landscape or site features. Also describe interior spaces with extraordinary design features (if any).
  - c. Describe alterations to the exterior of the building.

*The following architectural description is written by Cultural Resource Historians (Carl McWilliams) for the Architectural Survey in May 2008. Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457 844 Aspen Street, Steamboat Springs, CO Cultural Resource Historians 1607 Dogwood Court, Fort Collins, CO 80525 (970) 493-5270*

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.

#### **Original Structure - Contributing**

This is a historic, 1 ½ -story, front gabled, Craftsman style dwelling, with some Rustic style attributes. 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.

#### **Addition – Non-contributing**

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.

#### **Garage – Non-contributing**

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."

The 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 – 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. However, a sense of time and place of a 1920s Craftsman style residence remains largely evident.

#### Bibliography

12. Provide a list of research sources used in compiling this application.

Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.468 (May 2008) 850 Aspen Street, Steamboat Springs, CO Cultural Resource Historians (Carl McWilliams) 1607 Dogwood Court, Fort Collins, CO 80525 (970) 493-5270

<http://co-steamboatsprings.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/855>

Architectural Inventory Form 5RT.2457 (May 2008) 844 Aspen Street, Steamboat Springs, CO Cultural Resource Historians (Carl McWilliams) 1607 Dogwood Court, Fort Collins, CO 80525 (970) 493-5270

<http://co-steamboatsprings.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/854>

Field Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering, Colorado Historical Society:

[http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/1625Field.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/1625Field.pdf)

Routt County Assessor

#### Application Information

13. Owner: Craig Family

Mailing Address:

Telephone:

14. Owner Consent to Designation:

I / We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of, the property described in this application for Historic Resource designation do, hereby, give my consent to the designation of this structure as an Historic Resource.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Applicant/Preparer Name: Alexis Eiland/Eiland Preservation Consulting, LLC

Affiliation/ Interest in Property: Consultant to the City of Steamboat Springs/For the Owner

Address: 1786 Brome Drive, Steamboat Springs, CO 80487

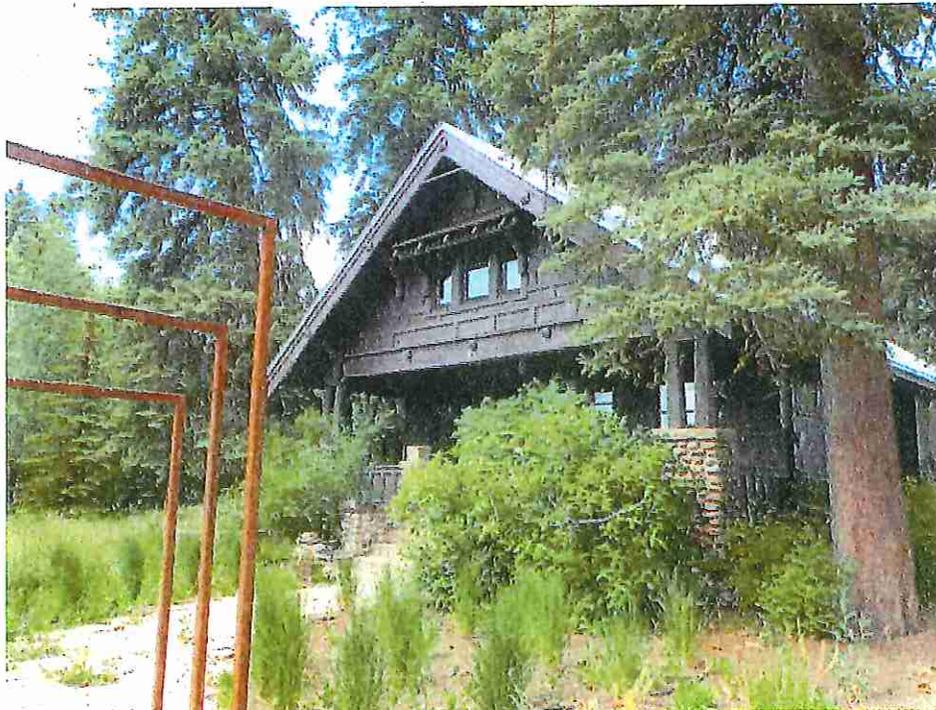
Telephone: 917.374.1629



8. Photographs: 844 Aspen Street (June 2014)

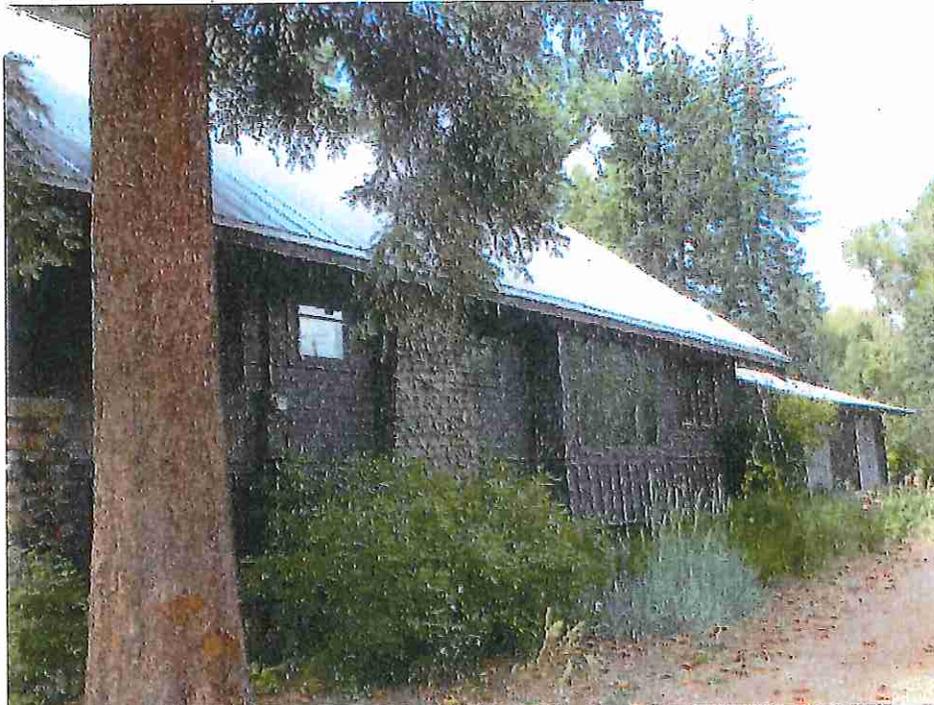


SW and SE Elevations

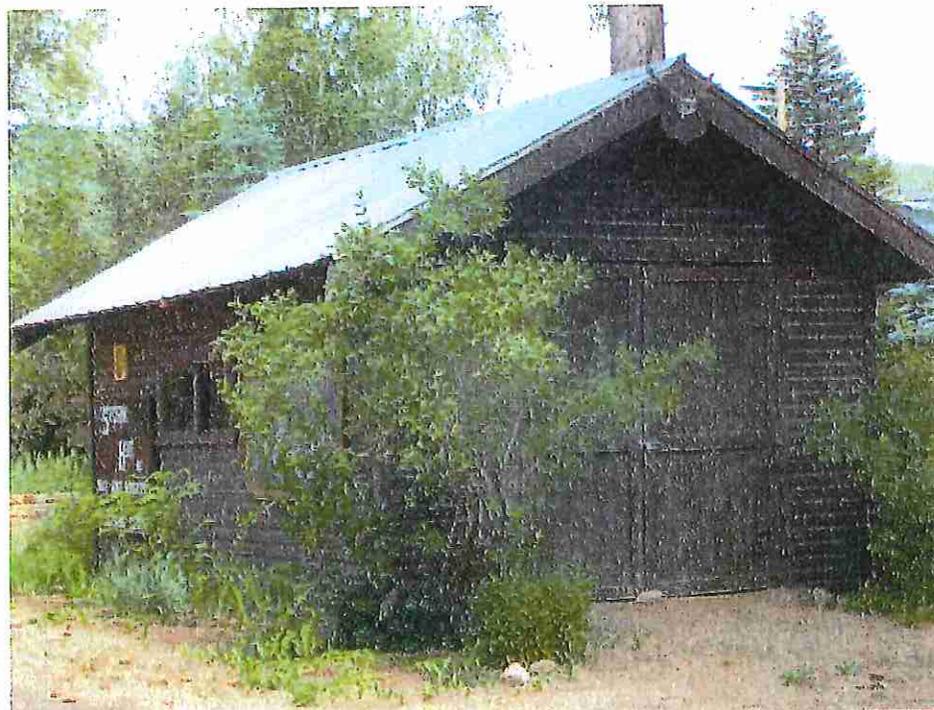


Main Façade (SW Elevation) – craftsman porch





SE Elevation showing non-contributing rear addition



Garage (Non-contributing)



9. Site Map: 844 Aspen Street





Werner House  
844 Aspen Street  
Steamboat Springs

Photos circa 2013  
(before historic designation)

Original Exterior



## Original Entrance Interior



## Original Window Trim



## Original Living Area



## Original Fireplace



### Fireplace Detail



### Original Stairway



## Original Dining Area



## Downstairs Interior Rooms

