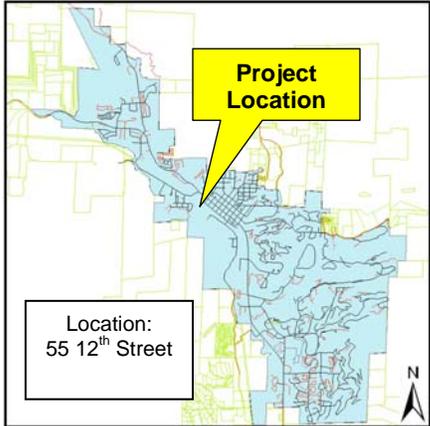


**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING &
 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF
 REPORT**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM 4A:	
Project Name:	Community House
Prepared By:	Lauren Schaffer, Historic Preservation Coordinator (Ext 278)
Through:	Tom Leeson, AICP Director of Planning Services (Ext. 244)
Historic Preservation Commission (HPC):	August 6, 2009
Planning Commission (PC):	NA
City Council (CC):	NA
Zoning:	Open Space and Recreation (OR)
Applicant:	City of Steamboat Springs PO Box 775088 Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
Request:	City of Steamboat Springs Historic Register Application



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I. CITY OF STEAMBOAT SPRINGS HISTORIC REGISTER- STAFF ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Staff finds that the Community House located at 55 12th Street is eligible to the City's Historic Register as an Historic Resource. The resource is significant under Criterion 1 in the area of History for its association with the development of Steamboat Springs and under Criterion 2 in the area of Architecture as a good local example of the Rustic style and of builder Ernest Campbell's work. Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission approve listing of the Community House as an Historic Resource.

Community House- 55 12th Street



II. BACKGROUND

The City of Steamboat Springs Historic Register was created in 2009. The Historic Preservation Policy Review Committee reviewed historic preservation policies in 2007 and 2008 and recommended the creation of the City's historic register. An application for inclusion on the Historic Register as an Historic Resource has been submitted for the Community House in Little Toots Park. Historic Preservation Staff for the City of Steamboat Springs prepared the nomination for the property owner. The Parks and Recreation Commission consented to historic register nomination and designation for the Community House during a September 2008 date meeting.

III. PRINCIPAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Principal Discussion items should include:

- Qualification for inclusion on the City of Steamboat Springs Historic Register
- Is the resource significant under Criterion 1 in the area of History and Criterion 2 in the area of Architecture?
- Does the resource retain integrity from the period of significance?

IV. NOMINATION DESCRIPTION

See attached nomination

I. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The Historic Preservation Commission will review the nomination for the Community House located at 55 12th Street to the City of Steamboat Springs Historic Register on August 6, 2009.

II. PROJECT ANALYSIS

The following section provides staff analysis of the application as it relates to nomination criteria as outlined in Ordinance 2230. It is intended to highlight those areas that may be of interest or concern to HPC, staff, or the public. For a comprehensive list of designation criteria, standards and requirements applicable to this proposal please refer to Ordinance 2230 or contact the staff planner.

A) KEY ISSUES

Ordinance 2230, Sec. 26-84(f)

- 1) *Staff Analysis:* **Eligible;** the attached historic register nomination suggests that the Community House at 55 12th Street qualifies for listing on the City of Steamboat Springs Historic Register as an Historic Resource. The resource is nominated under Criterion 1 in the area of History and Criterion 2 in the area of Architecture as significant to the community of Steamboat Springs. The resource is noted for its association with the development of Steamboat Springs and as a good local example of the Rustic style of architecture.

VII. STAFF FINDING

Recommended Resolution

The City of Steamboat Springs's Historic Preservation Commission hereby resolves that the Community House at 55 12th Street, which is more particularly described as Block 1 of the Springs Addition, Section 8, Township 6 North, Range 84 West, Steamboat

Springs, CO, is eligible for listing on the Steamboat Springs Register of Historic Places under Criterion 1 in the area of History for its association with the development of Steamboat Springs and under Criterion 2 in the area of Architecture as a good local example of the Rustic style and a good early example of Ernest Campbell's work and approves inclusion of the Community House in the Steamboat Springs Register of Historic Places.

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Historic Resource Application

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

Property Identification

1. Address of Resource: 55 12th Street, Little Toots Park, Steamboat Springs, CO

2. Legal Description of Property: The Community House is located in Little Toots Park, Block 1 of the Springs Addition to Steamboat Springs, Section 8, Township 6 North, Range 84 West, known as 55 12th Street. The boundary includes the building and the property extending fifteen feet in each direction to form a rectangle from the footprint of the building.

3. Historic Name: Community House
Current Name: Community House

4. Historic Use: Social/meeting hall and Recreation and Culture
Present Use: Other/Storage

Historical Data Summary

5. Year of Construction: 1921
Source of Information: Steamboat Pilot, October 5, 1921

6. Architect or Builder: Ernest Campbell
Source of Information: Routt County Sentinel, August 26, 1921

7. Original Owner: Steamboat Springs Townsite Company
Source of Information: Steamboat Pilot, October 5, 1921

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.

The 1921 Community House in Little Toots Park is eligible to the Steamboat Springs Register under Criterion 2 in the area of *architecture* as a good local example of early 20th century rural Rustic style and its associations with master-builder Ernest Campbell and **under** Criterion 1 (*history*) in the area of Entertainment/Recreation and Social History. It embodies many of the defining characteristics of the Rustic style design philosophy, including the use of native materials in its log construction and stone chimney (no longer extant), simple ornamentation, and log wall interior. The building is in harmony with its mountain setting, an important quality of naturalistic design encompassed in the Rustic style. Constructed as the Community House, the building reflects the development of the Yampa Valley and its commitment to outdoor recreation and the out-of-town visitor or tourist.

Construction and auto tourism

The 1921 Community House building reflects the development of the community and the character and economics of tourism in Steamboat Springs during the 1920s.

The City of Steamboat Springs was founded by Lt. James Harvey Crawford, a homesteader who saw the Yampa Valley for the first time in 1874 while on a hunting trip. Upon discovery of the lush valley and its mineral springs, Crawford was so enchanted that he promptly staked a claim and moved his entire family to their new homestead the following summer. The Crawfords obtained a legal survey of their homestead and received a patent for the claim in 1876. In 1885, Crawford and a group of investors from Boulder

formed the Steamboat Springs Town Company and began platting the town in a location southeast of the original homestead. The Townsite Company began selling lots and parcels, while Crawford and the investors had additional plans to market the community as a tourist destination and health retreat.

Tourism has played an important role in the economy of Steamboat Springs. The varied amenities of the region, including the hot springs, hunting, skiing, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation has drawn tourists to the region since the early 1900s. The arrival of the railroad in 1909 and the Victory Highway after World War I increased accessibility to the Yampa Valley. Twentieth century tourism waxed and waned with national economic trends, peaking in the 1920s, declining in the 1930s and early 1940s due to the Great Depression and World War II, and increasing again in the late 1940s and 1950s with the postwar economic boom. With an increase in tourists and travel came the demand for improved roads for automobile travel. The 1920s saw the construction of roadside parks, auto camping parks, picnic grounds, and the beginnings of motor courts to facilitate tourists nationwide.

Accommodating visitors in the area after the arrival of the railroad and the opening of the Victory Highway automobile travel, several motels and hotels were constructed. Additionally, Steamboat Springs established free camping grounds for auto tourists at the western end of town on the "island," in what is now the area of West Lincoln Park and Dream Island. The use of the "island" and the camping grounds were given by the Town Company to the Steamboat Commercial Club (Routt County Sentinel, June 27, 1919). An August 22, 1919 article in the Routt County Sentinel details the visit of representatives from the Automobile Blue Book Publishing Company who regrettably were forced to give Steamboat Springs "a black eye" in the publication by mentioning the lack of available local hotels, rooms, and amenities for tourists.

The idea of the Community House was brought about by a committee of Steamboat Springs women. Beginning in August 1921, a committee appointed by the Commercial Club formed to raise funds to erect a shelter house and meeting place at the free camping grounds. Mrs. F.A. Metcalf, Mrs. W.O Wright, Mrs. L.L. Brown, Mrs. C.H. Leckenby, and Mrs. B.G. Bradley carried out the work. The proposed community house: "will be open to the public, and at times of storms during the summer, when many campers are now much inconvenienced, the building will provide a welcome shelter. It is proposed that it will be so arranged that parties taking refuge there may prepare their meals, and it will be a place where all may gather for social intercourse when the weather is unpleasant out of doors. At all times, however, the community house will be available for the use of public gatherings.... In the winter time it will serve as a shelter for skiing parties, and for meetings of the Ski Club and the Ladies Mountain Club, and it is proposed at all times it shall be of general benefit to townspeople and visitors."

Plans detailed a building of "rustic construction" with a dirt floor and cobblestone fireplace, for which "a supply of free fuel will always be kept stored, dry, and ready for use." (Routt County Sentinel, August 5, 1921)

By the end of August 1921, the contract for the Community House had been awarded to Ernest Campbell. Work was to commence immediately and to be completed within 30 days. The amount allotted for the construction of the Community House was \$500 (Routt County Sentinel, August 26, 1921). By early October, local newspapers were congratulatory of the completed building and announced the availability of the Community House "for auto tourists at any time that storms catch them in need of shelter" (Routt County Sentinel, October 7, 1921).

Rustic Style

"Rustic style architecture is characterized by its natural setting and its use of native materials, often log and stone. Designed to blend in with the natural environment, these structures are usually vacation homes, hunting lodges, dude ranches, or tourist-related facilities in national and state parks.

Traditional building techniques emphasizing hand craftsmanship were often employed in the construction of Rustic structures. The majority of these structures in Colorado were built after 1905, though early examples date to the last years of the 19th century. Rustic structures are primarily of log construction with stone foundations, battered walls, overhanging roofs, and small paned windows. Interior and exterior ornamentation is often of log construction, sometimes consisting of bent and twisted logs and branches used as balusters and brackets.

Rustic style buildings differ from pioneer log structures that generally were built during initial settlement periods and often exhibited crude construction. Rustic buildings generally have stone chimneys while pioneer log cabins utilized metal flues attached to iron stoves. Rustic buildings have more commercially manufactured hardware and materials, such as window frames, doors, and interior paneling. Such buildings may also employ hip roofs, a form virtually never found on pioneer log structures.

The National Park Service played an early role in popularizing the Rustic style. Many buildings throughout its park system employed the design philosophy, ranging from large guest lodges, to visitor centers, to the lowly comfort station (privy). Rustic design even figured into road and trail construction, attempting to minimize the visual impacts through the use of native materials in retaining wall and bridge construction. Stephen T. Mather, the first National Park Service director, and Thomas Vint, the NPS chief architect, both supported the concept of naturalist design and its architectural expression in the Rustic style. The U.S. Forest Service also adopted the Rustic style for many of its ranger stations and campground facilities.

During the depression years of the 1930s, federal relief programs put many of the unemployed to work in national, state and municipal parks building trails, retaining walls, bridges, picnic shelters, comfort stations, and other structures. The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration were particularly active in these projects. Often working under the direction of National Park and Forest Service planners, the Rustic style became a hallmark of their projects. The Rustic style carried over to projects outside of parks, and often miles away from the mountain environment so associated with its use.

Many private Rustic buildings were the product of their owners, both in design and construction. Others reflect the skilled hands of a local craftsman. John Spence, a native of Scotland and a skilled carpenter and mason, designed and built the Hiwan Homestead in Evergreen (National Register). A number of private architects created Rustic style designs for public and private projects. J.J.B. Benedict designed shelters and buildings for the Denver Mountain Parks system (National Register), in addition to Baehr Lodge for a private party. The project portfolios of Burnham Hoyt and the firm of William E. and Arthur A. Fisher include Rustic style Colorado buildings.

The Rustic style remains popular and it continues to influence design in public parks and private construction in the Rocky Mountain West.

The Rustic style appears throughout the Western Slope community of Steamboat Springs, with a very good residential sampling occurring in the downtown area. The best examples of Rustic architecture featured in the 1930s and 1940s, well after the initial settlement and community-building period, when the smaller size and simple design made the buildings achievable. The style also reflected an idealization of the pioneer period in the West and a desire of homeowners to recapture a portion of that history. Most of the extant buildings are of simple origin, with unknown builders and construction history.” (Christian Science Society Building National Register nomination prepared by Laureen Schaffer.)

The Community House is a good local example of the early Rustic style building as it appeared in western Colorado. True to the Rustic style, the builder utilized local materials and simple decorative elements to create an indigenous building in harmony with its small-town mountain setting. Traditional construction, hand craftsmanship, and a simple functional design, the hallmarks of the style, feature with the Community House. Many good examples of the style are present throughout the Old Town area of Steamboat Springs, with the National Register-listed Christian Science Society Building recognized locally as being the best example. However, the Community House serves as an early example of the style and of the builder’s work. Constructed by Ernest Campbell, the building is one of the best surviving examples of his early work in the Rustic style.

Ernest Campbell was born in Canada to parents who had emigrated from England (US Census, 1920). In Routt County, Ernest Campbell owned and operated a sawmill through the early half of the twentieth century. His name appears often in advertisements and the social happenings of the community. Interestingly, in 1905, Campbell was accused of cutting state timber without a permit and threatened with

a fine of \$25 per tree. Buildings known to have been constructed by Campbell feature at 600 Lincoln Avenue, 641 Oak Street, and 800 Oak Street. The Lincoln Avenue building was called the Campbell Building for many years after its construction in 1904. The Tread of Pioneers Museum is currently housed in the other Campbell-constructed building at 800 Oak Street. Both buildings are of wood frame construction, have experienced modifications, and are not of the Rustic style. The National Register-listed Christian Science Society Building at 641 Oak Street is an excellent example of the Rustic style. Constructed in 1934 by Campbell, the building differs from the Community House in that it represents a more mature understanding of the style. The Community House remains a good example of the early Rustic style as it appeared in Steamboat Springs.

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 1921 Community House is a one-story, rectangular plan 25 ft. by 30 ft., front gable-roofed Rustic style building. The log walls rise from a concrete slab foundation. Wood frame windows, without lights, on the north, south, and east elevations provide interior illumination. Vertically positioned logs fill the gable ends. The eaves originally contained a saw-toothed bargeboard of unpeeled logs, which historic photographs reveal were removed sometime after 1976. The roof is sheathed with metal panels. The interior walls are of logs, the floor is poured concrete, and the remainder of the building is open and unfinished. The building stands in a turf covered, irregularly-shaped corner parcel that extends back from Lincoln Avenue toward the Yampa River known as Little Toots Park. Mature landscaping is present, with the City park featuring a playground, a gazebo, and the 1960 Chamber of Commerce Building. Soda Creek flows to the north of the Community House and meets the Yampa River at the western edge of the park. The Bud Werner Memorial Library features to the northwest of the park parcel and completes the block.

The building is supported by a non-original concrete slab foundation that was added at an unknown date. The building originally featured a dirt floor and began to deteriorate. The sill logs from the northeast corner were replaced in 2006 due to the severity of the rotted condition of the logs. The logs were replaced at this time and a concrete footer was added at this corner.

The original wood window openings are in place, consisting of round logs placed around the openings. Wood has been placed within the openings in an effort to seal, or board up, the building. Two large, rectangular window openings appear on the north, south, and east elevations. A large window opening on the east elevation has been added in between the two original openings. This non-original opening is located where the river rock chimney originally featured. The chimney was removed at an unknown date, but most likely coincided with a move in the location of the building. The west elevation, Yampa River side, mostly likely featured logs, but now has horizontally placed wood siding. This replacement, too, may have occurred at the same time the building was relocated. The exterior logs are stained in a natural brown finish, while the window and other trim is painted red. The Community House originally had distinctive Rustic style trim elements that included a notched ridgeline, the stone chimney, a saw-toothed bargeboard, and two decorative porch posts. All of these elements were removed at an unknown date. The original wood shingled roof was replaced with a metal roof in 1939 (Steamboat Pilot, May 25, 1939).

Alterations and Integrity

Changes to the Community House occurred over its nearly ninety-year history because of general maintenance, changes in use, and an apparent move. Historic photos and news articles document a building located on the "island" west of town. This is a reference to the area of West Lincoln Park and Dream Island. The building was relocated to Little Toots Park at an unknown date; however, anecdotal evidence suggests that this move occurred very early in the buildings history. No evidence was found to indicate that this move occurred in recent times. It is likely that the move took place before 1939, when a newspaper article refers to the Community House in City Park (rather than the previous term "the island").

Therefore, the Community House has been located in Little Toots Park for more than 50 years. The removal of many of the distinctive architectural features also occurred at an unknown date. This features made the Community House distinctive and unique, but do not render the building unrecognizable as a good example of the Rustic style. The Community House retains sufficient massing and material to make it a Rustic style building. The building, though somewhat changed since its 1921 construction, retains sufficient integrity to convey its architectural and historical significance.

The Community House is a good local example of the Rustic style as it appeared in Steamboat Springs and is a good example of Ernest Campbell's early work in the style. The change in the location of the building, from the "island" west of town to Little Toots Park, occurred at a date early in the building's history. The Community House has been located in Little Toots Park as long as community members remember and therefore, is historically associated with its current location. The building has been located within Little Toots Park for over 50 years. The Community House retains sufficient integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to qualify it for listing on the Steamboat Springs Historic Register.

Bibliography

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

Architectural Inventory Form for Community Center, Steamboat Springs, Routt County, Colorado, 5RT.1047, recorded in 1996.

Routt County Assessor's Office. Steamboat Springs, CO.

Routt County Sentinel, June 27, 1919; August 5 and October 7, 1921.

Schaffer, Laureen. Christian Science Society Building National Register Nomination, 5RT.1053. February 2007.

Steamboat Springs' City Clerk, Steamboat Springs Company Receipts and Expenditures, 1921.

The Steamboat Pilot, August 3, August 10, August 17, October 5, 1921; May 25, 1939; January 1, 1976.

Tread of Pioneers Museum, photo collection and park file. 800 Oak Street, Steamboat Springs, CO.

United States Census, 1920.

Application Information

13. Owner: City of Steamboat Springs
Mailing Address: PO Box 775088, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477-5088
Telephone: (970) 879-2060

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.

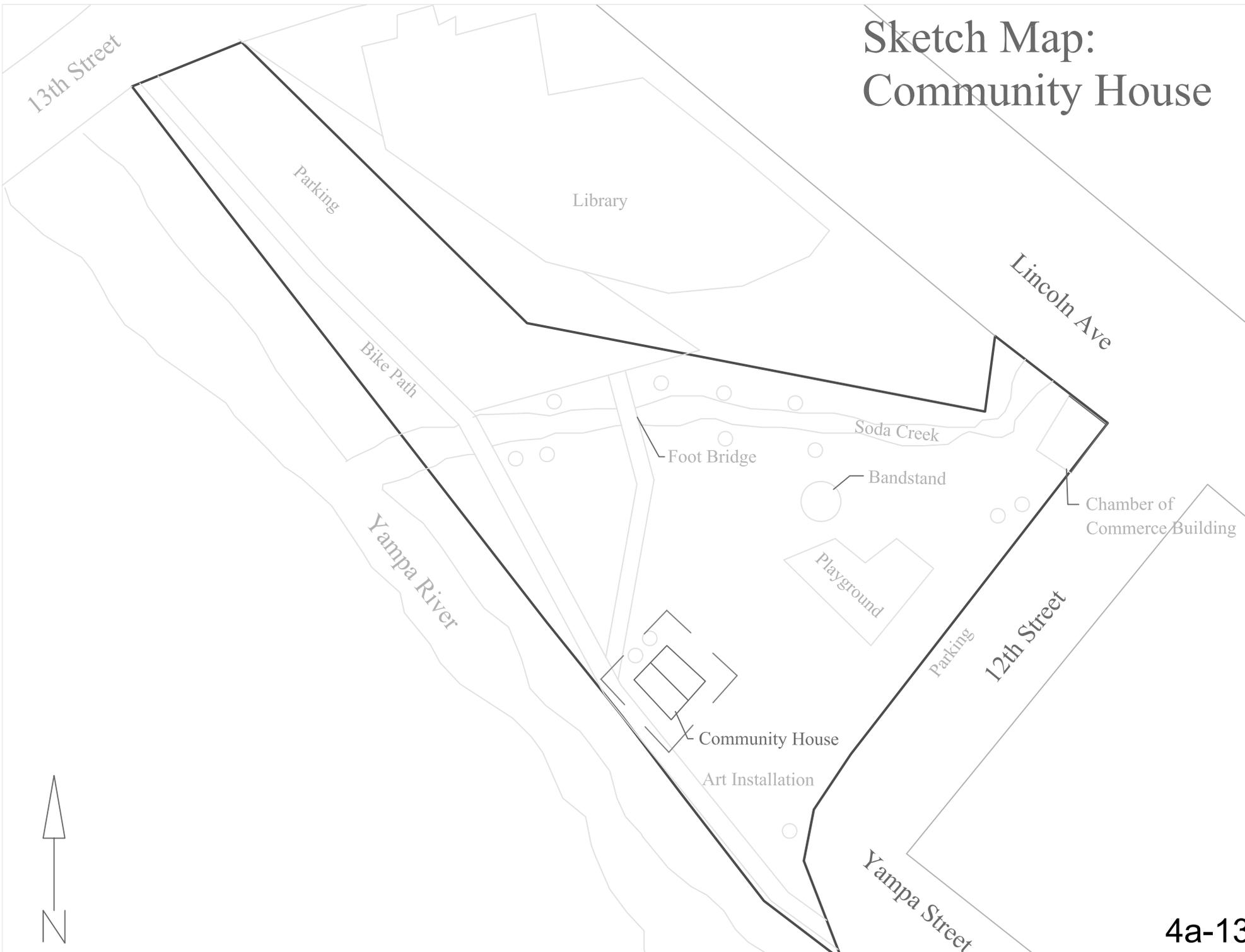
Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

15. Applicant/Preparer Name: Laureen Schaffer
Affiliation/ Interest in Property: City of Steamboat Springs
Address: PO Box 775088, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
Telephone: (970) 879-2060

Sketch Map: Community House



PHOTOGRAPHS



Steamboat Springs Community House – 55 12th Street (South Elevation)



Steamboat Springs Community House – 55 12th Street (Northeast Corner)