

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

1. Name of Property

Stewart's Tavern

historic name:

Stewart's Tavern

other name/site number:

John Stewart's Tavern Inn

2. Location

street & number: Short Gap Road

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Short Gap

vicinity: X

state: WV

county: Mineral

code: 057

zip code: 26719

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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.

Susan M. Pierce  
Signature of Certifying Official

5/31/00  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Stewart's Tavern  
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**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)

☒ 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	
_____ 1 _____		buildings
_____		sites
_____		structures
_____		objects
_____ 1 _____	_____ 0 _____	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

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**Historic Functions**

DOMESTIC: hotel, single dwelling

**Current Functions**

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification:**

VERNACULAR

**Materials**

Foundation	<u>Stone</u>
Walls	<u>Log</u>
Roof	<u>Metal</u>
Other	<u>      </u>

**Narrative Description**

(See continuation on sheets.)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

  x   **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.

  x   **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.

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**Criteria Considerations**

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

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

Exploration and Settlement

**Period of Significance**

c. 1790-1839

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(See continuation sheets.)

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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### 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: Mineral County Historical Society

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 0.13 acres

### UTM References

Quad Map: CRESAPTOWN

17 668000 4379200  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description

(See continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(See continuation sheet.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/Title: Erin Pogany

Organization: WV SHPO

Date: August 1999

Street & Number: 1900 Kanawha Blvd East

Telephone: 304/558-0220

City or Town: Charleston

State: WV

ZIP: 25305-0330

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**Property Owner**

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

Name: Frankfort District Historical Society  
c/o Loretta Thomas

Street & Number: Route 2, Box 103 E

Telephone: 304/726-8487

City or Town: Keyser

State: WV

Zip: 26726

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Stewart's Tavern is situated on a small lot off a main road in the wide valley of Short Gap. The structure has been moved about sixty feet from where it once stood. The original site of the tavern is now a triangular plot of land created by the construction of a fork in the road. Stewart's Tavern is still located on property associated with the original owner, just across Knobley Road where it forks from State Route 956.

The tavern was built in the latter part of the eighteenth century with hand hewn chestnut logs having steeple notching. It is a two and a half story log structure supported by a foundation of stone. The roof has side gables and corrugated metal sheeting. On the front facade a full shed porch also has a corrugated metal roof while wooden posts, deck, and rail are supported by a stone pier foundation. A grist mill stone provides a step to the porch deck. A new wood plank door is to the left side of the first floor with a 6/6 double-hung sash window to the right. All doors and windows are new, but are very elaborate and precise in detail to look like the original construction. The window muntins are pinned into the sash. The large wooden plank doors have metal hinges and handles.

The north facade has two 6/6 double-hung sash windows on each floor and two 6-pane fixed windows in its peak; all separated by a stone chimney. The south facade has a centered door on each floor. The bottom door is reached by two steps up to a small wood deck. The rear facade, or west side, has a first floor door and three 6/6 double-hung sash windows.

The two floors in Stewart's Tavern have one large room with a dogleg staircase in the southwest corner of the room. Under the first floor staircase is a small storage closet with a vertical wood plank door. The stone fireplace on the north wall has a stone foundation and a log mantle. It is suspected that early drain pipes in the tavern were also made of chestnut wood.

A later two-story addition from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century has been removed, so the building now stands as it was originally constructed.

**Summary:**

Stewart's Tavern is a wonderful example of late eighteenth century architecture and is one of the oldest two story log buildings standing in Mineral County. Although moved from its original location, the building is located on property associated with the original owner just 60 feet from where it once stood.

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**Statement of Significance**

Stewart's Tavern was built in the late eighteenth century during the first generation of post frontier building development in Hampshire and Mineral counties. It is significant under Criterion A for Exploration and Settlement and under Criterion C for Architecture. Criteria Consideration B for Moved Properties is also being used. The period of significance begins in c. 1790, when the building was constructed, and extends to 1839, when the community was established and the mill changed hands.

During the mid-eighteenth century the frontier began to expand into the western portions of Virginia and Maryland. However, as the French and Indian War progressed, pioneers left their homes and retreated back east in search of a safer environment. Communities were abandoned and soon destroyed by nearby Native American Indian tribes. When the war ended the frontier was sparsely populated because of fear of occasional violence from the Native American Indians. New settlers in the area generally built temporary shelters, planning for more substantial structures as time availed. It was not until the last decade of the eighteenth century that there was a second, more stable, period of growth and building development. It was during the period of 1790 to 1810 that Stewart's Tavern was probably built, representing a phase in Short Gap's history in which building construction was more substantial than in previous years.

The site of Short Gap was occupied as early as the 1750s by a grain mill which was located along Turners Run. Records indicate that the road leading from Fort Ashby, across Patterson Creek and the north branch of the Potomac River was a colonial period route to the west. At Short Gap, near the mill, the road forked with the northern section (SR 28) leading to Fort Cumberland. "The Fry and Jefferson Map of 1751 shows a line of settlements, noted as mills on the map, extending northwesterly from Winchester to Cumberland. The frequency of mills indicates that enough grain farming was underway in the Hampshire and Mineral County areas to support a fair number of these processing facilities." (P. Reed, p. 1)

The 18<sup>th</sup> century mill property was known first as Creamer's Mill and had about 203 acres. Oliver Creamer may have been killed by Native American Indians in 1755. The sale of the mill land for 50 pounds in 1761 may indicate that the mill property was damaged. The property was later known as Wise's (1761) and Turner's (1770). Ownership of the land changed hands again in 1790 to Abraham Halderman, who increased the acreage to 550 acres. He sold the 550-acre mill property to the Deakin brothers in 1797. It is speculated that the tavern was built either during the Halderman or Deakin ownership. While the deed records indicate the tavern never had an owner by the name of Stewart, time has attached the name to the property. It is speculated that Stewart may have run or leased the establishment. An inn placed near a mill would have been a popular destination. In September 1839, the property was acquired by one of the Deakin heirs, John Hoyer, at a land auction. The mill tract was highly valued at \$500 with 250 acres of land.

The tavern continued to be a commercial establishment, possibly acting as a stagecoach stop in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Later it became a residence within the farm community. The property was purchased from Tom Thorpe in 1988 by the Frankfort District Historical Society,



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Inc. Due to special circumstances and the road project, the tavern was moved approximately 60 feet across Knobley Road to its present location. Without the intervention of the Society members, the home would have been lost. Attention has been given to the restoration of the log structure. For example, the pinned construction for the 6/6 double-hung sash windows was replicated. The building is used today as a local museum.

When the tavern was moved, and the building stripped of interior and exterior finishes, the opportunity was available to examine the building and have it documented by Douglas Reed, in 1989. In his report, the tavern is noted as significant structure for Mineral County and portrays the technological transition between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The woodwork of the tavern is associated with the 18<sup>th</sup> century, while the hardware, with the use of butt hinges, is typical of the post-1790 period.

Although not the only structure surviving from this crucial time period, Stewart's Tavern does portray special qualities for the era in which it was built. It has two full stories and an attic space while other area log buildings built in the late 18th century have only one to one-and-a-half stories. The interior of the tavern also shows a high degree of sophistication in construction when compared to other period architecture. The woodwork, for example, has wall markings indicating where treads and risers once supported a winding staircase. The undersides of the floor boards were also whitewashed to portray a white ceiling finish for the floor below. The floor boards and floor joists are beaded which has helped date the building to post frontier construction.

**Summary:**

The tavern is regarded as one of the oldest properties in the Short Gap area. The log construction has been dated to the 1790s period. While the building has been moved, the distance was quite short. The tavern is still located on the original mill property tract of land owned by Oliver Creamer. The environment, setting and location remain essentially the same.

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**Bibliography**

Reed, Paula S. Booklet: *John Stewart's Tavern/Inn, Short Gap, West Virginia*. Hagerstown, MD: Preservation Associates, Inc. August 1993.

Reed, Douglass. Construction history, February 1989.

Fry and Jefferson Map for Frederick County, VA. 1751. Jeffery's Atlas, 1778.

Deed Books, Mineral County Courthouse, Keyser, WV

Northern Neck Surveys, K-1757-1762. Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, VA

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at the end of Line 1 of a parcel of land of John A. Taylor, et ux, as described in Deed Book 199, Page 497 among the Land Records of Mineral County, West Virginia; thence with part of Line 2 of Taylor-land;

(1) South 61 degrees West 71.77 feet to an iron Pin set; thence through lands of which this is a part by two new division lines,

(2) South 31 degrees 10 minutes 12 seconds East 104.02 feet to an Iron Pin set on the Westerly side of a concrete block in concrete; thence

(3) North 59 degrees 40 minutes 14 seconds East 43.24 feet to an Iron Pin set on the Right-of-way of the Short Gap Road; thence with said road Right-of-way,

(4) North 15 degrees 33 minutes, 34 seconds West 105.83 feet to the beginning, containing 0.13 acres more or less.

**Boundary Justification**

The property is described above in Deed Book 255, page 662 of the Land Records for Mineral County, West Virginia.

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Name of Property: John Stewart's Tavern and Inn  
Address: Knobley Road  
Town: Short Gap, WV  
County: Mineral

Photographer: Katherine Jourdan

Date: May 1999

Negatives: WV SHPO, Charleston, WV

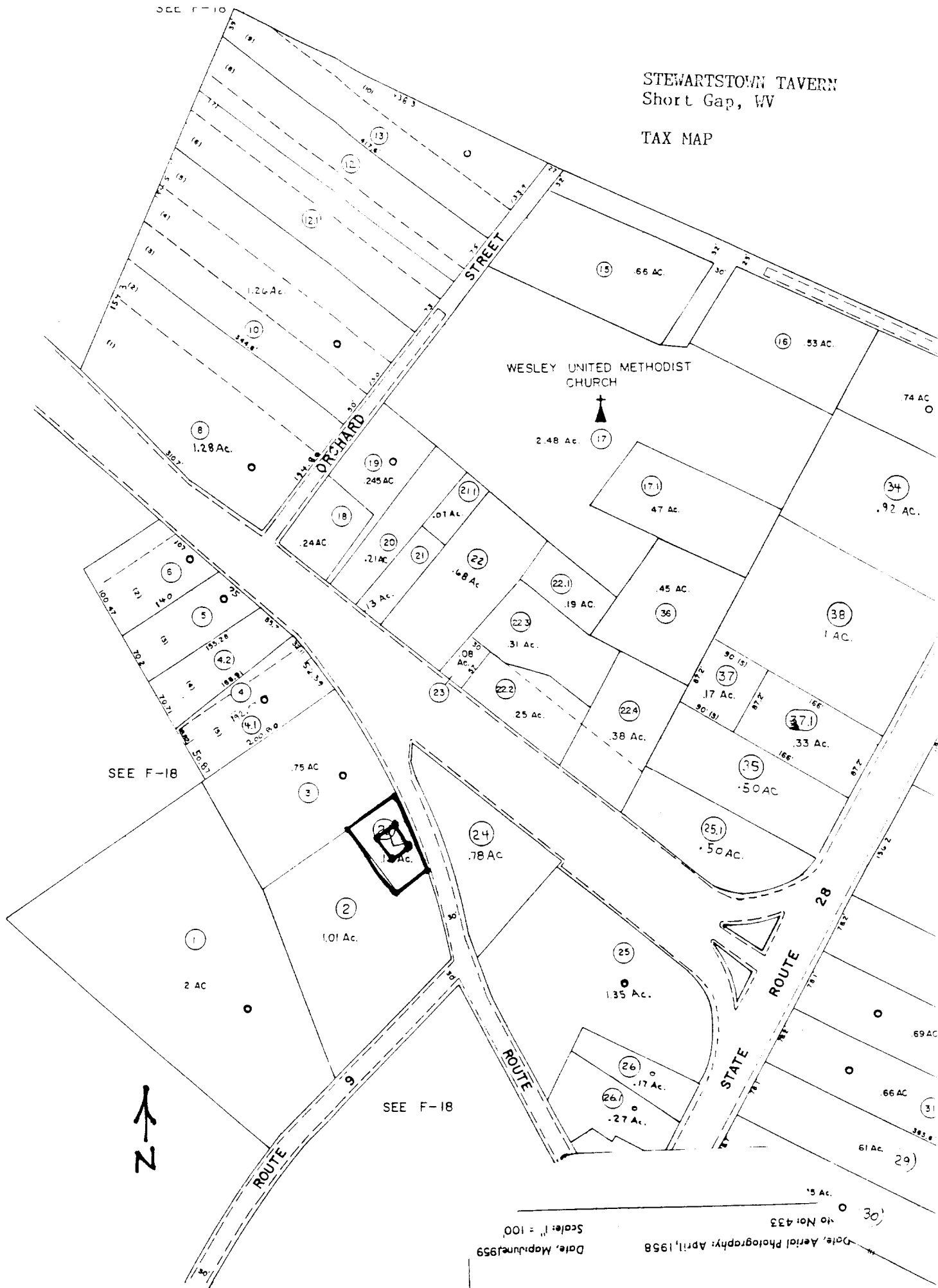
Photo 1 of 4: Front (east), and south facade  
Camera looking NW

Photo 2 of 4: Front, and north facade  
Camera looking SW

Photo 3 of 4: Rear (west) and south facade  
Camera looking N

Photo 4 of 4: Original location across the street  
Camera looking E

## TAX MAP



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STAIRS TO SECOND FLOOR

STEPS

BACK DOOR

WINDOW

FIRE PLACE

WINDOW

CLOSET

FRONT DOOR

WINDOW

FRONT PORCH

8 foot track

PORCH

SIDE DOOR

FIRST FLOOR







