

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Wingate Commercial Historic District

Wingate, Union County, UN1139, Listed 12/1/2014
Nomination by Sybil Argintar
Photographs by Fran Shubert, March and April 2014



View of historic district from the southeast



View of historic district from the northeast

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of property

historic name Wingate Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 203, 205, 207 – 209, 211 North Main Street

not for publication N/A

city or town Wingate

vicinity N/A

state North Carolina

code NC

county Union

code 179

zip code 28174

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

_____ entered in the National Register

_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined eligible for the

National Register

_____ See continuation sheet.

_____ determined not eligible for the

National Register

_____ removed from the National Register

_____ other (explain): _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade Sub: specialty store
Commerce/Trade department store
Commerce/Trade financial institution

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce/Trade Sub: specialty store
Work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
roof rubber
walls brick
other wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

ca. 1904 - 1964

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Areas of Significance

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Wingate Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Union County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acree of Property 0.33 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 350540 3971200
2 _____

Zone Easting Northing
3 _____
4 _____
____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sybil H. Argintar, Preservation Planning Consultant

organization Southeastern Preservation Services date August 22, 2014

street & number 166 Pearson Drive telephone (828) 230-3773

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28801

12. Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Fern H. Shubert Family Trust

street & number 505 S. Elm Street telephone (704) 624-2720

city or town Marshville state NC zip code 28103-1458

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Wingate Commercial Historic District
Union County, North Carolina

Summary

The Wingate Commercial Historic District is located in the town of Wingate in eastern Union County, North Carolina, approximately five miles east of the county seat of Monroe. The historic district is roughly bounded by Wilson Street on the north, the south property line of 203 North Main Street on the south, North Main Street on the east, and the buildings' west property lines on the west. North Main Street runs north-south on the east side of the district. The district is flat topographically. Immediately outside of the district, to the south, are vacant lots, the CSX railroad right-of-way, new commercial buildings, and Highway 74. The highway runs in an east-west direction and connects several towns in the county, with Marshville to the east and the county seat of Monroe to the west. To the north of the district is a residential area and the campus of Wingate University, and to the east, on the other side of North Main Street, is the post office and an older brick building which is covered with vinyl siding. To the immediate west of the district is a parking lot. Farther to the east and west is modern residential development. The four contributing commercial buildings are constructed of brick with flat roofs, are set back uniformly, and consist of the taller, one-story J. L. Austin Company Store in the center, framed by one-story buildings. All of the buildings have flat roofs with metal coping and parapet walls that step back from east to west. The district, which encompasses approximately one-third of an acre, incorporates within its boundaries buildings dating from ca. 1904 to 1925, forming an intact collection of Wingate's commercial buildings.

Inventory List

The group of four buildings comprising the district is all located on the west side of the 200 block of North Main Street. They are listed in the inventory by address, from low to high numbers. Building construction dates are based upon deed records, Austin family history, North Carolina yearbooks, Wingate University annual yearbook ads, and the 1925 Sanborn map. The buildings are all named for their original occupants. Contributing buildings are those buildings constructed during the period of significance which have retained sufficient integrity to reflect the history of the district.

203 North Main Street. State Bank of Wingate. Contributing. ca. 1909.

This one-story brick building is similar to the adjacent building to the north, Wingate Drug Company, but has a wider façade and the brick is a darker color. This partially painted brick building, like 205 North Main Street, has notable brick corbelling and a row of thirteen corbelled brick pendants in a tear drop pattern at the cornice. Below these pendants are three rectangular vents. There is a second course of corbelling below the decorative pendants, and the upper corners of the building are framed by brick pilasters with corbelled bases. Brick quoins of five courses each, frame the storefront opening. The storefront is a compatible new design, with two bays in the original openings. The south bay has a single-light door with a transom, and a display

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window to the south of it. Above all are double transom windows. The north bay is comprised of a display window with double transoms above. Kickplates are beadboard. A new raised walkway with a metal railing and a handicap ramp on the south end has been added in front of this and the adjacent building to the north, 205 North Main Street. The south elevation is five bays wide, all with segmental arched openings with an outer course of projecting brick. A window and door are on the west end and three high windows are on the east end. Single fixed light windows, deeply inset, are original, with a replacement window on the west end. The door has original wood panels but at a later time was clad in metal on the exterior. The rear of the building is stuccoed, with no openings, as this was the location of the bank vault. The interior of the building retains its original beadboard ceiling and is currently in use as a gift shop. The original vault door remains in the shop as a display, and the original vault room at the northwest corner has been converted to a storage room and bath.

The State Bank of Wingate was organized in 1909, by a committee of citizens, and the land for the bank was bought from W. M. Perry in 1909.¹ Original officers for the bank included R.A. Morrow, President and J. W. Bivens, Cashier.² The bank bought the adjacent building to the north, ca. 1945, and extended their vault to the north at the rear of the adjacent building, opening into the adjacent space with a new door.³

205 North Main Street. Wingate Drug Company Store. Contributing. ca. 1910.

This partially painted brick commercial building has notable brick corbelling and a row of eight corbelled brick pendants in a tear drop pattern at the cornice. Below these pendants are two rectangular vents. There is a second course of corbelling below the decorative pendants, and the upper corners of the building are framed by brick pilasters with corbelled bases. Brick quoins of five courses each, frame the storefront opening. The single storefront bay is a compatible new design, within the original opening, consisting of a wood-framed recessed entry framed by display windows with transoms. Kickplates are beadboard. The solid masonry building is built of a soft, possibly hand-made brick. A new raised walkway with a metal railing and a handicap ramp on the south end has been added in front of this and the adjacent building to the south, 203 North Main Street. The interior of the building is one main room with a smaller brick-walled room at the rear which became an extension of the bank vault in the building at 203 North Main Street, made ca. 1945 when the bank bought this building.⁴ There is a non-original metal door on the south wall of this room which was added when the bank cut through to enlarge the bank vault into this building. When the bank bought this building in 1945, the two arched openings (one

¹ Union County Deed Book 43, p. 527.

² North Carolina Yearbooks, 1911. Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, p. 465.

³ Union County tax records for the property.

⁴ Ibid.

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window and one door) at the rear of the 205 North Main Street building were bricked in and a door was retrofitted into the arched door opening. The building has been converted to the campus post office for Wingate University, and the former bank vault room serves as an office.

This building has been recently rehabilitated and the façade returned to its historic appearance, based upon physical evidence when a non-historic (late 1960s to 1970s) brick façade was removed. When the later façade was removed, the ghost lines of the brick pilasters, corbelling and pendants were evident. The later façade dated to sometime after the Bank of North Carolina merged with the State Bank of Wingate in the 1960s. The Wingate Drug Company was built in an almost identical style to the adjacent State Bank of Wingate at 203 North Main Street, and was in operation as the Wingate Drug Company no later than 1911.⁵

207 – 209 North Main Street. J. L. Austin Company Store. Contributing. ca. 1904.

This one-story brick building is covered with a stucco finish, completed in the recent rehabilitation based on historic photos showing the building was stuccoed. The solid masonry building is built of what appears to be locally-made brick that has a softer finish than brick fired in a factory. The building is six bays wide on the first and four on the upper level, but visually there are two sections of the building. On the south end, there are two segmental arch windows with six-over-six sash flanking a square opening with two modern replacement doors. Above the lower level windows are smaller segmental arched two-over-two windows. The north end of the building is similar except the door is narrower with a segmental arch and with an inoperable single-leaf, multi-light all-glass modern door in the original door opening. Across the façade and above the windows are square vents, and above this are eight recessed panels at the cornice. The south elevation has a single wide opening with a replacement door. The depth of this building extends further to the west than the other three buildings, and this south elevation is visible at the rear. The painted rear elevation is three bays wide, with a segmental arched door opening with a replacement door on the north end, and two segmental arched windows in the center and on the south end, with replacement windows identical to the ones on the rear of 211 North Main Street. The one-story interior of the building remains as two large open spaces, with the original beadboard ceilings. The opening between the two sections has been enlarged in the current renovation, and some new support columns and beams have been added below the original ceiling. Joseph Leonidas (Lonnie) Austin (1868 – 1932) began work as a merchant in Wingate, first running the Perry-Stewart (later Perry-Austin) store beginning in 1893.⁶ This building was located across North Main Street, at the location of the current post office building. In 1904,

⁵ North Carolina Yearbooks, 1911. Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, p. 465.

⁶ Ibid, p. 46.

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Joseph L. Austin, in partnership with W. M. Perry, G. M. Stewart, and J. W. Bivens, opened the J. L. Austin Company Store at 207 – 209 North Main Street.⁷ Groceries were sold on the south side of the store, and hardware on the north side, including farm and garden tools. To the rear was a cotton gin building (now gone), since Austin was also a cotton merchant. Running of the business was a family affair, with daughter Katie Lee working in the store from the age of fourteen, and daughter Mary, before her untimely death in 1928, working as a store clerk and bookkeeper.⁸ J. L. Austin died suddenly from cancer in 1932, and his oldest son, J. L. Austin Jr., began running the store at age eighteen. J. L. Austin Jr. and younger brother Olin Austin continued to operate the store until 1976, when J. L. Austin Jr. died and Katie Lee Austin, his sister, was too elderly to continue its operation. After this store and Katie Lee's store were sold, changes were made to the buildings, including replacing the windows on this building, a later covering of vinyl siding, and boarding over of the transoms on the Katie Lee Austin Store.

211 North Main Street. Katie Lee Austin Store. Contributing. 1925

This one-story Commercial Style brick building is three bays wide, with a recessed entry bay flanked by display windows. The single-light-over-panel door appears to be original, with original angled display windows on either side of the entry. Angled brick forms the corners of the recessed entry walls. The display windows that are flush with the façade are six large lights each, within the same opening as the historic windows. The upper two lights on each display window replace a multi-vertical-light transom which was on the building originally. The transom above the entry is the original multi-vertical-light. There is a soldier course of brick above the storefront, and a recessed sign panel in the upper facade, but the building is otherwise unadorned. The north elevation, with a common bond brick pattern, has no windows. A single door opening near the center has a replacement door within a segmental arched opening. A later chimney was removed from this elevation in the current renovation work. The rear of the building is three bays wide, all with segmental arched openings, and newer doors and windows retrofitted within them. Windows are multi-light, metal-frame awning style with a grid of security bars in front. The interior of the building is one space supported by columns, with a beadboard ceiling.

According to family history, Katie Lee Austin (1901 - 1987) began working in her father's general store, J. L. Austin Company when she was fourteen years old. She did not graduate from high school, and instead preferred to work in the store. In 1925, this building was constructed so she could have her own dress shop operation. She continued to run her shop through the 1960s and on a limited basis in the 1970s, until the J. L. Austin Company Store closed in 1976. Local

⁷ Ibid, p. 59 and 163.

⁸ Ibid, p. 55.

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residents remember this building as Katie Lee Austin's store, although she also worked as needed in the family's general store to the south.⁹

⁹ Austin, Willie Virginia. "The Austin-Yarbrough Families 1740 – 1983." Monroe, North Carolina: Now and Then, 1983, p. 53. This family history notes the construction date of this building as 1925.

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Wingate Commercial Historic District
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Summary

The Wingate Commercial Historic District in Union County, North Carolina, meets National Register Criterion A for its important association with the commercial development of Wingate, a railroad town with many thriving businesses, through the first six decades of the twentieth century. The district has a period of significance from ca. 1904, the date of construction of the J. L. Austin Company Store, to 1964, the fifty year date for the historic time period. Although the buildings continued in business after 1964, the period is not of exceptional significance.

Historic Background and Commercial Context

Founded in 1842, Union County, North Carolina was formed from the southern sections of Anson and Mecklenburg counties. The county in its early days was very rural in nature, with scattered settlements. It was not until the Central Carolina Railroad, the successor to the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherfordton Railroad of the 1850s, arrived in 1874 in Monroe, the county seat, that towns began to develop. The Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherfordton Railroad had been reorganized as the Carolina Central Railway Company in 1873, running a total of 240 miles between Shelby and Wilmington, North Carolina.¹⁰ When the railroad was built, a spur line, Ames Turnout (named for a Mr. Ames, who helped build the rail line), was run from Monroe to what would later become Wingate. In 1876, in the early years of Ames Turnout, the only buildings were Meadow Branch Church, and a sawmill operated by W. Hamp Simpson.¹¹ The town changed its name to Ames in 1880, and then, in 1896, to Wingate, in honor of the new Wingate School that had just opened there.¹²

In late-nineteenth-century Ames, there were no public schools, and in 1895, at Meadow Branch Church (later Wingate Baptist Church) the Baptist Association of Churches voted to form the Wingate School, for grades one through twelve, for area girls and boys, and to have a place where children from other areas could also go to school.¹³ The 1899 – 1900 Wingate School catalog included an enrollment of approximately 230 children, most of whom were from Wingate, but some came from Monroe, Matthews, Rockingham, Marshville, Stout, Indian Trail, Faulks, and Charlotte.¹⁴ The school was named Wingate to honor the former president of Wake

¹⁰ http://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_carolina_central_railway.html
history of Central Carolina Railroad. Accessed August 21, 2014.

¹¹ "Wingate Centennial Special." *The Home News*. September 27, 2001, p. 2.

¹² Perry, Walt. Letter to Fern Shubert, written 2012, while building renovations were occurring and "Wingate Centennial Special." *The Home News*. September 27, 2001, p. 4.

¹³ Austin, Willie Virginia. "The Austin-Yarbrough Families 1740 – 1983." Monroe, North Carolina: Now and Then, 1983, p. 173.

¹⁴ <http://library.digitalnc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/yearbooks/id/7310/rec/1>, pp. 6 – 10. Wingate School catalog. Accessed August 21, 2014.

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Forest College, Washington Manly Wingate.¹⁵ Many homes were built in Wingate in the late nineteenth century, most of them housing students who attended the school from other areas.

Just prior to the opening of the Wingate School, in the early 1890s, John Williams opened a store on the south side of the railroad tracks, and in 1893, Joseph Leonidas (Lonnie) Austin (1868 – 1932) and partners founded a mercantile store, the Perry-Stewart store (later the Perry-Austin store), built on the east side of Main Street.¹⁶ The Austin family was a prominent one in the town of Wingate, and 1893 was the beginning of the J. L. Austin family's long-running mercantile business and commercial contribution to the town. J. L. Austin was born in Mecklenburg County, lived in the Waxhaw Creek area for a while, and then, after his mother died, moved with his father to Indian Trail where they bought a farm. At age fourteen, Austin left home, finished school, and became a teacher. He married Lula Maude Yarbrough (1877-1943) on February 15, 1900. They had nine children, Katie Lee (born 1901); Mary (1903 – 1928); Annie (1904 – 1996); Lura (1906 – 1982); Janie (born 1908); Willie Virginia (born 1911); J. Lonnie Jr. (1914 – 1976); Olin (1916 – 1975); and Claris (born 1918). He taught for a while, but then began work as a merchant at the Perry-Stewart store.¹⁷ It was at this earlier store building that J. L. Austin served as the town's first postmaster, beginning in 1896. Mail was delivered to and distributed from the store building two times per day.¹⁸ This building was located across North Main Street, at the location of the current post office building.

The town of Wingate was incorporated by the North Carolina legislature in 1901, with the center of town at the crossroads of Wilson Street and Main Street, and the town limits were one mile out from this intersection, one-half-mile out from the center in all directions.¹⁹ There were several freight and passenger trains each day, with the Central Carolina Railroad having merged in 1901 with the Seaboard Air Line Railway.²⁰ The first mayor of the newly incorporated town was J. Tom Lowery, and the first commissioners were W. M. Perry, John W. Outen, and J. Lonnie Austin Sr.²¹ The town and the Wingate School grew up together along the railroad. The school, located “two hundred yards north of the railroad”, was on a ten-acre lot, with another twenty-six acres of land “surveyed and laid off in lots suitable for building purposes,” to be sold

¹⁵ <http://www.townofwingatenc.gov/community/community-profile/history/> History of the town, Wingate website. Accessed July 31, 2014.

¹⁶ “Wingate Centennial Special.” *The Home News*. September 27, 2001, p. 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 46.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 170.

¹⁹ Austin, Willie Virginia. “The Austin-Yarbrough Families 1740 – 1983.” Monroe, North Carolina: Now and Then, 1983, p. 170.

²⁰ *Ibid*.

²¹ <http://www.townofwingatenc.gov/community/community-profile/history/> History of the town, Wingate website. Accessed July 31, 2014.

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to those who wished to build near the school.²² The population of Wingate at the time of its incorporation in 1901 was 100, increasing to 292 by 1910.²³ In 1904, J. L. Austin, in partnership with W. M. Perry, G. M. Stewart, and J. W. Bivens, opened a store across the street from his earlier store, the Perry-Austin store, at 207 – 209 North Main Street, and established a long-running mercantile establishment, the J. L Austin Company Store.²⁴ Groceries were sold on the south side of the store, and hardware on the north side, including farm and garden tools. To the rear was a cotton gin building (now gone), since Austin was also a cotton merchant. Customers would come from all over town and surrounding rural areas, often trading chickens or eggs for merchandise. J. L. Austin was generous in extending store credit to those who needed it.²⁵ The State Bank of Wingate (203 North Main Street) opened ca. 1909, and by 1911, Wingate had five general merchandise stores, one grocery, and one drug store, the Wingate Drug Company (205 North Main Street).²⁶

By 1915, there were several businesses operating in Wingate, including the J. L. Austin Company, Wingate Supply Company, Thomas L. Brewer Company, Jesse J. Perry Store, W. A. Chaney Store, and B. L. Gaddy Store. The Henry Frank Williams livery stable and a cotton gin were also in full operation.²⁷ By 1925, downtown Wingate (known as The College Town in local newspapers) businesses included six grocery stores, four dry goods stores, one hardware, one furniture, the Wingate Drug Company store, and four garages and service stations. Additionally there was one cotton gin, a pressing club, a shoe shop, a wood-working plant, a wholesale lumber company (the Perry Mill), two blacksmith shops, one electrical supply shop, two insurance agencies, the State Bank of Wingate (still the only bank in the town), a barber shop, two cafes, a meat market, the telephone exchange, and a telegraph office. There were ten passenger trains per day, and it was noted by the local newspaper that “Wingate has a highly efficient and rapidly growing junior college, controlled and supported by the Baptist denomination.”²⁸ Also in 1925, Katie Lee Austin (daughter of J. L. Austin) opened a dress shop just north of her father’s business, the Katie Lee Austin Store (211 North Main Street). A handful of commercial buildings were built in the 1940s, among them the Klondike building, which rapidly became a hangout for Wingate college students.²⁹

²² <http://library.digitalnc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/yearbooks/id/7310/rec/1>, p. 12. Wingate School catalog. Accessed August 21, 2014.

²³ Ibid and North Carolina Yearbooks, 1915, Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, p. 440.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 59 and 163.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 163.

²⁶ North Carolina Yearbooks, 1911, Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, p. 465.

²⁷ 1915 documentary photo and North Carolina Yearbooks, 1915, Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, p. 440.

²⁸ “Monroe and Union County.” *The Monroe Journal*. October 23, 1925, p. 15.

²⁹ “Wingate Centennial Special.” *The Home News*. September 27, 2001, p. 5. This building was located at the corner of North Main Street and Highway 74. It was torn down in 1986.

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As Wingate School grew, first as a high school, then as Wingate Junior College beginning in 1923, and as a four-year college beginning in 1953, so did the town. Students, along with local people, supported the businesses. In 1953, the year that Wingate College was formed, many new campus buildings were constructed, and the student population grew to over 1500.³⁰ A natural consequence of this growth in the student population was that these students undoubtedly shopped at local stores. In the 1960s, there were still several thriving businesses in downtown Wingate including Klondike Restaurant, Plaids & Prints Fabric Shop, Helms Cleaners, Floyds Barber Shop, a washerette, Superior Cleaners, Austin Store, Ma-Leck Woodcrafts, the post office, and a service station.³¹

The commercial district, located north and south of the railroad tracks, lining the east and west sides of North Main Street and the north and south sides of Highway 74 at its intersection with Main Street, developed in Wingate from the turn of the twentieth century through the mid-1960s and continued to exist into the late 1970s to early 1980s. At that time, some of the historic buildings were demolished to make way for new commercial buildings, and the buildings within the historic district were modified to look more “modern”. The railroad, Wingate School (now Wingate University), and the easy access of Highway 74 as a commercial corridor joining most of the towns in the county, all helped Wingate to thrive. A by-pass was never built, so businesses continued to locate in the town. As roads improved, some residents shopped in Monroe and as far away as Charlotte, but also supported local businesses.

Wingate, while smaller than most of the other towns in the county, had a thriving downtown, centered on the railroad. In comparison, Monroe, the county seat, Waxhaw, and Marshville, all railroad towns, had larger commercial centers than Wingate. By 1905, Monroe had a population of 4500, with one bakery, three banks, two barber shops, four butchers, three blacksmith shops, one stationer, one bicycle shop, six clothing store, six glassware stores, six drug stores, six dry goods stores, one florist, a fish market, thirteen general stores, a laundry, four millineries, sixteen grocers, four jewelry shops, and one wholesale grocer. The town continued to grow through the first half of the twentieth century, serving as the main shopping area for the town and for surrounding communities.³² Waxhaw, incorporated in 1889, had a “thriving commercial core”, with many brick buildings lining both sides of the railroad in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries.³³ Marshville, by 1925, had a total of eighty-five businesses in its commercial

³⁰ Austin, Willie Virginia. “The Austin-Yarbrough Families 1740 – 1983.” Monroe, North Carolina: Now and Then, 1983, p. 173.

³¹ Monroe City Directory, 1966, section on Wingate.

³² North Carolina Yearbooks, 1905, Raleigh, North Carolina: The News and Observer, pp. 561-562.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 50.

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core, including grocers, dry goods, hardware, general merchandise, furniture, drug, and shoe shops. There were two banks and numerous medical offices, print shops, insurance agencies, and cafes, and service stations.³⁴

³⁴ "Monroe and Union County." *The Monroe Journal*. October 23, 1925, p. 15.

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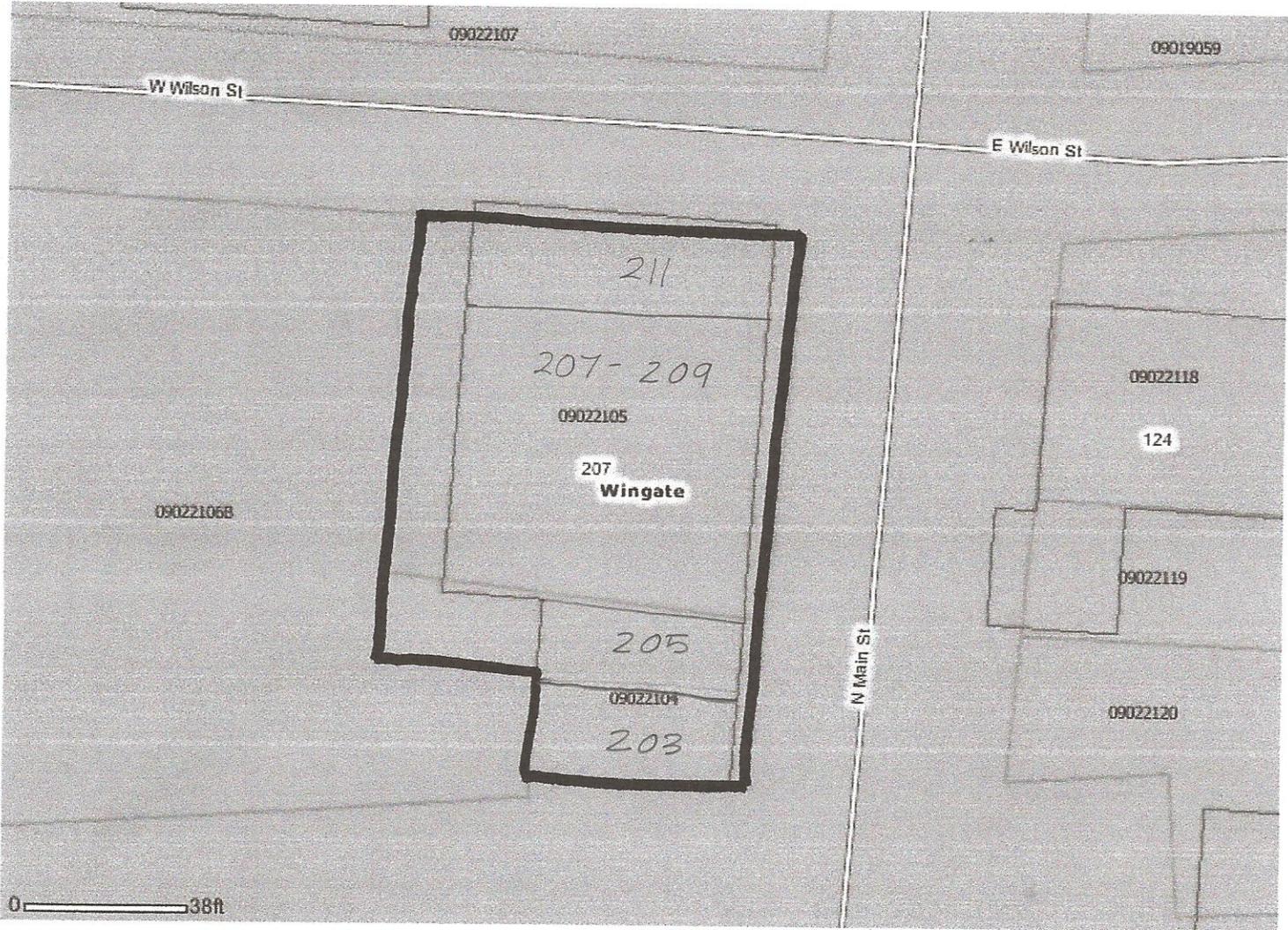
Boundary Description

The boundary of the historic district is shown by a heavy black line on the accompanying Union County tax map at a scale of 1" = 38'.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the district encompass the property historically associated with this group of historic commercial buildings.

GoMAPS - Union County NC Public Access



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Friday,
August 8
2014

This map is prepared for the inventory of real property found within Union County, NC and is compiled from recorded deeds, plats, and other public records and data. Users of this map are hereby notified that the aforementioned public primary information sources should be consulted for verification of the information contained on this map. Union County, and the mapping companies assume no legal responsibilities for the information contained on this map.

Grid based on the North Carolina State Plane Coordinate System
All dimensions in feet

Sketch Map
Wingate Commercial Historic District
Wingate, NC
Union County
□ Contributing Buildings
— National Register Boundary