VLR- 12/2/69 (EXPANDED: 4/15/86) NRHP- 2/26/70

Form 10-300 (July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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STATE:	
Virginia	
COUNTY	
Washington	
FOR NPS USE ON	1LY
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

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	Abingdon								Į
2.	LOCATION		N		5 W. 1 Ct (Dt	111			1
	extending .3 mi. NE and .3 mi. SW of intersection of Main St. (Rt. 11),								
	CITY OR TOWN: St. (Alt	E and .3 ml. SW	or inte	ersection	or Main St. an	ia Cum	mings	5	1
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	Abingdon			COUNTY:					1
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3.	CLASSIFICATION								1
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Abingdon's Main Street presents a fine collection of nineteenth-century domestic and commercial buildings, the importance of which is enhanced by the town's location in Southwest Virginia, an area that remained frontier long after the town's founding in 1778. The eight-and-one-half block section of Main Street which constitutes the preservation zone covers two ridges with rather steep slopes between. Lined along these hilly streets are fine Federalist and nineteenth-century revival designs. Among the more notable structures are the Doctor Pitts House, 247 East Main Street, a stuccoed brick, two-story building with stepped gable ends which adds formality to the steep grade east of the court house, and, far to the west, the General Francis Preston House, the center block of the present Martha Washington Inn. Located in between are the stuccoed Tavern, which dates from the late-eighteenth century; the Barter Theatre; the Virginia House, an early-nineteenth century brick hotel; the fine Victorian bank, and many others.

The variety of functions as well as design is important, and while the majority of the buildings are dwellings, several churches, offices and stores, as well as the county court house, demonstrate the various elements that appeared on a main thoroughfare in the nineteenth century. Although some of the overall effect has been marred by twentieth-century intrusions, the historic area of Abingdon still survives and retains the essential elements of its earlier development.

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The area that is being designated a preservation zone is a particularly fine example of the development of a "main street" in a rural Virginia town during the nineteenth century. Buildings of particular note include the Abingdon Bank and Cashier's House, the Washington County Court House, the Virginia House, the King House, the White House, the Doctor Pitts House and the Martha Washington Inn which was built in the 1830's by General Francis Preston. Of especial note is the Barter Theatre of Virginia, which has won international acclaim since its establishment in 1933 by Robert Porterfield.

Howe, Henry, <u>Historical Collections of Virginia</u> . Charleston, S. C.: 1845. Summers, William Preston, <u>History of Southwest Virginia and Washington County</u> . Baltimore: 1966. <u>Virginia</u> : <u>A Guide to the Old Dominion</u> . New York: 1956.							
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Staff, Virginia Historic Landmark	s CC	Omm188101	n, James W. M	loody, Jr., D	irector		
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commi	ssi c	on		November 1	8. 1969		
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tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public La	- 1	Ihereby	certify that this pr	operty is included	in the		
89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusi	lon	.National	Register.	•			
in the National Register and certify that it has bee	Į						
evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set							
forth by the National Park Service. The recommend level of significance of this nomination is:	ueu	Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation					
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		ATTEST	•				
Dr. Edward P. Alexander, Chair							
Title Virginia Historic Landmarks Co	ommi	ssion					
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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

