

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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**1. Name of Property**

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historic name: Morgan County Courthouse

other name/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**2. Location**

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street & number: 202 Fairfax Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Berkeley Springs

vicinity: N/A

state: West Virginia code: WV county: Morgan

code: 065 zip: 25411

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**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Susan M. Pierce, Deputy SHPO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
West Virginia Division of Culture and History

\_\_\_\_\_  
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 Certifying Official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of 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)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- \_\_\_\_\_ private
- public-local
- \_\_\_\_\_ public-State
- \_\_\_\_\_ public-Federal

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
3	0	TOTAL

**Name of related multiple property listing:** County Courthouses of West Virginia

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register** 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

**Current Functions**

GOVERNMENT = county courthouse

GOVERNMENT = county courthouse

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS= Neo-Classical Revival

**Materials**

**foundation:** block, stone

**roof:** asphalt, steel

**walls:** brick

**other:** wood

**Narrative Description**

See Continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- 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

Property is:

\_\_\_\_\_ **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

Architecture

Politics and Government

## Period of Significance

1907-1955

## Significant Dates

1907

## Significant Person

N/A

## Cultural Affiliation

N/A

## Architect/Builder

Holmboe and Lafferty, Architects

Westenhaver, S.A., Builder

## Narrative Statement of Significance

(See continuation sheets.)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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### Bibliography

(See 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property:** Less than one acre

**Quad Map Name:** Hancock, MD-WV-PA

**UTM References:**    17    737969    4390025  
                          Zone    Easting    Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description

(See continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(See continuation sheet.)

Morgan County Courthouse  
**Name of Property**

Morgan County, WV  
**County and State**

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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**name/title:** Alan Rowe and Erin Riebe (WV SHPO) with Barbara E. Rasmussen  
**organization:** Historic Preservation and Research      **date:** June 2003  
**street & number:** 224 Wilson Avenue      **telephone:** (304) 292-7652  
**city or town:** Morgantown      **state:** WV      **zip code:** 26501

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### Property Owner

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**name:** Morgan County Commission  
**street & number:** 202 Fairfax Street      **telephone:** (304) 258-8547  
**city or town:** Berkeley Springs      **state:** WV      **Zip code:** 25411

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

<u>Morgan County Courthouse</u>	<u>Morgan County, WV</u>
<b>Name of Property</b>	<b>County and State</b>
<b>Section number</b> <u>  7  </u>	<b>Page</b> <u>  1  </u>

**Location and Setting**

Berkeley Springs, the county seat of Morgan County, is located approximately ten miles south of Hancock, Maryland at the intersection of U.S. 522 and W.Va. 9 in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle. Originally named Bath, Berkeley Springs, is a small community nestled against Warm Spring Ridge of Cacapon Mountain near the western limit of the Ridge and Valley Mountain Province. State Route 9 links the town with other Panhandle towns of Martinsburg, Shepherdstown, and Charles Town. The courthouse is situated on lot 69.

Also included within the courthouse property are two additional contributing buildings; the county annex and jail, now offices.

<b>Courthouse</b>	<b>1907</b>	<b>Contributing</b>
<i>Exterior</i>		

The Morgan County Courthouse is a two-story, three-bay, Neo-Classical Revival building constructed in 1907. The building was constructed of yellow brick with limestone accents. A centered clock tower extends above the second story flat roof and dominates the main elevation.

The entrance is centered on the first story of the tower. The double-door entrance is arched and recessed and features a large fanlight. Ionic pilasters flank the entrance and support an entablature accented with egg-and-dart and dentil molding. The frieze reads "Morgan County Courthouse." The second and third stories of the tower have one-over-one, double-hung sash windows separated by a seated liberty motif that was restored in 1974. The upper story is topped by a pediment with dentil molding. The octagonal clock tower features a domed roof with four arched louvered vents and four rectangular vents on the angled corners.

There are two, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows to each side of the tower on each story. All of the first-story windows are protected by replacement cloth awnings. Decorative brick inlays separate the first and second story windows. At each corner of the facade two Ionic pilasters rise to a decorative entablature with modillions and dentils. The windows, entablature, brick inlays, and pilasters are carried around the to the side elevations.

A county annex is situated to the east of the courthouse and it attached by a stairwell. A small addition on the rear, or north elevation provided some extra office space.

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Morgan County Courthouse

Morgan County, WV

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*Interior*

The interior of the building has a small vestibule with a second set of double-doors that are modern. County offices flank each side of a centered hall. Each office door is has lower panels with an upper window and a casement transom. The hall leads towards the rear of the original section of the courthouse and a staircase with an arched opening. The staircase leads to the second story and the courtroom. In the courtroom the original tin ceiling is concealed by suspended acoustical tile. The room spans the front or south elevation of the building. Wooden elements such as the bench, jury box, counselors' table and gallery railing are executed in oak. The judge's bench centers the room, on a raised platform flanked by square pilasters capped with ormolu Ionic motifs. The judge's chamber is to the immediate rear and is flanked by the jury room and the judge's secretary's room. A courtroom gallery features nine pine benches with cushions that were donated to the courthouse by the community's Presbyterian Church during the 1970s. The modest updates to the courtroom appear reversible and do not seriously compromise its historic integrity.

**The Annex**

**c.1920**

**Contributing**

The county annex building is situated adjacent to the east elevation of the courthouse and is joined to the courthouse proper by two hallways. The two-story building is constructed of brick. Its main facade imitates the blonde brick of the courthouse. Although the first story has been altered with replacement doors and windows, the second story retains the original openings with three-part windows with rectangular transoms. A shingled awning was added between the stories.

**Jail**

**1939**

**Contributing**

The jail is situated off the northeast corner of the courthouse and was constructed to replace a smaller jail that was located on the same site from 1920 to 1939. The jail, currently housing sheriff's offices, is a simple rectangular-shaped, poured concrete building. The only visible elevation (the rear, or north) is three bays wide. Some window opening have been enclosed.

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*Statement of Significance*

The Morgan County Courthouse is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion A: Politics and Government* for its local significance with Morgan County's political history. Although not the first courthouse in the county, this building is associated with the political and social history of the Eastern Panhandle, representing the proliferation of local government in Virginia's western regions. It is also significant under *Criterion C: Architecture* for its Neo-Classical Revival architecture. The courthouse associates Morgan County with broad trends in public architecture in the early twentieth century. The period of significance is 1907, the year the courthouse was constructed, to 1955, the National Register's fifty-year-cut-off date.

**Brief History** (see *County Courthouses of West Virginia MPS*, 2004 for full context)

The statutory name of Berkeley Springs is actually Bath, but the more common Berkeley Springs is used in all cases except on ballots and other legal documents. The town is home to the four-acre Berkeley Springs State Park, a famous mineral spring that is the reason for the area's initial settlement. Berkeley Springs is closely associated with the family of George Washington, who originally purchased the town site for a homestead. However, the existence of the mineral springs and the early attention of many famous Virginians assured the rise of a town at this place.

The spring was soon acquired by the Town of Bath. The parcel was a portion of a fifty-acre tract conveyed by Lord Fairfax in 1776 for the erection of a spa and town to rival the English town of Bath. In 1777, the town sold Lot 69 to Robert Rutherford, an original trustee. Joining Rutherford as trustees were Bryan Fairfax, Thomas Bryan Martin, Warner Washington, the Rev. Charles Mym Thurston, Thomas Rutherford, Alexander White, Philip Pendleton, Samuel Washington, William Ellzey, Van Swearingen, Thomas Hite, James Edmonson, and James Nourse. The 1776 town plat was recorded in the Berkeley County courthouse in Martinsburg in 1798. The town was attractive to investors for the economic potentials that were associated with the warm springs there. Long a place of healing and respite, the trustees hoped to profit from development of the area's tourist potentials.

The town's population rapidly increased after the end of the Revolution, as ailing veterans flocked there in hopes the medicinal waters would restore their health. Bath became known as Berkeley Springs because the town's post office took that name, honoring former colonial governor Norborne Berkeley as well as the spring. Another post office in southeastern Virginia had already claimed the name of Bath. Gradually, Berkeley Springs became the common usage, and Bath was retained only in legal documents and election records.

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The natural phenomenon of the mineral spring was sufficient to generate the rise of a town, which in turn drew sufficient population to the area to warrant the establishment of another county in Virginia's west. Plagued by difficult geography that made travel to the neighboring county seats of Martinsburg or Romney difficult, the growing population of the Berkeley Springs area followed the rising trend in western Virginia and petitioned for a separate county. Morgan County was created in 1820 from portions of Hampshire and Berkeley counties, the last of a series of partitions that began in 1634 with a division of Charles City County. Some thirteen different Virginia counties at one time claimed the territory that is now Morgan County. It was named for Revolutionary War General Daniel Morgan.

The formation of the new county gave the region's residents a closer seat of government and a stronger political and economic voice in state affairs. Before the first courthouse was constructed, the court met at the tavern of Ignatius O'Farrell, and later at the Buck Horn Tavern. The court rented the home of Thomas Young for one year for \$40, and used it for a temporary county jail. The court further ordered that the County Clerk's office be established in the "Town of Bath." The first courthouse, located on Lot A, at the corner of Wilkes and Fairfax streets, was a house and a lot that the county justices purchased from Joseph H. Sherrard for \$3,500. That courthouse burned in 1844 in a fire that destroyed the entire 100 block of Wilkes Street from Fairfax to Congress streets.

After the fire, the court acquired a new lot. The justices traded the fire damaged vacant lot A to Henry Mayer of Frederick County, Virginia, for Lot 69, paying an additional \$600 "lawful money." A new courthouse was built on the site, which is very close to the famous springs. According to a painting hanging in the courthouse, this building was a two story gable front Classical Revival building with a bell tower above the entrance. Relocating the seat of court to Washington and Fairfax streets was an important development for Berkeley Springs. The business district followed the courthouse and gradually migrated away from Wilkes Street. This courthouse stood, nearly untouched until 1907 when the new courthouse was constructed.

The original county jail was not located near the first courthouse. It was located on Lot 109, at the site of Flagg House. That facility, which could accommodate four prisoners at once, was constructed of logs, each a foot in diameter. Adjoining this structure was a small jailer's home of six rooms. A covered walkway connected the two buildings. The jail was destroyed by fire during the Civil War.

**Architecture**

The 1907 Neo-Classical Revival architecture of the Morgan County Courthouse is significant for a rural community and joins the county with the many other small West Virginia communities whose courthouses also are executed in this style. Neo-Classical Revival architecture was

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popular during the later years of the second Industrial Revolution in America and was often chosen for courthouses and other public buildings constructed at during the same era. The courthouse stands witness to the county's respect for the institutions of civic responsibility, law, and government. Its style is emphasized by a figure of a seated liberty, a bold statement of community values in the rural region. In 1907, it was a very modern building for this Federal-era town.

The architectural firm of Holmboe and Lafferty, of Clarksburg, West Virginia, designed the present courthouse. The construction firm of S.A. Westenhover of Martinsburg, West Virginia, was the contractor. The total project cost \$12,367. The firm of Buxton and Skinner furnished the steel furniture in the vaults of the Circuit Clerk's Office and E.H. Howard Clock Co. of Boston furnished the clock in the tower. The wooden furniture for the jury room and circuit court rooms was supplied by Wm. J.C. Dulaney Co., of Baltimore. In 1953, the vault housing the county clerk's records was enlarged and fireproofed. The roof of the clock tower was recovered in 1974 with stainless steel to replace the original galvanized steel, which had rusted badly. The clock was originally a mechanical clock, which struck the hours on a large bell. It was converted to a synchronized electrical drive and the bell striker was disconnected because of complaints from nearby residents. The striking mechanism survives, however.

**Summary**

The Morgan County Courthouse is eligible under *Criteria A: Politics and Government* for its significance in Morgan County's political history. Since the early twentieth century, this building as provided a place for lawmakers and county officials to gather and conduct business. The building is also eligible under *Criterion C: Architecture* as a locally significant example of the Neo-Classical Revival style of architecture. The period of significance dates from 1907, the year the courthouse was constructed, to 1955, the National Register's fifty-year cut-off date.

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Morgan County Courthouse

Morgan County, WV

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***Bibliographic References***

Ambler, C.H., *West Virginia: The Mountain State*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1940.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Sectionalism in Virginia 1776-1861*. Chicago: University Press of Chicago, 1910.

\_\_\_\_\_ *West Virginia: A History*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1930.

Chambers, S. Allen, Jr. *Buildings of West Virginia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Doherty, W. T., *Berkeley County USA: A Bicentennial History of a Virginia and West Virginia County, 1772-1972*. Parsons: McClain Printing Co., 1972.

Office of the Circuit Clerk, Morgan County, West Virginia

Office of the County Clerk, Morgan County, West Virginia (Box 96, File 15)

Morgan County Historical Society. *Morgan County and Its People*. Dallas: Taylor Printing Co., 1981.

Rasmussen, Barbara. *Absentee Landowning and Exploitation in West Virginia, 1760-1920*.  
Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994.

West Virginia Historical Records Survey. Microfilm. West Virginia and Regional History  
Collection, West Virginia University Libraries. Reel 150.

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Morgan County Courthouse

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***Geographical Data***

Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundary commences at a point on the west corner of the courthouse located on the east corner of N. Washington and Fairfax Streets and continues northeast to the north corner courthouse. It then continues southeast along the rear of the courthouse until reaching the jail building where it continues northeast then southeast along the rear elevation of the jail. From this point the boundary continues southwest along the wall of the jail and annex building until reaching the main facade of the annex building where it continues northwest along the front of the annex and courthouse to the beginning point.

Boundary justification

The boundary encompasses the footprint of the Morgan County Courthouse, jail and annex. The sheriff's building to the rear of the courthouse was constructed in 1962 and the county commission building, next to the annex, has had many alterations.

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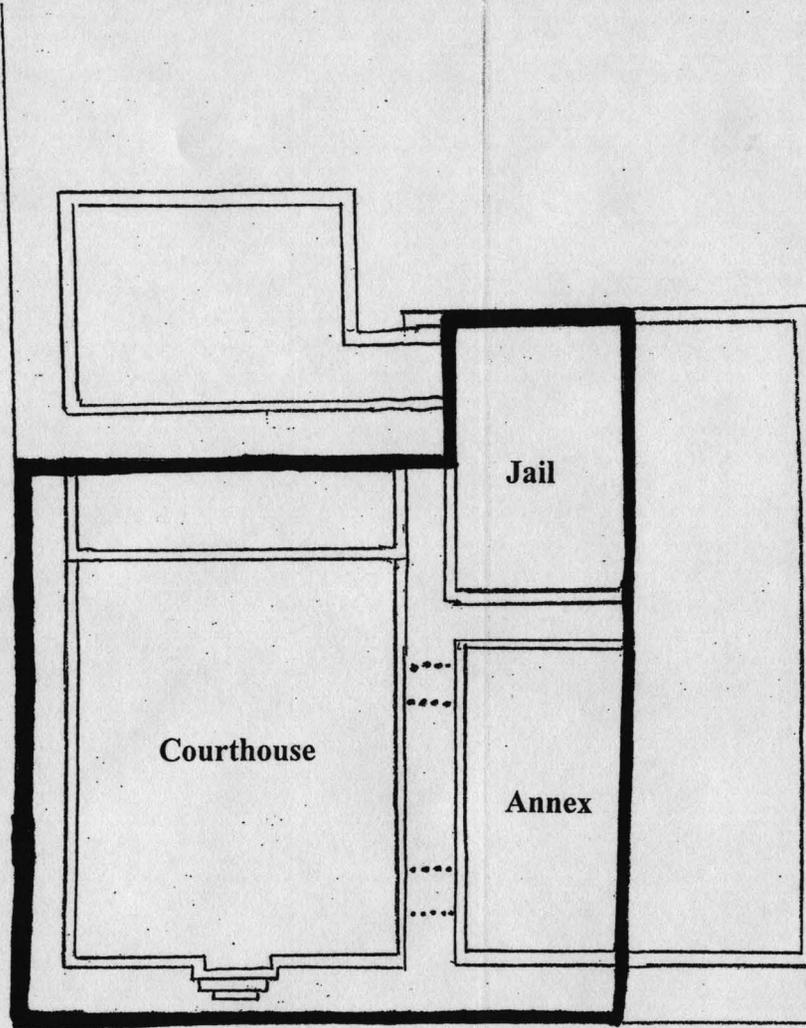
**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Morgan County Courthouse  
Address: 202 Fairfax Street  
Town: Berkeley Springs  
County: Morgan  
Photographer: Erin Riebe and Alan Rowe, WV SHPO  
Date: March 2004  
Negatives: WVSHPO, Charleston, WV

- Photo 1 of 9                      Morgan County Courthouse and setting. View facing northeast.
- Photo 2 of 9                      Morgan County Courthouse. View facing northwest.
- Photo 3 of 9                      Morgan County Courthouse setting showing memorial in median.  
View facing northwest.
- Photo 4 of 9                      Detail of Morgan County Courthouse entrance. View facing  
northwest.
- Photo 5 of 9                      West facade of Morgan County Courthouse. View facing  
southeast.
- Photo 6 of 9                      First floor interior hall of Morgan County Courthouse.
- Photo 7 of 9                      Office door detail on first floor of Morgan County Courthouse.
- Photo 8 of 9                      Arched detail in county clerk office.
- Photo 9 of 9                      Detail of county clerk safe door.



N. Washington Street

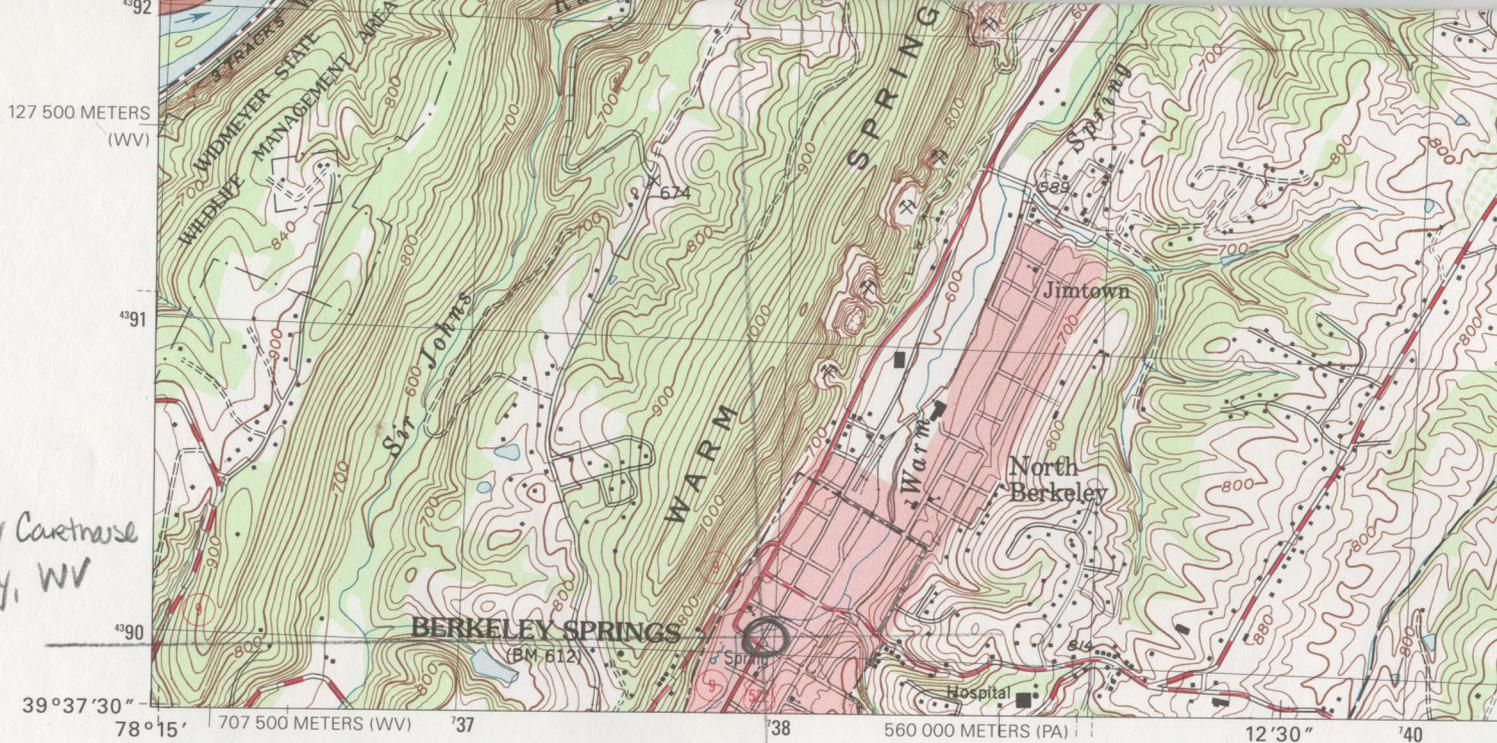


Fairfax Street

Morgan County Courthouse  
Morgan County, WV

 NR Boundary  
 Photos

Morgan County Courthouse  
Morgan County, WV



**Produced by the United States Geological Survey**

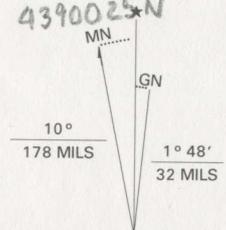
Topography compiled 1947. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1996 and other sources. Survey control current as of 1951

North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 17 2 500-meter ticks: West Virginia Coordinate System of 1983 (north zone). 10 000-foot ticks: Maryland Coordinate System of 1983. 2 500-meter ticks: Pennsylvania Coordinate System of 1983 (south zone)

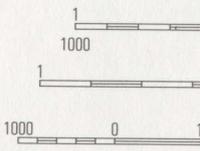
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software

Landmark buildings verified 1951

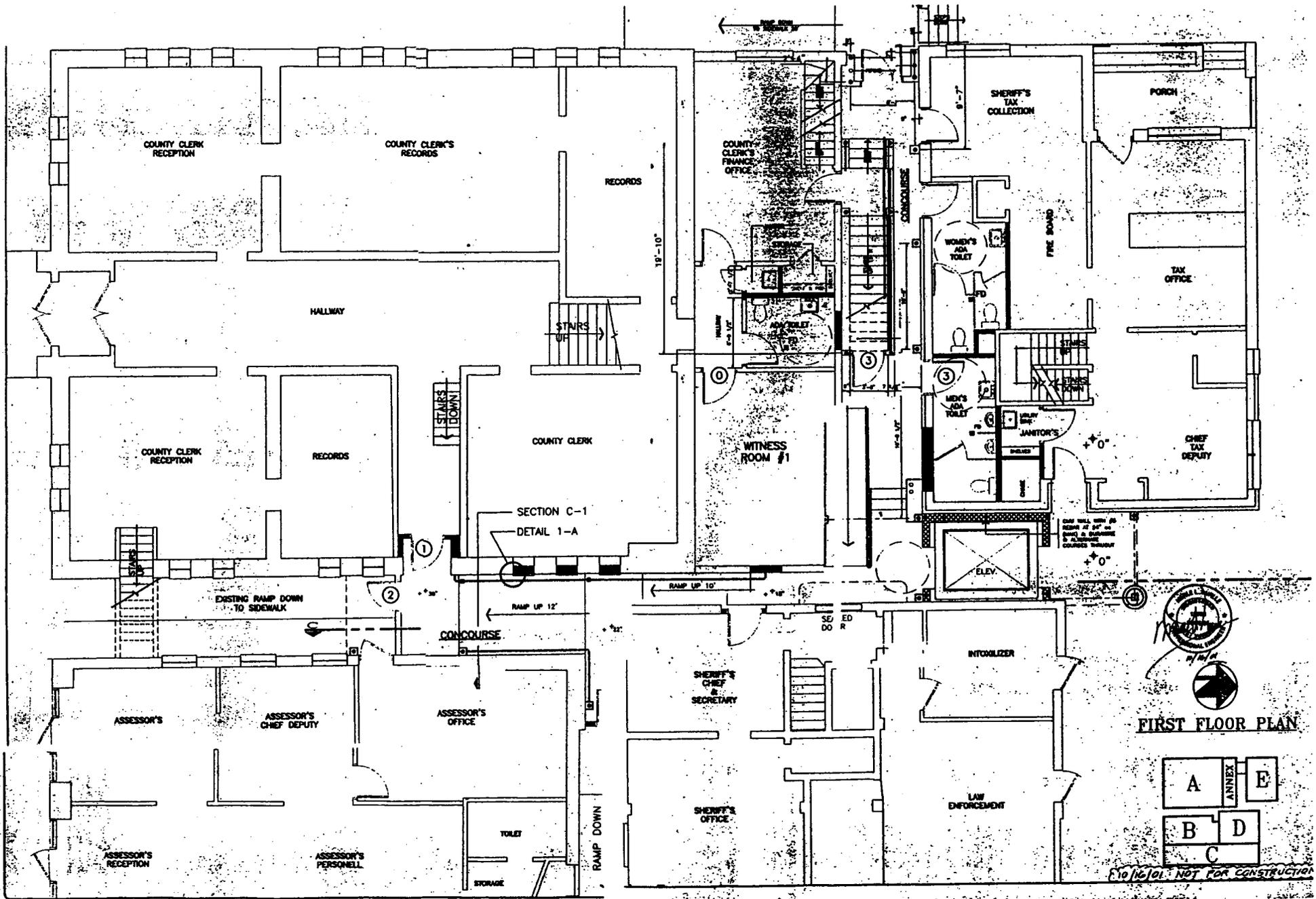
UTM  
17 737 969 E 4390 025 N



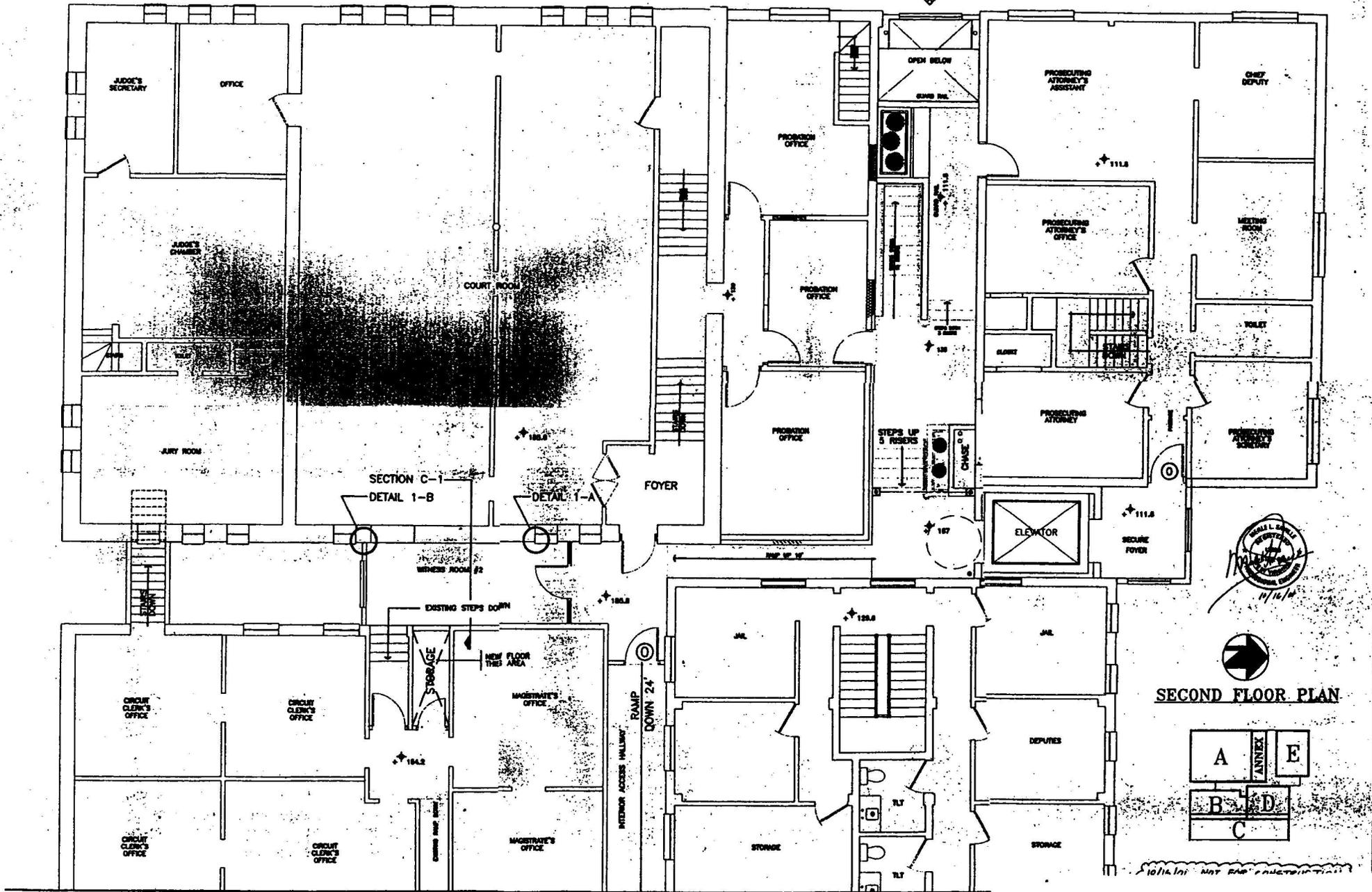
UTM GRID AND 1999 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



FOR SALE  
A FOLD



Morgan County Courthouse  
 Morgan County, West Virginia  
 Not to Scale



Morgan County Courthouse  
Morgan County, West Virginia  
Not to Scale









MORGAN COUNTY

KEY

BB&T





CIRCUIT  
CLERK

Department





COUNTY CLERK.

