

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

State Inventory No. 70-00986 **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
 Review & Compliance No. _____
 Non-Extant (enter year) _____

1. Name of Property

historic name Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant Substation and Service Building
 other names/site number Field Site #: FS-008

2. Location

street & number 126 Pine Street
 city or town Muscatine vicinity, county Muscatine
 Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name _____ Township No. _____ Range No. _____ Section _____ Quarter of Quarter _____
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original Town Block(s) 9 Lot(s) 6, 7, 8, 9 & E1/2 of Lot 10

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)	Number of Resources within Property			
	If Non-Eligible Property	If Eligible Property, enter number of:		
	Enter number of:	Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____ buildings	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____ sites	_____	_____	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____ structures	_____	_____	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____ objects	_____	_____	objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____ Total	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	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 _____ Historical Architectural Data Base Number _____

Historical and Architectural Survey and Evaluation of the Downtown Commercial District 70-013

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>04I01: Public Works/ electric substation/service bldg</u>	<u>04I01: Public Works / electric substation/storage</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>08C: Modern Movement/Art Deco</u>	foundation <u>10B: Concrete/Poured</u>
_____	walls <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>15C: Rubber</u>
_____	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)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A	Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B	Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C	Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D	Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Muscatine
City Muscatine

Address 126 Pine Street

Site Number 70-00986
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)

02: Architecture

07: Community Planning & Development

Significant Dates

Construction date

1936 check if circa or estimated date

Other dates _____

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect

Young & Stanley, Inc.

Builder

August C. Altenbernd

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

name/title Jim Rudisill, Planning & Community Development Coordinator (R.L. McCarley, consultant)

organization City of Muscatine date January 5, 2005

street & number 215 Sycamore telephone 563-264-1554

city or town Muscatine state Iowa zip code 52761

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

Page 3

<u>Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant</u> Name of Property	<u>Muscatine</u> County
<u>126 Pine Street</u> Address	<u>Muscatine</u> City

7. Narrative Description

This two-story brick Art Deco structure was built in 1936 as an electrical substation and administrative building for the Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant. Young & Stanley, Inc., a local firm that had been created in 1932 after C. Maxwell Stanley joined the two-person staff of Central States Engineering, designed the structure. The building fits into an excavated corner lot that was formerly used as a feedlot. The lot originally had a fairly steep slope, but apparently was reshaped for the building's construction.

The foundation for the structure is poured concrete, while the remainder of the building's exterior is an orange-colored hard brick laid in common bond. Simple brick lintels stretch across the window and door openings. The façade is divided into three parts, with a slightly protruding center section that is flanked by two outer sections that are similar in size and wider than the center section. Pilasters separate the two flanking sections into bays. The double-door entry is centered in the middle section. A cement landing with steel railing and six cement steps lead to the slightly recessed entry that is framed by stone cladding. The top stone is covered by a sign that reads "Muscatine Power & Water", the current name of the city's utility service. Three, second-story windows are located directly above the entry and are composed of three sections: a four-light top section; a tilting two-light middle section; and a two-light bottom section. Above this set of windows, three diamond-shaped designs are etched into the pediment. The middle design is substantially larger than the other two. The two side sections on the façade are divided into bays by brick pilasters, with recessed windows between each pilaster. There are two primary bays in each side section. The exterior bay in each section matches the protrusion of the façade's center section. Each side section has four windows on each story, with narrower windows in the two bays closest to the center. The second story windows are composed of three sections: a six-light top section, a single-light hinged middle section; and a three-light bottom section. The sash configuration of the first-story windows is reversed from the second story windows.

Landscaping on the building's south side elevation has created a cut that exposes the building's foundation wall and provides an at-grade access to the basement level. The front yard of the building gently slopes to the west to meet the cut grade, while a 10-foot retaining wall that connects to the building holds the back lot. The upper portion of the building's elevation follows the same three-bay pattern as the façade. Unlike the façade however, only the east bay of this elevation contains pilasters, and there are also no protruding sections of building. The basement access includes a double-dorr entry with two older steel doors, each with windows centrally located in its top half. The remaining fenestration on the basement level includes a row of three six-light fixed windows that are located to the west of the doors. East of the entries are four vented openings high on the story. Each bay of this elevation contains two windows on each upper story. The south elevation windows vary in design. Pilasters separate the windows in the east bay in the same manner the façade windows are separated. The east bay windows also match the design of the façade. The second-story windows in this bay include a six-light top section, a two-light hinged middle section, and a three-light bottom section. The top and bottom sashes are reversed in the first story windows. The two second-story windows in the middle bay include a top section that contains eight lights, a two-light hinged middle section, and a bottom section that contains one row of four lights. The same design is repeated in the east, first-story window of this bay, except the

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 4

<u>Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>126 Pine Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

top and bottom sashes are reversed. The west, first-story window of the middle bay is a twenty light window (five rows of four lights). The far west bay of the east elevation also contains two windows each on the first and second stories. The second story windows in this bay include a six-light top section, a two-light hinged middle section; and a three-light bottom section. The first-story windows are fixed fifteen light windows (five rows of three lights).

The bay arrangement is repeated on the north elevation, but with several substantial differences that increase this side's decorative features. Pilasters of varying widths extend across the entire elevation, creating the same three-bay effect that is seen on the façade and south elevation. Unlike the façade however, the middle bay of this elevation is wider than the side bays and is recessed on this side. The recess is created by a double-set of pilasters that meet at the junction of the middle bay to its outside companions. The outside bays contain a pilaster that is flush with their face, while the recessed bay contains a recessed pilaster. The middle bay also includes a wider pilaster that divides it in half, creating a mirror image for the entire elevation. Each bay contains two windows in the first story and two on the second story. The second story windows in the east bay are three-section units that contain a six-light top section, a hinged two-light middle section, and a three light bottom section. The two windows in the second story of the west bay repeat that pattern. The two windows in the middle bay, however, include an eight-light top section, a hinged two-light middle section and a four-light bottom section. The two first story windows in each of the outside bays contain a nine-light top section, six-light middle section, and three-light bottom section. The two middle first story windows contain a twelve-light top section, eight-light middle section, and four-light bottom section.

The rear elevation differs the most from the other three sides of the building. It is asymmetrically divided into two parts by an exterior chimney that extends above the roof approximately two feet. The portion north of the chimney contains a steel door entry adjacent to the chimney. The door, which opens to the first story of the building, has a narrow, full-width window in the upper half. A set of steel steps and a steel mesh landing provides access to the door. To the north of this door are three first story openings for vehicles. Each opening is equipped with an original roll-type steel, overhead door. These units still operate. Above each entry bay is three-section window. The northern window has an eight-light top section, two-light hinged middle section, and four-light bottom section. The other two windows have eight-light top sections, a paneled middle section, and a two-light bottom section. The narrower part of this elevation is located to the south of the chimney and includes three windows in both the top and bottom stories. The first story three windows are all three-section units, with a three-light top section, hinged two-light middle section, and six-light bottom section. The south window of the second story have the same design but the top and bottom sashes are reversed in it. The second story middle window also has three sections, but the top section has four lights, hinged middle section has two lights, and bottom section has four lights.

A parapet runs around the entire building and is crowned with stone and concrete.

The interior of the building has not been substantially altered since its construction. The ground floor of the north half of the building is essentially an open vehicle storage and maintenance area, with access from the outside through the three overhead, steel roll doors. This maintenance area extends to the

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 5

<u>Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>126 Pine Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

bottom of the second floor. A portion of the second floor above the vehicle maintenance area contains a large open room that was formerly used for parts storage. The remaining portion of the second floor extends along the east side of the building. It contains a hall that separates the former parts storage area from office space.

The south half of the building contains a basement level that is approximately seven feet high and first and second floors that are each about 15 feet high. The basement has been divided into a storage room that is accessible from the outside doors and a set of stairs leading down from the first floor. The basement also contains a work and office area that is located in the basement's west side. Both the first and second floors of the south half of the building are open rooms that formerly contained electrical devices and equipment. Both rooms run the entire length of the building and are accessed from an interior stairway that separates the two halves of the building. This interior stairway rests on a solid cement wall that separates the vehicle storage/maintenance area from the basement. A spiral, iron staircase also connects the two upper rooms in the south half of the building. It is located in the west end of each room. Most of the electrical equipment has been removed and the rooms are now used for document storage and other uses.

A non-historic L-shaped metal shed on a poured concrete platform is also located on the site, as is a variety of electrical distribution and control structures. Although these contribute to the functional use of the property, they are considered non-contributing to the historic significance of the 1936 building because of their age.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant appears to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Additionally, the plant appears to contribute to a potential downtown historic district.

Construction of the Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant's Pine Street Substation and Service Building represented an important step in the development of 20th century business and industry in the downtown. The new facility not only improved the distribution of electrical power to a vital section of the community, but also through the unique design and attention to beautification incorporated into the project, community leaders continued to support efforts to show a growing and diversified community. Thus, it appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

The Art Deco style is uncommon in Muscatine, and its incorporation into this public utility building provides an unusual and contrasting design to the more common Victorian/Italianate structures of the commercial downtown to the east and the residential district to the west. The design creates a distinct border between the two different districts. This is one of only two buildings constructed in the downtown district in the 1930s that is extant. The building is also one of the first designed by the newly formed engineering firm of Young & Stanley, which eventually grew into the Stanley Group, one of Muscatine's

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 6

<u>Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>126 Pine Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

most well known international firms. Mr. Young retired in 1938, so this structure might be one of the last buildings in Muscatine that he helped design. Thus, this building appears eligible under Criterion C.

Additionally, it appears to be a contributing building in a potential downtown historic district. It falls within on historic context for the proposed district: "20th century Business and Industry." The new building pushed development of the downtown by promoting electrical service, including such innovative features as underground wiring and enhanced street lighting. Construction of the building also might have signaled a renewed sense of civic pride and accomplishment during this Depression era that saw little downtown construction.

Prior to the construction of this building, Muscatine was struggling to provide the downtown and neighboring parts of the community with electrical power. An aging substation that set across the railroad tracks at the foot of Chestnut Street was clearly not meeting the community's needs. The old site was often inaccessible because of trains, meaning the substation could be cut off in emergencies. The old substation was also a fire hazard that lacked storage facilities and other modern improvements.

The city also felt the need to improve its distribution system to the downtown and was interested in beautifying the area. The construction of the new substation offered that opportunity to the electrical board of directors, which agreed to install underground wiring to the downtown as part of the construction project. According to news reports, officials expected the underground lines to be safer, perform better in storms and improve the attractiveness of the downtown ("Light Board To Build New Sub Station," April 2, 1936). In a later report, they awarded a contract for landscaping the area, further defining the new development as not only an effort to improve the electrical service in the community, but also the aesthetics of the area ("Board Contracts For Landscaping At Sub-Station" 1936).

The 1946 Sanborn map shows an imposing masonry building with plenty of front yard. The placement of the building well back into the lot provided a clear field of view of both the building and the surrounding area. It also allowed a large amount of green lawn to be maintained in the front of the building, creating a welcoming and attractive entrance. The south one-third of the building was defined as a sub-station, while the northern two-thirds of the building had trucks on the first story and storage on the second story. Concrete floors, steel columns, and iron reinforcement are indicated for the building.

The substation continued to help meet the energy demands of the downtown for nearly 50 years, but as electrical systems developed more complexity, the plant's equipment gradually became obsolete. The building also became overcrowded with equipment and utility staff. Most of the electrical equipment was eventually moved outdoors or relocated to other service sites. When new facilities were constructed in the 1980s, the building was turned into a storage and maintenance depot.

Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 7

Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant
Name of Property

Muscatine
County

126 Pine Street
Address

Muscatine
City

9. Major Bibliographical References

“Board Contracts For Landscaping At Sub-Station,” *Muscatine Journal*, April 30, 1937, 12.

City Directories, Muscatine. Various publishers, 1935-present. Available at the Musser Public Library.

“Light Board To Build New Sub Station,” *Muscatine Journal*, April 2, 1936, 1.

“Outside Concrete Work Finished On Substation,” *Muscatine Journal*, November 27, 1936, 3.

Sanborn Map Company. “Muscatine, Iowa,” Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1883, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1905, 1912, 1919, 1928, 1946. Accessed online at: <http://www.sanborn.umi.com>.

Stanley Consultant Website. *Stanley Group History*. Muscatine, Iowa; Stanley Group, Accessed online at: <http://www.stanleygroup.com>

“Steady Progress Maintained At New Substation,” *Muscatine Journal*, December 30, 1936, 11.

Location map



Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 8

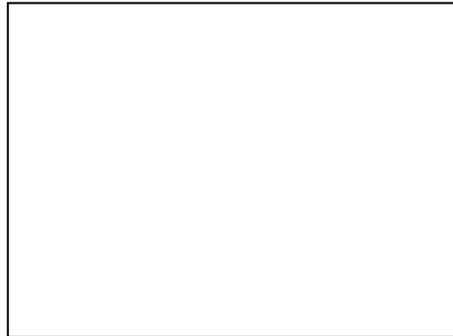
Muscatine Municipal Electric Plant
Name of Property

Muscatine
County

126 Pine Street
Address

Muscatine
City

Plan



(Front - Pine)

Photograph of building (digital image)

