

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

West High Street Historic District

The West High Street Historic District is a group of eleven buildings and one garden in the core city area of High Point, three blocks west of Main Street. The district borders the south side of the North Carolina Railroad tracks that run through the center of town. The buildings have historically incorporated a variety of uses including educational, residential, commercial and industrial. Today, the district is zoned Central Business. Current land use within the district presents a mixture of residential and commercial, including offices, a showroom, and a warehouse. The majority of commercial tenants currently in the district are “auxiliary” businesses that support the furniture market. Examples include a fabric showroom located in the 1905 Fraser-Wilson House at 407 West High Street and the offices of Red Squirrel Brand Marketing located in the 1879 Blair School at 106 Oak Street.

The district, approximately four acres large, includes three city blocks: the 400 and 500 blocks of West High Street, which runs east -- west along the south side of the NC Railroad tracks, and the 100 block of Oak Street, which runs north -- south and adjoins West High Street in the middle of the district. Eleven resources contribute [C] to the historic significance and “place identity” of the district: six houses, three outbuildings, the Kirkman House garden, and the 1899 Kirkman Manufacturing Company building at 507 West High Street adjacent to the O. Arthur Kirkman property. The only non-contributing building [NC] in the district is the American Legion Post No. 87, built in 1960, at 409 West High Street.

The eleven contributing resources in the West High Street Historic District date from 1879 to 1922. The district contains the oldest documented building surviving in the downtown area, the 1879 Blair School at 106 Oak Street. Also found in the district is one of the earliest and finest surviving examples of the Colonial Revival-style in the core city area, the 1905 Fraser-Wilson House at 407 West High Street, built by Henry Fraser, founder of Alma Furniture and Myrtle Desk companies. The district includes also the

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city's earliest, and one of the finest examples of the Queen Anne style, the 1897 Annettie Brown House, at 110 Oak Street.

Contributing further to the district's "place identity" -- the feeling, design and setting of the district's historic time and place -- are narrow streets, sidewalks, granite curbs, brick and granite retaining walls, old trees and other mature plantings. The O. Arthur Kirkman House retains its historic gardens covering over one and a quarter acres, representing the last surviving urban "estate" in the original downtown area, a city which once had many large lots with gardens. All of the historic contributing buildings in the district retain their architectural character from their period of significance, possess integrity of design, feeling and association, and exhibit fine workmanship.

Contributing also to the historic context of the West High Street District are the historic properties and neighborhoods located adjacent and nearby, to the north, south, east, and west. To the north across the NC Railroad tracks is the Oakwood National Register Historic District with resources dating from 1901 to 1939. To the east, within less than 600 feet, at 305 West High Street, is the Tomlinson Chair Manufacturing Company buildings, dating from 1902 to 1927, a National Register complex of historic buildings adapted as high-end furniture showrooms, Market Square, and a private restaurant and meeting room facility, the String and Splinter Club. To the west, adjacent to the district, is the late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial complex which includes a collection of brick factory buildings built by the Hayworth Roll and Panel Company, beginning in 1905, the first manufacturing company of wooden veneers in the state of North Carolina.

West High Street Historic District

Built alongside the NC Railroad tracks, the West High Street Historic District's orientation to the railroad tracks exemplifies the early twentieth century trend of Southern well-to-do builders of substantial homes to locate along major transportation arteries, often near factories or commercial buildings. O. Arthur Kirkman located his 1899 mattress factory at 507 West High Street next door to his residence at 501 West High Street. Henry Fraser built his 6,200 square foot house at 407 West High Street two blocks east of his factories for the Alma and Myrtle Desk Companies. Tom Kirkman chose in 1900 to locate his home at 415 West High Street just three blocks west of his successful dry goods store on Main Street. W. T. "Tom" Kirkman also served as one of the city's first aldermen from 1898 to 1903.

The West High Street Historic District reflects High Point's settlement patterns of the first generation of merchants, professionals, and industrialists. They lived near their factories and places of business, within easy walking distance of downtown, before the advent of trolleys and automobiles. The West High Street Historic District represents a "walking" downtown, a compact urban design popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Pre-suburban High Point was originally located within a half mile radius of the center of town, where the 1855 NC Railroad tracks crossed the Old Plank Road [now Main Street] completed in 1853. The Southern Railway Depot built in 1905 at this juncture is still considered the historic center of town. The West High Street Historic District is located within this original half mile radius.

The West High Street Historic District represents an historic example of the compact urban design that cities across the country like High Point and the Triad are currently seeking to develop. Overall, the West High Street Historic District contains a high quality collection of historic buildings with strong "place identity" that stand out among High Point's late nineteenth and early twentieth century urban neighborhoods.

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The West High Street Historic District is a rare survival in the center city area that represents today a unique area in High Point.

Local historic district overlay zoning presents a regulatory tool that is currently available to preserve and protect this important residential and commercial area. The West High Street Historic District merits such protection.

The proposal to create local historic district overlay zoning in the West High Street Historic District offers an opportunity to put into practice the vision of the November 2006 *Community Growth Vision Statement* to “Preserve and revitalize key historic landmarks and unique areas in High Point...and to preserve both commercial and residential historic areas meriting such protection....” [page 2]. It also fulfills the recommendations of the *High Point Core City Master Plan* adopted unanimously by the High Point City Council February 5, 2007.

For further information on the architectural and historical significance of the West High Street Historic District, please see the district’s nomination to the National Register of Historic Places available locally through the High Point Planning and Development Department.

FRASER-WILSON HOUSE
407 West High Street
Looking South

January 2007



FRASER-WILSON HOUSE
407 West High Street
Looking Southeast

January 2007



AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. 87
409 West High Street
Looking Southeast

January 2007



W.T. "TOM" KIRKMAN HOUSE
415 West High Street
Looking Southeast

January 2007



W.T. "TOM" KIRKMAN HOUSE
415 West High Street
Looking Northeast

January 2007



O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN HOUSE
501 West High Street
Looking Southwest

January 2007



O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN HOUSE
501 West High Street
Looking Northeast

January 2007



O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN OFFICE
501 West High Street
Looking Northeast

January 2007



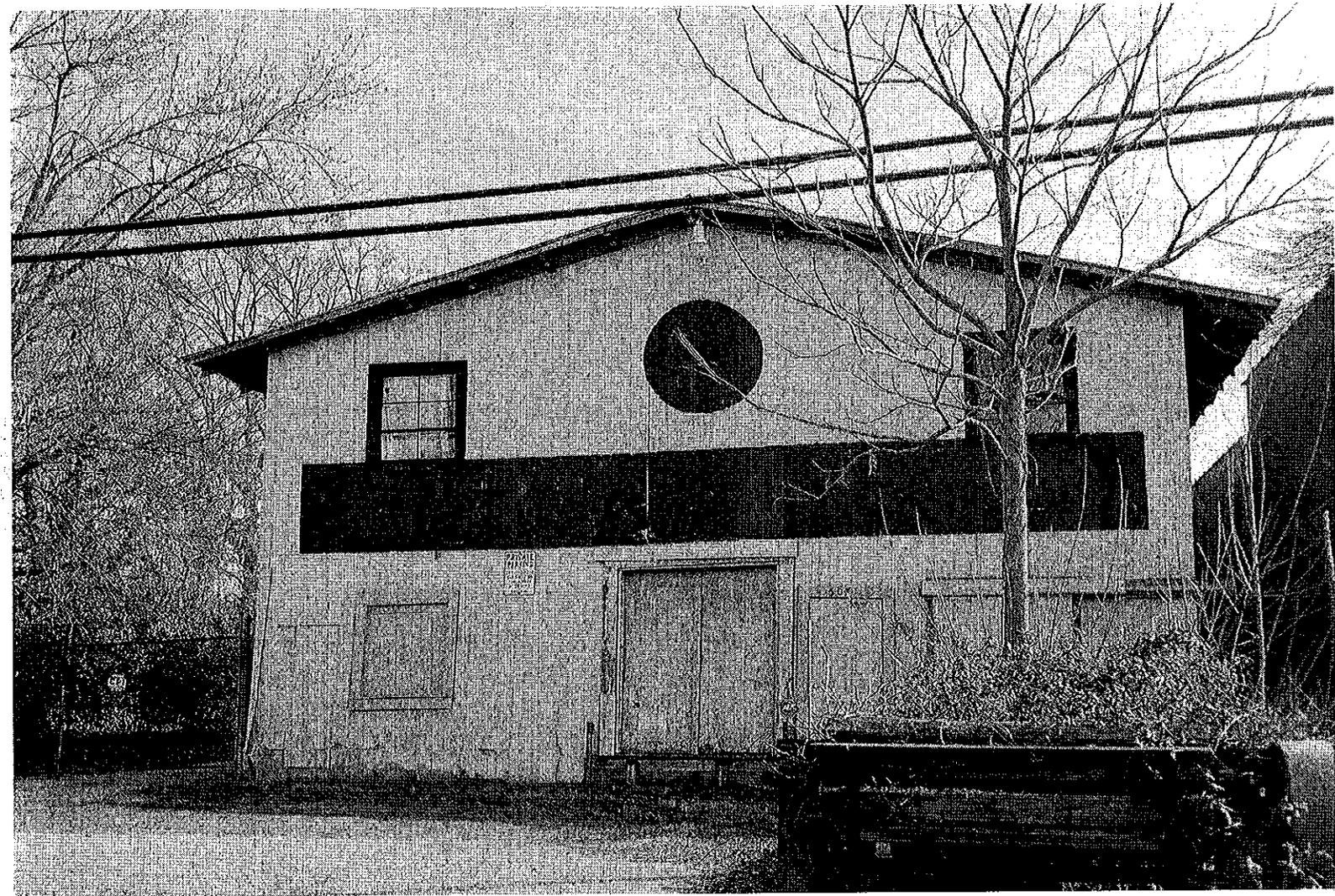
O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN GARAGE
501 West High Street
Looking Southeast

January 2007



O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN MANUFACTURING CO. BUILDING
507 West High Street
Looking South

January 2007



WEST HIGH STREET - STREETScape
500 Block of West High Street
Looking East

January 2007



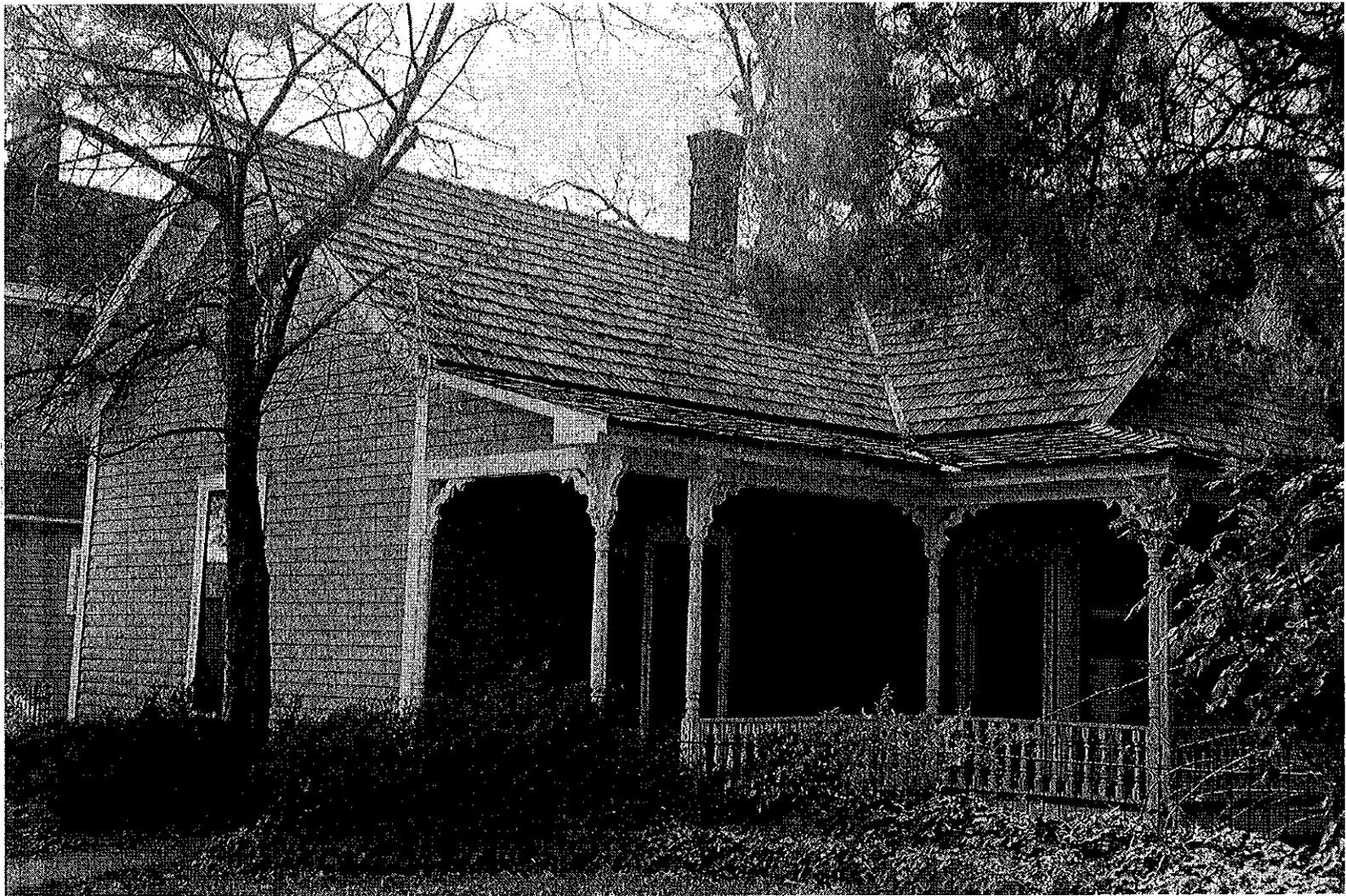
OAK STREET – STREETSCAPE
100 Block of Oak Street
Looking South

January 2007



BLAIR SCHOOL/O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN HOUSE
106 Oak Street
Looking Southwest

January 2007



BLAIR SCHOOL/O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN HOUSE
106 Oak Street
Looking Northwest

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W. A. RING HOUSE
107 Oak Street
Looking Northeast

January 2007



ANNETTIE BROWN HOUSE
110 Oak Street
Looking Northwest

January 2007



ANNETTIE BROWN HOUSE
110 Oak Street
Looking North

January 2007



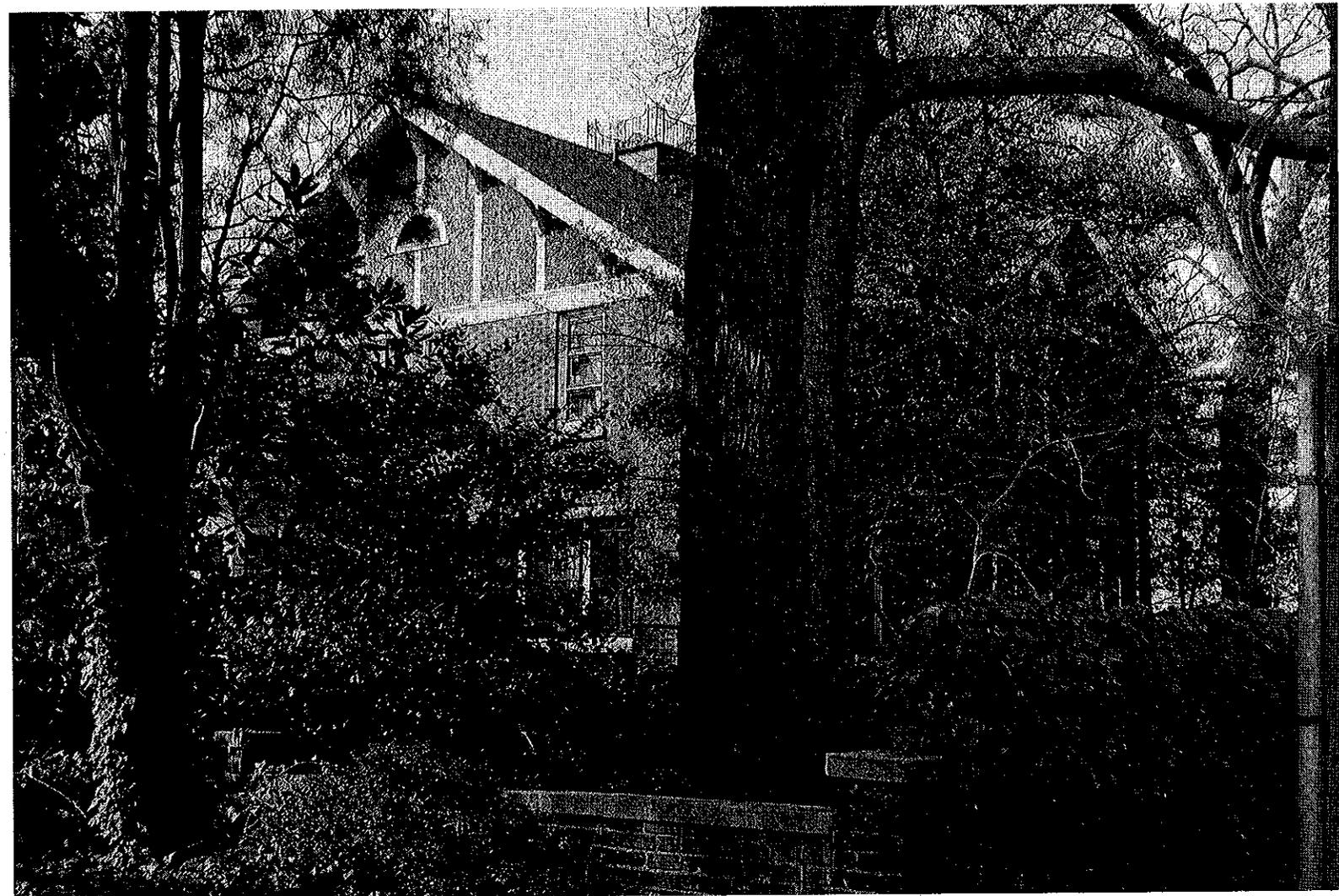
**WEST HIGH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
SIDEWALKS, GRANITE CURBS, BRICK GARDEN WALLS,
OLD GROWTH TREES and MATURE PLANTINGS
100 Block of Oak Street
Looking North**

January 2007



**WEST HIGH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
SIDEWALKS, GRANITE CURBS, BRICK GARDEN WALLS,
OLD GROWTH TREES and MATURE PLANTINGS
100 Block of Oak Street
Looking Northwest**

January 2007



INVENTORY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

1). **FRASER-WILSON HOUSE.** 407 West High Street.

Built: 1905
Description: 6200 square foot two-story Colonial Revival
C: *Guilford County Historic Landmark [1997]*
Use: Showroom, Doblin Fabrics
Owner: Nera Wilson Smith, Thomasville, NC

2). **AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. 87.** 409 West High Street/109 Oak Street

Built: 1960
Description: One-story brick and cement block modern building
NC: *Non-Contributing Resource*
Use: Meeting Hall and Bar for the Am. Legion Post No. 87
Owner: American Legion Headquarters, Indianapolis, Indiana

3). **W.T. "TOM" KIRKMAN HOUSE.** 415 West High Street.

Built: 1900
Description: 3600 square foot two-story Colonial Revival
C: *Protective Easements Held by Preservation NC*
Use: Leased to Furniture Designer/Residence/Home Office
Owner: Dorothy Gay Darr, High Point, NC

4). **O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN HOUSE.** 501 West High Street.

Built: 1915
Description: 4000 square foot two-story Craftsman

- 5). 4a). **GARDEN** [Site] Ca. 1898, 1925, 1960.
Protective Easements Held by Preservation NC
6). b). **OFFICE.** Built: Ca 1902.
7). 4c). **GARAGE/DOG HOUSE.** Built: 1915.
8). 4d). **GARAGE.** Built: Ca. 1917.

C: *National Register Properties [1988]
Guilford County Historic Landmarks [1989]
Protective Easements Held by Preservation NC*
Use: Private Residence
Owner: Dorothy Gay Darr, High Point, NC

9). O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN MANUFACTURING COMPANY BUILDING.
507 West High Street.

Built: 1899, 1940, 1970
Description: 14000 square foot two-story frame building [heart-of-pine siding, now covered in aluminum] with brick addition in 1940 and metal addition in 1970
C: *Protective Easements Held by Preservation NC*
Use: Leased for storage
Owners: Dorothy Gay Darr, High Point, NC
William Joseph Darr, High Point, NC

10). BLAIR SCHOOL/O. ARTHUR KIRKMAN HOUSE. 106 Oak Street.

Built: 1879, 1898
Description: 2000 square foot, cruciform one-story frame building
C: *National Register Property [1989]*
Guilford County Historic Landmark [1990]
Preservation Easements Held by Preservation NC
Use: Leased as Offices for Red Squirrel Brand Marketing Co
Owners: Dorothy Gay Darr, High Point, NC
William Joseph Darr, High Point, NC

11). W.A. RING HOUSE. 107 Oak Street.

Built: 1922
Description: 1700 square foot one-story bungalow
C: *Contributing*
Use: Residential Rental: Duplex
Owner: Dorothy Gay Darr, High Point, NC

12). ANNETTIE BROWN HOUSE. 110 Oak Street.

Built: 1897
Description: 3000 square foot two-story Queen Anne with turret
C: *Guilford County Historic Landmark [2005]*
Use: Leased as Offices for Southeast Point of Sale Co.
Owners: Dorothy Gay Darr, High Point, NC
William Joseph Darr, High Point, NC

