

**Site Inventory Form**  
**State Historical Society of Iowa**  
 (December 1, 1999)

State Inventory No. **52-01069**

New  Supplemental

Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship:  Contributing  Noncontributing

Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries

National Register Status:(any that apply)  Listed  De-listed  NHL  DOE

9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance Number \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Extant (enter year) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Things & Things & Things

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Location**

street & number 130 (138) S. Clinton Street

city or town Iowa City

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_

vicinity, county Johnson

Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_

(If Urban) Subdivision Original Town

Block(s) 81

Lot(s) part of 5

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]**

**4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]**

**5. Classification**

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

— buildings  
 — sites  
 — structures  
 — objects  
 — Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing Noncontributing

1 — buildings  
 — — sites  
 — — structures  
 — — objects  
1 — Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title Iowa City Central Business District Study - 2017 UPDATE

Historical Architectural Data Base Number 52-127

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

02E COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

02E COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

01 NO STYLE

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation 10 CONCRETE

walls 15H Synthetics/Synthetic stucco

roof 17 OTHER

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**8. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

- Yes  No  More Research Recommended
- Yes  No  More Research Recommended
- Yes  No  More Research Recommended
- Yes  No  More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Johnson  
City Iowa City

Address 130 (138) S. Clinton Street

Site Number 52-01069  
District Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or 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.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

01 ARCHITECTURE  
07 COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

**Significant Dates**

*Construction date*  
1970  check if circa or estimated date  
*Other dates* \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

*Architect*  
unknown  
*Builder*  
unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography  See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM References (OPTIONAL)**

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

**11. Form Prepared By**

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organization AKAY Consulting

date 10/2017

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city or town Minneapolis

state MN

zip code 55407

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION** (Submit the following items with the completed form)

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____

- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

**FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL**

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or non-contributing status)
- Barn:**
  - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
  - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
  - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by (name/title): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Related District Number

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Things & Things & Things

Johnson

Name of Property

County

130 (138) S. Clinton Street

Iowa City

Address

City

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## 7. Property Description

The Things & Things & Things building is a 2-story, mid-block commercial building built in 1970 as the first of the urban renewal constructions in the downtown. The building replaced two, early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings that were destroyed by fire in January 1970.

The building's visual character is indicative of its 1970 construction date, particularly in its fully glazed façade, steel framing, concrete block side walls, back wall of the façade (visible through the glazing) of exposed concrete and brick, and stepped form. The glazed façade terminates with a corrugated shed roof that slopes back to meet a narrow metal cornice – a 1970 image (Image 03) indicates that the current roof sheathing is not the original, which lacked corrugation. A double entrance is recessed and located on-center. With the exception the change in roofing material, the building retains a high level of historic integrity specific to the façade. The interior integrity has not been evaluated.

In 2017, the Things & Things & Things building remains without apparent alteration from the description provided in 2001. The building is currently occupied by Endeavors.

**Image 01.** View of the streetscape within which the building is located, looking east across S. Clinton Street.



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

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Things & Things & Things

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**Image 02.** View of the façade (west elevation), looking southeast from S. Clinton Street



(Image by AKAY Consulting, August 2017)

## 8. Statement of Significance

This commercial building faces Old Capitol Mall one block south of the Pentacrest, a National Register historic district located on the campus of the University of Iowa. Built in 1970, Things & Things & Things was the first building constructed as part of the Iowa City urban renewal program, which resulted in the loss of dozens of historic buildings and reoriented the historic character of the city's Central Business District. As such the building derives significance under Criterion A in that historic association. Further, the building is considered significant under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century commercial architecture, which departed from the historic precedents that typify 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century downtowns of Iowa. The Things & Things & Things building is considered a contributing resource to a potential historic district.

As a resource less than 50-years of age, the building meets Criterion Consideration G in association with the Iowa City urban renewal program. While construction of this building occurred as a result of loss of the previous building to fire, its construction was locally reported along with updates on the urban renewal planning and implementation process – being called out specifically as the first building constructed as part of the program. Iowa City program of urban renewal is representative of the nationwide movement that transformed downtown commercial areas by razing large swathes of buildings and replacing them with new buildings, parking lots, parking ramps, and other features designed to restore economic vitality to communities in economic distress. The process of urban renewal left scars – both physical and psychological – in towns large and small. That was certainly the experience in Iowa City, where urban renewal created wide and painful schisms that remain to this day. However, in some cases and to varying degrees, urban renewal did indeed support stronger economies and bring new amenities to downtowns. Things & Things & Things is an important piece in the history of Iowa City commerce and commercial architecture, specifically as a representative of the impact of urban renewal.

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Name of Property	County
130 (138) S. Clinton Street	Iowa City
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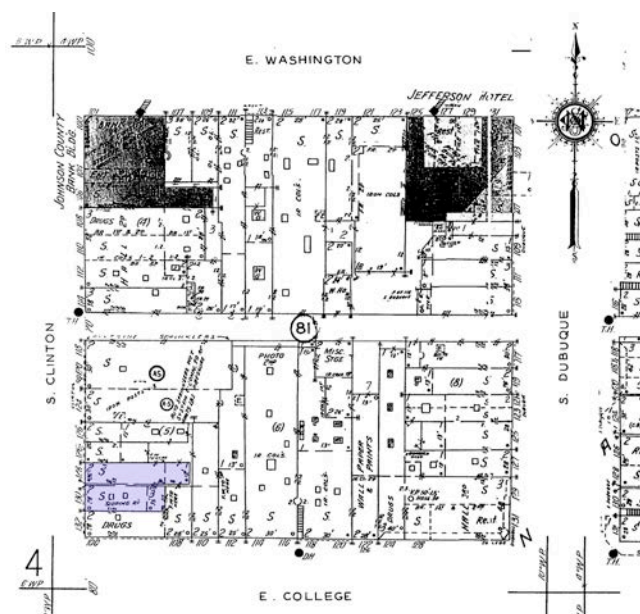
## Historical Background

As originally laid out, this section of Block 81 provided a series of lots facing onto College Street. However, the strong attraction of “Capitol Square” created the presence of east and west facing buildings along the Clinton Street corridor that faced the Square. The Things & Things & Things building at 130 S. Clinton was the first major construction in the Iowa City urban renewal area. The store opened in December 1970.

Things & Things & Things at this location appears to have been the third iteration of the business; the earlier stores are sometimes referred to in advertisements as Things & Things Part 1 & 2. One of the Things stores was located at 125 S. Dubuque Street. The business continued to advertise that location through February of 1970 (Advertisement, *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, February 05, 1970: 9), but closed its doors 10 days prior to relocating to the “as yet completed” Clinton Street store in December of 1970 (“Local Store Damaged In Fire,” *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, December 21, 1970: 1).

In addition to the store on S. Dubuque, business owner Tom Wegman had a Things & Things & Things store in the former Pusateri Fruit Store building at 128 S. Clinton Street. That building burned on January 20, 1970 – a blaze that also destroyed the adjacent building housing the Paper Place (Irving Weber, “Sicilians operated Iowa City’s early fruit stores,” *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, August 23, 1980: 14 and “Coming Down,” *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, January 26, 1970: 9). Advertisements for a fire sale at the “Thing, Things & Things Uptown Shop” at 128 S. Clinton appeared in the local newspaper in April of 1970 (Advertisement, *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, April 6, 1970: 16).

**Figure 01.** Fire Insurance Map – 1933 rev.1948



(Source: Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1933 rev.1948, Sheet 2.)

The current Things & Things & Things building was constructed after the store’s previous location in the Pusateri Fruit Store building at 128 S. Clinton burned in January of 1970. The fire also destroyed an adjacent building.

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Things & Things & Things

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With urban renewal plans for the Iowa City downtown well under way by 1970, the acquisition of 100 sites for demolition was ready to proceed by that summer. The first major construction in the Iowa City urban renewal area was announced as the new \$190,000 Things & Things & Things boutique. The new store rose on the former site of the Pusateri Fruit Store, which had been destroyed by fire earlier that year. At the time of the fire, Things & Things & Things occupied the corner building at 132 S. Clinton), having been located there since 1963 (Irving Weber, "Sicilians operated Iowa City's early fruit stores," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, August 23, 1980: 14). Construction on the new building was set to begin the first week of August, 1970. The local newspaper described the building design as a split-level structure with a 31-foot frontage on Clinton Street. The interior plan had a two-story section at the front of the building and a three-story section at the rear. The building was designed by local architect William Nowysz with Richard E. Larew as general contractor.

The new building accommodated a greenhouse, delicatessen, children's clothing and books, dinnerware, and men's and women's clothing as well as an assortment of "trinkets" and other items ("New 'Things' Building First Construction in Area," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, July 31, 1970: 3.)

**Figure 02.** Architects Rendering - 1970



(Source: "New 'Things' Building First Construction in Area," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, July 31, 1970: 3.)

Local notices indicated that the new Things & Things & Things was scheduled to open on December 7, 1970 ("Notices," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, November 11, 1970: 23.) Given the news accounts indicating the closure of the store on S. Dubuque St., it appears the new building was of a size which allowed for the consolidation of locations; after its opening, the store at 130 S. Clinton Street appears to have been the only Things & Things & Things store location in the city.

There was a fire at Things & Things & Things (130 S. Clinton Street) on December 20, 1970, damaging the front entrance and causing smoke damage to the interior. The news article about the fire indicated that the store was not yet completed ("Local Store Damaged In Fire," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, December 21, 1970: 1).

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**Image 03.** Historic Image – S. Clinton Street – c.1970



(Source: State Historical Society of Iowa.)

This view of S. Clinton Street looking northeasterly from near College Street shows the Things & Things & Things building (right) soon after its 1970 construction.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References (2001)

Iowa City city directories.

Property Transfer Records, Johnson County Auditor's Office.

Tax Assessor's Records, City of Iowa City Assessor.

Sanborn maps, 1874, 1879, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1906, 1912, 1920, 1926, 1933, and 1933 updated to 1970.

### 2017: References

Iowa City Public Library. Digital Photograph collection. <http://history.icpl.org>.

Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map, 1933 rev.1948

State Historical Society of Iowa. Iowa City. Photograph Collection.

Slonneger, Marybeth. *Finials: A View of Downtown Iowa City*. Iowa City: Hand Press, 2015.

Svensden, Marlys A. "Survey and Evaluation of the Central Business District." Prepared for the Iowa City Historic Preservation Commission, 2001.

Svensden, Marlys A. "Things & Things building: 52-01069." Iowa Site Form, 2001.

### Newspapers

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. "Coming Down." January 26, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. Advertisement. February 05, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. Advertisement. April 6, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. "New 'Things' Building First Construction in Area." July 31, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. "Cash Register Pried At Things & Things." October 22, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. "Notices." *Iowa City Press-Citizen*. November 11, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. "Local Store Damaged In Fire." December 21, 1970.

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*. "Sicilians operated Iowa City's early fruit stores." August 23, 1980.



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## 11. Additional Documentation

Legal Description: Original Town Com 20' N of SW cor Lot 5 Blk81; E 60'; N 20'; N 31.75'; W 80'; S to Beg

Assessor: 002 +1010378019

Latitude/Longitude: 41.659485/-91.534315

Plat Map:

