

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

State Inventory No. 70-00140  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 Giesenhau Grocery  
 other names/site number Field Site #: FS-079

**2. Location**

street & number 227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St  
 city or town Muscatine, Iowa  vicinity, county \_\_\_\_\_  
 Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_ Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If Urban) Subdivision \_\_\_\_\_ Original Town \_\_\_\_\_ Block(s) 32 Lot(s) W 20'E40'S100' Lot 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)	Number of Resources within Property	
	If Non-Eligible Property	If Eligible Property, enter number of:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____	Contributing _____ Noncontributing _____
<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____
	_____ buildings	<u>1</u> _____ buildings
	_____ sites	_____ sites
	_____ structures	_____ structures
	_____ objects	_____ objects
	_____ Total	<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**

<b>Historic Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Current Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>02E11: Commerce/Grocery</u>	<u>70: Vacant/Not in Use</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>05: Victorian</u>	foundation _____
_____	walls <u>03: Brick</u>
_____	roof <u>08B: Asphalt Rolled</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 227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St

Site Number 70-00140  
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)

05: Commerce

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1876  check if circa or estimated date  
Other dates \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

**Architect/Builder**

Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Builder \_\_\_\_\_

**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 Jay Brady, Chair (R.L. McCarley, Consultant)

organization Muscatine Historic Preservation Commission date February 21, 2005

street & number 215 Sycamore telephone 563-264-1554

city or town Muscatine state IA 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

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<u>Giesenhaus Grocery</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
Address	City

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## 7. Narrative Description

This building is a three-story, three-bay, c. 1876 commercial building that has had its storefront modernized. The building storefront consists of two large single light plate glass windows set on a low kneewall. The two windows are angled back from the outer building pilaster to the recessed store entry. The store and upper story entries are offset to the east portion of the building with the upper story entrance farthest east. Both doors are modern store style doors with metal frame and glass bodies. The store door has a small glass transom above. The upper story door is surrounded by metal tin siding. The storefront is equipped with a flat metal awning suspended from the front wall of the second story by four metal rods. The area between in the storefront lintel and the awning is clad with wood sheeting. The sheeting has metal flashing at its upper edge to prevent water intrusion. The upper wall is brick and has a brick pilaster at each end of the front elevation. All of the upper story windows are single-over-single-light double-hung windows with wood frames. The third story windows have full arch window hoods with keystone motif at center. Top of the arch opening has been filled in with wood, above the rectangular sashes. The second story windows have segmental arch window hoods with smaller keystone motif. The roof cornice is supported by four large brackets and several smaller brackets. Address "No. 227" is in the space between the left outer bracket and the left inner bracket, and the date "1876" is in the space between the right outer bracket and the right inner bracket on the frieze. No association with a "No. 227" was found through the level of research conducted for this project.

The east and west elevations are party walls with adjoining buildings with the exposed portion of the west elevation consisting of brick with two window openings. The north window opening is sheeted with plywood. The south window opening has a possible original six-over-six-light window with wood frame and sashes. The rear elevation consists of a brick third story with galvanized steel gutter and downspout, two brick chimneys, a pair of aluminum clad single over single windows on the west half, non original door in the west portion of the east half and an aluminum clad single over single window in the east portion of the east half. The brick first and second story of the rear elevation consists of a centered metal door and a brick filled opening in the east third at the ground level.

## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Giesenhaus Grocery does not appear to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria B or C. However, it does appear to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the Frederick Giesenhaus Grocery. Additionally, it does appear to be a contributing building in a potential downtown historic district.

The three-story building housed the Fred Giesenhaus Grocery from 1876 to 1913 replacing an earlier two-story building. The Fred Giesenhaus Grocery was one of the longer running groceries outlasting many grocers from the 1800s. Muscatine typically had about 30 grocers from the 1860s into the 1890s. The Giesenhaus Grocery spanned from the Civil War era into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Giesenhaus was a prominent grocer and successful, constructing not only this three story building but another three-story building at 203 E. 2<sup>nd</sup>. The longevity and prominence of the Giesenhaus Grocery and contributions to the

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<u>Giesenhaus Grocery</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
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downtown building and business environment are significant and would appear to make this building individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

Finally, the building would likely be a contributing structure to a historic commercial district in the downtown. It falls within two historic contexts identified for this potential district: "19<sup>th</sup> century Business and Industry" and "20<sup>th</sup> century Business and Industry." The Giesenhaus Grocery business is a long lasting family owned grocery that spanned from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century into the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century at 227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> with both father and then son becoming proprietors in succession. The building also has an interesting association with the advent of the moving picture theatre industry although its use as a theatre was relatively brief and other theatre locations were more successful.

The photographic record and the 1876 date on the building support an 1876 building date contradicting claims in the *Portrait and Biographical Album Muscatine County, Iowa*, 1889 and the 1902 *Muscatine Journal* Business Briefs which claim he has been in the same three story building since 1867. The *Portrait and Biographical Album Muscatine County, Iowa*, 1889, page 289 indicates that Fred Giesenhaus rebuilt a one-story brick building into a three story brick building in 1867. However, the 1869-70 GR22 photograph of this block shows a two story brick building at 227 East 2<sup>nd</sup>. The 1879 GR164 photograph shows a three-story building comparable to the present at 227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> supporting a 1870s date for the building. The 1866 city directory lists Fred Giesenhaus Saloon at 273 2<sup>nd</sup> with the 1869-70 and 1874-75 city directories listing the Fred Giesenhaus Grocery at the north side of 2<sup>nd</sup> between Cedar & Sycamore, and the 1876-77 and 1879 directories listing the grocery at 216 E. 2<sup>nd</sup>. At this time, Giesenhaus operated one of about 34 groceries in Muscatine. Finally the addresses align to the present day and the grocery is listed at 227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1883. He continued to operate at this address through the 1880s and 1890s, with about 30 other groceries in Muscatine in this period.

According to the 1889 *Portrait and Biographical Album Muscatine County, Iowa*, Frederick Giesenhaus emigrated from Prussia in 1857, and worked as a day laborer and baker before opening his grocery in February 1867. He "has now been engaged in the mercantile business for twenty-one years, building up a large and profitable trade." His son, Charles A. Giesenhaus, assisted him in the grocery business. He built his current building at 216 & 218 East Second street, where he carries on business, as well as a three-story brick block on the same street, the first floor of which is occupied by his brother, Charles Giesenhaus, who carries a fine stock of jewelry. "Mr. Giesenhaus now does a business of over \$30,000 per year, and is classed as one of the substantial men of Muscatine....His course has been that of a fair-minded, honest gentleman, who, though he wants his just dues, is always willing to meet his obligations fairly and promptly, and enjoys the confidence and highest regard of all with whom he has business or social relations" (*Portrait and Biographical Album Muscatine County, Iowa*, 1889: 289).

A review of Muscatine businesses in 1902 also noted the significance of this business: "The Fred Giesenhaus grocery is probably the oldest grocery store in Muscatine who has been continuously in business since February 28, 1867. This business has been conducted in the same building all that time, 227 East Second Street. After the terrible civil war had been settled, Mr. Giesenhaus decided to go into business for himself and secured his present quarters and opened a grocery store. ...he was soon the possessor of an excellent patronage... and soon became one of the strongest establishments in the city.

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<u>Giesenhaus Grocery</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
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<u>227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
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He took his son into the business and today the firm is known as Fred Giesenhaus & Son" (Brief Histories of Muscatine Businesses, *Muscatine Journal*, 1902, p. 27)

Frederick Giesenhaus continued to be listed at this location in the 1900 City Directory prior to his son, Charles A. Giesenhaus taking over by 1904. Charles A. continued to operate the grocery to 1913. In 1913, he was operating the Standard Grocery Company at 313 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. He would continue Standard Grocery Company at this location through 1919. Charles opened Bridge Grocery at this location by 1921, named for its proximity to High Bridge at the end of Walnut and the amount of traffic they received from Illinois over this bridge. In the early 1930s, his daughter Grace M. Giesenhaus took over as manager of the business, though Charles continued to work as a clerk. In July 1939, the business was sold to Andrew Johnson and his son Ernest, who made several improvements to the store ("Bridge Grocery," May 31, 1940, 28).

From 1913 to 1916 the Princess Theater, an early motion picture theater was here. The Princess Theater was opened by George Neibert and Ludy Bosten. An ad article from the Annual Edition of the 1913 Muscatine Journal claims "they have connections with the best of Film Companies in the business and they have shown a very keen business management by introducing pictures that are so popular in all the larger cities through the United States." The article shows an elaborate arched recessed entrance to the theater and indicates "with an airy, well ventilated clean play house these two young men have built up a reputation among the movie goers of this city during their career in Muscatine. With their variety of quality films, and well balanced programs and with the best and latest projecting devices will sure mean another successful year to the young proprietors of the well known theatre." (*Muscatine Journal* Annual Edition, December 13, 1913, pages unnumbered). Unfortunately, their business did not last with the Princess Theatre out of business by 1919.

Another article concerning the development of motion pictures in Muscatine indicates that the first moving picture house in Muscatine was located in a building on West Second [Bijou at 206 W. 2<sup>nd</sup>] street, which was gutted by fire in 1912. "There Muscatine people learned to love the movie and the germ of the "movie habit" which has since infested Muscatine worked its way into the system of the populace." In 1913, there were five theaters, the A-Muse-U, Unique, Princess, Royal, and American and "practically every night sees each of these doing a flourishing business. The vast development in picture houses in Muscatine is one of the most noticeable features of the business. Starting with the one on West Second Street with benches for seats, the houses have gradually been made more elaborate and comfortable until a plant which will cost \$30,000 and which will be one of the most substantial business buildings in the city has been put under way. As each moving picture house was opened, improvements were added over the ones already in operation. More attention was paid to ventilation seating, screens, etc., and the newest house promises to be the last word in moving picture theaters. One of the big improvements is the mirror screen which tones down the reflections and brings out the high lights and shadows of the pictures to great advantage" ("Muscatine Witnesses Development of Motion Pictures," Muscatine Journal Annual Edition, December 13, 1913, unnumbered).

The 1911 City Directory lists three moving picture theatres – Bijou, 206 W. 2<sup>nd</sup>; Lyric, 116 Sycamore; and People's, 111 Sycamore. By 1913, moving picture theatres included Princess Theatre, 227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup>; A-

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<u>Giesenhaus Grocery</u>	<u>Muscatine</u>
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Muse-U, 103-105 Sycamore; Lyric, 116 Sycamore; Unique, (formerly Peoples then to become American by the end of 1913) 111 Sycamore; Royal, 1059 Hershey. The theatres listed in 1916 included: American, A-Muse-U, Palace, 212 Sycamore, and Princess. By 1919, the theaters had been somewhat consolidated with American, A-Muse-U, Gayety Theatre, 303 E. 2<sup>nd</sup>, and the Palace listed.

The Princess Theatre had a relative short run as a movie house – 1913- through 1916 – with the theatre out of business by 1919. While the Princess may have been part of the evolution of moving picture theatres in Muscatine, other theatres were more successful and longer lasting with American, A-Muse-U, and the Palace being the longer lasting movie theaters.

The building history for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is relatively nondescript with Johnson Clothing shop listed in 1919, Glasgow Tailors from 1921 to 1931, Elfers Electric from 1934 to 1938, vacant in the early 1940s, Sears, Roebuck, & Co. from 1943 to 1952, Willis Cabinet & Flooring from 1954 to 1959, and Kempf Jewelers from 1961 to 1962.

Currently, the building storefront is vacant with upper stories used for apartments.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

“Bridge Grocery,” Muscatine Journal Centennial Edition, May 31, 1940, 28.

City Directories, Muscatine, Various publishers, 1869-1959. Available at the Musser Public Library.

Centennial Edition, *Muscatine Journal* newspaper, Muscatine, Iowa, May 31, 1940, Section 4, Pg 30. Available at the Musser Public Library.

“Fred Giesenhaus, Grocer –1867,” Brief Histories of Muscatine Businesses, *Muscatine Journal*, July 17, 1902, 27.

“Muscatine Witnesses Development of Motion Pictures”, *Muscatine Journal* – Annual Edition, Muscatine, Iowa, December 13, 1913, Pages Unnumbered.

OG #A-42, 2<sup>nd</sup> St at Cedar looking West, C 1906, Grossheim Photo Collection. Available at the Musser Public Library.

OG #A-107, Vol 27, Street Fair, September 10-15, 1900, Grossheim Photo Collection. Available at the Musser Public Library.

*Portrait and Biographical Album Muscatine County, Iowa*. Chicago: Acme Publishing, 1889.

“Princess Theatre Ad Article,” *Muscatine Journal* – Annual Edition, Muscatine, Iowa, December 13, 1913, Pages Unnumbered.

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Giesenhaus Grocery  
Name of Property

Muscatine  
County

227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Address

Muscatine  
City

Sanborn Map Company. "Muscatine, Iowa," Sanborn fire insurance maps. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 1883, 1888, 1892, 1899, 1907, 1912, 1919, 1928, 1946. Accessed online at: [sanborn.umi.com](http://sanborn.umi.com).

Second Street Muscatine, Randallman's Post Card Collection, 1907. Available at the Musser Public Library.

"Second & Sycamore Sts for Fireman's Parade Day Photograph," 1879, GR164 of Graham Photo Collection, Volume 4. Available at the Musser Public Library.

Second West from Cedar Photograph, 1869, GR22 of 977.7 Graham Photo Collection, Volume 1. Available at the Musser Public Library.

## Location Map



Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
 State Historical Society of Iowa  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Site Number 70-00140

Related District Number \_\_\_\_\_

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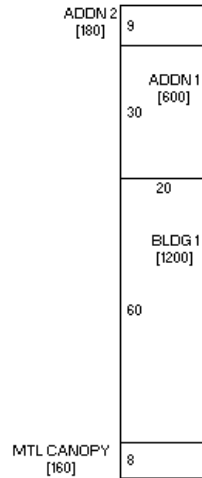
Giesenhaus Grocery  
 Name of Property

Muscatine  
 County

227 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
 Address

Muscatine  
 City

**Plan (from assessor's office)**



(front – 2<sup>nd</sup> Street)

**Photograph of building (digital image)**

