

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Wilton Candy Kitchen  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 310 Cedar Street  not for publication  
city or town Wilton  vicinity  
state Iowa code IA county Muscatine code 139 zip code 52778

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David P. [Signature] 11/22/92  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
State of 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

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property

County and State

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		Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/specialty store

SOCIAL/meeting hall

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/specialty store

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/falsefront store

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/limestone

walls METAL/tin

STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheets, attached.

Wilton Candy Kitchen

Name of Property

Muscatine County, Iowa

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- XA 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.
XC 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

(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

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY
ETHNIC HERITAGE/European
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1910 - 1942

Significant Dates

1915
1922

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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:

OCT 6 1992

Wilton Candy Kitchen

Name of Property

Muscatine County, Iowa  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 5	6 6 5 1 8 5	4 6 0 5 7 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jan R. Nash

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 12, 1992

street & number 906 South Lucas St. telephone 319/351-5156

city or town Iowa City state Iowa zip code 52240

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name George & Thelma Nopoulos

street & number 310 Cedar Street telephone 319/732-2278

city or town Wilton state Iowa zip code 52778

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Wilton Candy Kitchen

## 7. DESCRIPTION:

The Wilton Candy Kitchen is a two-story, gable-front, frame building built in 1856 with a high wooden falsefront which obscures the front gable. Three uniformly spaced second-story windows appear over the street level storefront. This storefront consists of a recessed centrally located front entrance reached by stepping up on a concrete slab. The door is flanked by large glass display windows over wooden bulkheads. Over the entrance is a commercial sign lit by neon reading "SODA" in large letters and "CANDY" and "LUNCH" in smaller letters. A red- and white- striped canvas awning is attached in the signboard area of the storefront over the display windows. To the right, or south of the storefront, is a covered stairway to the second-story apartment residence. At the rear is a flat roofed, one-story concrete block addition, built in 1965.

Neon signs advertising "Lunch" in one window and "Soda" in the other invite customers into a 1922 vintage ice cream and soda shop interior. The long marble soda fountain counter, with fixed pedestal stools in front, is just inside the door to the right (south). Oak and glass candy display cases to the left. Beyond, occupying the rear two-thirds of the big room, are dark walnut and opaque white-glass booths. Traditional wrought iron ice-cream table and chair sets as well as newer cafe table and chair sets occupy the open space between booths. The walls are lined with mirrors. At the rear of the room, are several doors leading to the restroom, the office and the rear concrete block addition.

The building sits on its original downtown location, fronting Cedar Street, with an alley running along its long north side. Windows on the second story look out over this alley. There is virtually no grass or yard on this property. Until recently a large brick commercial building occupied the lot across the alley to the north, now a flat, grassy area.

The commercial nature of Cedar Street has not changed since its buildings were first constructed. The exterior of the Wilton Candy Kitchen retains the appearance it took on between 1915 and 1920 when its owner, Gus Nopoulos, had the facade clad in brick-patterned, pressed metal and the sides stuccoed. The interior retains a 1922 appearance, the year the principal components of a defunct Davenport, Iowa, soda shop were purchased by Gus Nopoulos and installed in the Candy Kitchen. Overall, historic integrity of materials, design and workmanship remains very good for the significant period, and integrity of setting, feeling, and association is very high. This site is recognized on the local, state, and by many beyond the state's borders as one of the few remaining "old fashioned" soda fountains still in operation.

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The Wilton Candy Kitchen is one of the best storefronts from the earliest settlement period of Wilton extant in a downtown commercial area otherwise dominated by later, more permanent brick structures. Changes to the exterior made by Gus Nopoulos, who purchased the building in 1913 and whose descendants still own the building, include the application between 1915 and 1920 of stucco to the side elevations and a pressed-metal, brick-patterned, sheathing over the facade clapboards. Several buildings in downtown Wilton exhibit similar metal cladding which may have been added to provide fire protection, but also may have been part of a general upgrading of the older frame downtown buildings made possible by the prosperous agricultural economy in Iowa prior to 1921. The clapboards, cornice, and window trim (drip caps and sills) on the Candy Kitchen building remain under the metal cladding. The chimney nearest to the store front is original; the rear chimney stack dates to the 1920s or 1930s. Fenestration remains in the original configuration, including 3 windows on the second floor facade over large street-level glass display windows flanking a recessed central entrance. Display window glass has been replaced and original 2-over-2 display windows are now two large lights separated by a single vertical muntin. Original second story 2-over-2 windows have been replaced with narrower single-light, 1-over-1 windows.

The wooden shopfront on the Candy Kitchen remains intact, close to its original condition. The most prominent features of the shopfront are the bulkheads. Some of the applied wood molding on the bulkheads shows evidence of the more than 100 years of bicycles and shoe heels rested, rubbed and hooked against it; the lower horizontal piece on the north is missing. The contemporary canvas roll-out awning spans the width of the store front. Historic photographs of Cedar Street show awnings of this size and style were common on both sides of the street and common on the Candy Kitchen, specifically.

A one-story, concrete block addition was added to the back of the original frame structure in 1965 (replacing the free-standing frame ice house built by Gus Nopoulos in ca. 1915). This addition would generally be unobtrusive, positioned at the rear of the lot, except the large brick building across the alley was removed in October, 1989. As a result, the addition is very visible across the grassy vacant lot.

Significant interior features exist today which preserve the same vision of a soda shop as when Gus Nopoulos installed them--ornate pressed-metal ceiling, ca. 1915 (one of the last to be installed by tinsmith and hardware store owner Ash Nelson, and his employee John Luethye. Nelson also installed the exterior metal cladding on this and maybe other area buildings); dark walnut booths with leather seats, accented by white glass panels, and heavy white glass table tops, 1922; mirrored walls, framed in walnut with metal clasps spaced strategically above each booth to hold hats above the danger of spilled phosphates, 1922; art glass lamps suspended over each booth, 1922; mirrored walnut back bar with boxed columns decorated with art glass panels and a white Italian marble counter,

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(present in 1910 when Gus Nopoulos opened his shop); and a fountain counter made of pink Tennessee marble and trimmed in white and black onyx, purchased in 1922, but stored until the pre-1910 soda fountain became inoperable (perhaps 5 years later). Changes made after the 1920s include the installation of chrome and red vinyl spinning stools in front of the counter in the 1930s. The third soda fountain in the building was installed in 1951. Oak display cases for candy sales remain from the turn of the century and a prior owner. See the attached continuation sheet for a listing of commercial equipment which survives and is still in use at the Candy Kitchen.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Wilton Candy Kitchen is primarily significant under Criterion A, for its association with ethnic occupational patterns and the social institution of soda fountain shops:

Greek Ethnic Occupational Patterns

The Candy Kitchen is significant under Criterion A on a state level as a relatively scarce Iowa example of the nationwide occupational pattern followed by turn-of-the-century Southern European immigrants, specifically, immigrants from Greece.

Gus Nopoulos, owner/operator of the Candy Kitchen from 1910 until his death in 1983, left Greece when he was 16 and arrived at Ellis Island in 1907 with only the few dollars his mother had sewn to his undershirt, just what was required to pass through Ellis Island. The course Gus Nopoulos followed over the next few years--the cities he traveled to, the jobs he took, the business he established in Wilton--are typical of the broad patterns of Greek immigration and settlement in the United States. While Iowa's population was derived principally from earlier immigrants with Northern Europe ties, Gus Nopoulos and his Candy Kitchen are representative of the less-familiar, but definite presence of 20th-century Southern European immigrants in Iowa.

Current Greek-ancestry populations are centered around settlements established from the 1880s to 1914. Typically, Greeks who in the early years could not speak English went "to the city where friends or relatives were living and took whatever job they could find" [Allen and Turner, p. 127]. Often they had no intention of staying permanently in the United States, but sent money home and planned to return to Greece. Railroad work provided many Greeks with employment and resulted in Greek settlements especially in the West. After a few years, some immigrants had saved enough money "to open a small business, such as a dry-cleaner's establishment, a lunchroom or a *candy* or grocery store" (emphasis added)[Allen and Turner, p. 127]. In New York, whose port served as the main entry point for Greek immigrants, including Gus Nopoulos, an early study found Greek men were often "*running a candy or flower shop, an ice-cream parlor, or*

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a shoeshine stand" after a few years (emphasis added)[Allen and Turner, p. 127].

In Iowa one researcher who studied people of Greek ancestry in and around Des Moines found that Greek immigrants to Iowa generally had traveled west out of Chicago, working on the railroads and settling in small towns such as Maxwell. First generation immigrants often went into food businesses, from selling fruit by push cart to making candy [Cunning, 11/18/91]. Candy making appears to have been as common an occupation for Greeks in Iowa in the early 20th century as in the rest of the nation. Greek candymakers are known to have operated shops in Davenport (John Nopoulos, the Elite Confectionery Shop, ca. 1907-1922), in Wilton (Gus Nopoulos, Candy Kitchen, 1910-1983), in Lake Mills (George Genoulos, Candy Kitchen, ca. 1915-1920), in Ida Grove (Charles Stephanos, candy shop and soda fountain, ca. 1910-1917), and in Marengo (Steve and Bill Chimpanis, Rainbow Candy Kitchen, 1925-1956).

Gus Chimpanis who assumed his uncle's name, Nopoulos, after arriving in the United States, had seen his father and his uncle leave Greece around 1900 to travel to the U.S. Gus remained with his mother and from the age of 10 (in 1901) earned money to supplement the family's income by carrying the mail--very often letters from America--from the city, two hours away by foot, back up into the mountains where he lived. In 1907, with a ticket sent by his uncle and his mother's money sewn to his shirt, Gus left Greece and headed for Davenport, Iowa and work in his uncle's confectionery store. His father, whom Gus had not seen for seven years, met him at the train station and Gus failed to recognize him. While his father eventually returned to Greece, Gus stayed and learned the candy-making business in his uncle's shop.

In the spring of 1910, Gus and a fellow Greek, Nick Parros, traveled to the fair at Wilton, Iowa, and became aware of a recently vacated candy shop on Cedar Street, complete with candy making equipment, a soda fountain, display cases and iron-legged tables, chairs and counter stools. Opening day in June, 1910, saw such fast sales of ice cream, candy and cigars (obtained by a local cigar-maker, C.H. Jacobson)--with red carnations given to the ladies--that by Monday Gus was completely out of inventory. After a couple of years of successful operations, but also disputes with his partner, Gus bought the building in 1913 and shortly after bought out his partner. Gus's major outfitting of the interior space was completed by 1922 with the purchase and removal to Wilton of the interior of the Elite Confectionery which recently had closed in Davenport. Little has changed inside or out since.

Over the years the Candy Kitchen has maintained its association with Greek occupational patterns and immigration to Iowa. Gus Nopoulos' cousin from Greece, Gus Chimpanis, traveled to Wilton and worked in the shop for several years before being shipped out to fight in World War I. When Gus Chaimpanis lost his life in 1917 in the war--the first citizen of the town to do so--the local Wilton newspaper ran an article headed "Wilton Greek Killed in Action in France." In

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1921 the American Legion formed its first Wilton post and named it "Gus Chimpanis Post 584" in honor of this young Greek. (The Legion met upstairs in the Candy Kitchen until the mid-1930s.) Much later Gus' son, George, married a Greek girl who had been working in the Candy Kitchen after school. When Thelma Soteris Nopoulos' father, who had come to Wilton to work at the division shops of the railroad, was killed in an accident on the job, Gus Nopoulos became a second father to the six children left behind. Gus put them to work at the Candy Kitchen and the boys also worked at the farms Gus owned by then.

Soda Fountain Shop and Community Center for Social Activities

The Candy Kitchen also has significance on the local level under Criterion A as an excellent example of a functioning soda shop, an American social institution deeply imbedded in popular culture of this country during the first half of the 20th century, and as a center for community socializing.

While sweet frozen treats have been consumed since the days of Nero Claudius Caesar (A.D. 54-68), who sent runners to scoop up mountain snow and then flavored it with honey, juices and fruit pulps, the days of the Wilton Candy Kitchen as it exists today go back only as far as 1910. Frozen desserts, however, have been in the New World since as long as 1700 and Americans have always been fond of frozen sweet cream. George Washington's sweet tooth was well known. He enjoyed ice cream at a dinner party given by Alexander Hamilton in 1789 and during the summer of 1790 Washington ran up a \$200 tab with a local ice cream merchant in New York City.

The history of the modern American soda shop has its roots in the early 19th-century popularity of carbonated water, initially sold for its curative powers. A former pharmacist with Napoleon's army, E.M. Durand, is credited with opening the first modern drugstore in 1825 in Philadelphia where he sold cigars and sparkling water. His shop featured mirrors, marble-topped counters and mahogany display cases and served as the meeting place of Philadelphia's "physicians, scientists and literati" [Dickson, p. 89].

Eventually flavored syrups were added to the soda water and popularity of the drink grew. Elaborate mechanical dispensers or "fountains" were developed. Bostonian James W. Tufts, a pioneer soda fountain manufacturer, capitalized on soda water's popularity with his two-story, pillared and pedimented "Arctic Soda" fountain at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. Tufts had great success selling a wide variety of soda fountains through his catalogs. Credit for first combining ice cream and soda water in one glass is given to Philadelphian Robert M. Green who, as a concessionaire during the 1874 semicentennial celebration of the Franklin Institute, ran out of cream for his flavored soda water drink and substituted ice cream instead.

By the time Gus Nopoulos opened downtown Wilton's Candy Kitchen on June 10, 1910

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with homemade candy, ice cream and cigars for sale, the soda shop already had become a popular American institution, and the tradition of the soda shop serving as a social center for community activity was well established. Early shops in small towns were safe, appropriate shops where women and children could relax and socialize. "Most ice cream parlors maintained the highest standards of decorum" [Atherton, p. 59]. For example, the 1869 suite of "elegant ice cream rooms" which opened in Monroe, Wisconsin reserved an upstairs room for ladies who might be "timid about sitting at tables in the nicely furnished and pleasant room below, which was open to all" [Atherton, p. 59]. For Wilton residents, the Candy Kitchen was "cozy, clean and a safe place to be...the perfect place to hang out without having to worry about our safety" [R.Jipp interview].

The lingering association of soda water with healthful activities continued as soda shops became the temperate alternative to alcoholic beverages. The temperance movement did not pass by Wilton which as early as 1867 supported "U.P. Scovil's Temperance Restaurant" just up Cedar Street from the Candy Kitchen building. Advertisements for the Candy Kitchen after 1913 indicate Gus Nopoulos was sensitive to these popular notions of healthful activities. The April 24, 1913 Wilton Advocate carried an ad [see Continuation Sheet, attached] which read "Let the Children Drink all the Soda Water...They Want" and promised not to "serve any child any beverage that contains caffeine or other harmful ingredients." On the huge mirror behind the counter of the Candy Kitchen there still remains the original red and white Coca-Cola trademark sign dating to at least 1910. Ironically, Coca-Cola, which once touted itself as "The Great National Temperance Drink" [Schwartz, p. 123] was developed by an Atlanta pharmacist who combined "extracts of two potent botanicals--coca leaves...and kola nuts," and thus originally "packed a small wallop of cocaine" [Schwartz, p. 122]. Much later, according to family members, Gus sold beer in the store so families could stay together for their refreshments and the husbands could stay out of the taverns.

Spurred by Prohibition and aided by technological advances in refrigeration, soda fountains and ice cream shops reached their zenith in the 1920s and 30s. The popular culture of that period amply reflects this. George Gibbs proposed to a surprised Emily Webb over two strawberry phosphates in Thornton Wilder's 1938 play, *Our Town*. The play, and the 1940 movie version, nostalgically look back to the simpler times of the 1904 soda fountain counter. Also in 1938, Mickey Rooney found romance with Judy Garland over a soda in *Love Finds Andy Hardy*, and just one year earlier, Lana Turner was discovered at the soda fountain counter in Schwab's Drugstore in Hollywood.

Whether art reflects life or the reverse, the walnut booths at the Wilton Candy Kitchen have fostered more than one romance. One Wilton resident recalled that before marrying her husband in 1921 their dates included a trip to the Candy Kitchen "as often as money permitted" [J. McClean interview]. Another felt that in the 1920s the shop was the "place to go with a special boy, or maybe, a place

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to go to meet that special one" (Z. Abbott interview). Ruth Jipp must have met the special one. During the '20s, she spent many evenings with a girlfriend at the Candy Kitchen while her future husband also "was down at Gussie's with his gentlemen friends each night." Romance continued during the late 1930s when Gene Moylan recalled "escorting a new young lady" to the Candy Kitchen for "an ice cream sundae or milk shake and [a] visit with friends." Gus Nopoulos himself did not escape the romance in the air. When Miss Frankie Hudler came into the store "Gus would hurry into the back room and put on a new, clean White Jacket to impress her. Must have worked, they got married [in 1918]" [C. Duffee statement]. The favorite booth that Forrest and Jeanette Dice occupied during their courtship in the 1920s is still at the Candy Kitchen. Today, when she goes to the shop and sits in that favored booth, ninety-year-old "Nettie" Dice says "I miss my husband, but when I visit the Candy Kitchen loving thoughts of Forrest are with me" [J. Dice interview].

Since opening day in June 1910, the Candy Kitchen has been a gathering place for Wilton residents of all ages, for activities as varied as checkers tournaments and romancing, to killing time waiting for the mail to be put in the boxes at the Post Office across the street, or waiting for a chair to open at the barber shop next door, or for the Greyhound bus to come in. One-hundred-and-two-year-old Cora Jacobson remembers opening day when Gus Nopoulos bought his first cigars to sell from her husband. The streets were not paved in those days according to 100-year-old Irma Wildasin, who recalled that the horse-and-buggies would be tied to a hitching post in front of the store.

Children especially seemed attracted to the shop. Before Gus built his own ice house (ca. 1915) he had block ice delivered several times a week. The ice would be chipped off a larger block and children would gather round in the heat of the summer to catch the flying ice chips [C. Fulton interview]. The ice was packed around the ice cream and used to cool the phosphate drinks. The pungent smell of wet sawdust, which was heaped over the ice to keep it from melting too fast, is a memory of the Candy Kitchen for 90-year-old Josphine McClean. Sweet smells are remembered too. "We went in there as young girls and it smelled so good. It smelled like chocolate and ice cream" [J. McClean interview].

Gus Nopoulos "always had on his neat white shirt and black bow tie and white apron" and always greeted the kids with a smile [J. McClean interview]. Ruth Mickle recalls when she was seven years old (in 1910) and her mother would give her a nickel, she would run downtown to the Candy Kitchen "where Nick [Parros] or Gussie would patiently wait for me to pick out the candy I wanted and always with a smile take my nickel and I'd leave happy." Norma Adams also recalls she and her friends spending "many hours looking and making the big decision on their special choices" before spending [their] pennies at the candy counter [N. Adams statement]; while Mildred Hill's big brothers and sisters brought her in to pick out candy when she was a four or five year old. After-school hours were often spent at the Candy Kitchen. It was a good "hang out" where children and teenagers

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could enjoy a "Happy Thought" sundae and socialize, and parents did not need to worry about them [B. Nelson letter]. Afternoon breaks from his summer job on his father's newspaper (the Advocate) found Keith Thurston across the street consuming a homemade ice cream sundae and rolling dice with the waitress for double or nothing on the tab.

On weekdays, during the daytime, the Candy Kitchen was a spot for adults to gather. In the mornings, there was the regular "coffee club" [Gus Nopoulos, audio-taped interview, 1979]. Businessmen would meet and make deals over a cup of coffee [N. Adams statement]. In the early days, farmers would tie up their teams and take a break at the Candy Kitchen after unloading grain at the elevator across the street [T. Kaufmann interview]. On Sundays many families stopped by for a treat after church or to pick up the Sunday Chicago Tribune [K. Thurston statement]. In the summer, Fourth of July firecrackers could be purchased at the store, while during the long winter months a partner for a game of checkers usually could be found there although it was hard to beat the proprietor [C. Duffee statement]. Eighty-eight-year-old Togo Kaufmann remembers "many hours spent playing checkers with Gus," and the Davenport "checker sharks" who came to Wilton for the tournaments at the Candy Kitchen.

Perhaps because Gus kept the store open such long hours (until 11 o'clock or midnight, and he was the "first to sweep his sidewalks" in the morning [T. Kaufmann]); perhaps because he opened it seven days a week; perhaps because he was such a congenial Greek; perhaps because the store held something sweet and special for all ages; but most likely for all these reasons, the Candy Kitchen has been a center for community activity since it opened for business. In a broader sense, the Candy Kitchen has also become institutionalized, playing a pivotal role--like the church or school--in bringing together the farm and town populations of the Wilton area to create a greater sense of shared community feeling. The Candy Kitchen is a meeting place, a place for discussion, a place for making connections, between country dwellers and townsfolk.

The first days of the Candy Kitchen and Wilton in the early 20th century are preserved in the memories of older Wilton residents. When the shop opened the streets were dirt; transportation was by horse and buggy; harness shops and stables were common businesses downtown. Summers traditionally meant weekend band concerts at the intersection of Cedar and Fourth Streets, and winters meant cutting ice from the frozen Mud Creek nearby. Wednesday and Saturday nights year round, but especially in the summer, were busy because that's when the farm families came to town to do their shopping and socializing.

Entertainment during this time could include a silent movie topped by a treat at the Candy Kitchen. Josephine McClean and her friends would "hoof it downtown one night a week to go to the old movie house...they would run weekly serials, then it would be a cliff hanger until the next week...Vera Godske Oveson played the piano at the silent movies...When the weather permitted we would go to

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Gussie's after the silent movies for a treat. That was our prescribed weekly program." Saturday night band concerts, however, provided the best reason to gather downtown for a night of socializing and entertainment. Ads for the Candy Kitchen ran in the weekly Advocate, appearing just beside the notices of the band concerts.

Held just a half a block from the Candy Kitchen, the band concerts were regularly attended by farm families who would come to town by horse and buggy. "On Saturdays farmers would do chores early and hitch up horses to the surrey and take their families to town [C. Fulton interview]. "Most of the farmers would take their families to town on Saturday nights to get their weekly supply of groceries, sell eggs and listen to the band play in the summer...

The town was full of people and the men would have to wait in line at the barber shop to have their hair cut or a shave [T. Kaufmann interview]. After exchanging their eggs or churned butter for dry goods and groceries, (C. Winter statement) everyone would turn to the night's musical entertainment, truly a community event.

"They would close off the street for the band to play on Saturday nights throughout the summer" [H. Wacker interview], and townspeople mixed and mingled with the farm families. Ruth Rick Mickle, who married and moved away from Wilton in 1922, recalls on Saturday nights "we'd go downtown in the horse and buggy. Old Charlie, our horse was always afraid of the band playing in the center of town and papa would have to hold tight to the reins as we'd hurry past the band stand. Before we'd go home there was always a trip to the Candy Kitchen." Later, cars replaced horses as the means of transportation, but the band concerts and the Candy Kitchen remained constant. Mary Benson remembers attending the band concerts with her parents and the "Model T Fords with the open tops in the 1920s and the Model A Fords in the 1930s. They were parked up and down the streets." After the concerts she would go to the Candy Kitchen where Gus would give her a "soda fountain treat free as we were good friends and money was scarce."

Norma Adams remembers the role of the Candy Kitchen during the 1930s in the social life of the town. "I can remember how the place was packed on Wednesday and Saturday nights. The farmers would bring their eggs to town to sell and then purchase their weekly groceries. The whole family would stop at the Candy Kitchen for refreshments and talk over the events of the day before going back home to their farms. I remember the Saturday nights [and] the Wilton Booster Band playing in the center of 4th and Cedar Street...It would be hard to find a parking spot for the car. They would listen to the music, purchase needed groceries and go to the Candy Kitchen for a treat before going home. Many times we had to stand in line and wait for our turn to be served there."

Open long hours, seven days a week, the Candy Kitchen remained the area's gathering place throughout the 1940s, when war-related sugar and chocolate

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Wilton Candy Kitchen

shortages made on-site candy-making impossible. Short-order lunches, available at the store since the late 1920s, continue to be served to this day, as is the homemade ice cream and the fountain treats with which Gus Nopoulos first attracted his customers. After World War II, Gus' son and daughter-in-law, George and Thelma Nopoulos, increasingly took over the job of running the shop and are responsible for keeping it open today. George's first memories of the Candy Kitchen include being assigned as a 5- or 6-year-old to wind up the circa 1918 Brunswick record player--something he still does, though he now plays Glenn Miller and big band-era selections--and racing his brother to clear the booths of certain well known "big tippers" who might leave a nickel or a dime extra.

The Candy Kitchen, as Gus Nopoulos operated it, spans a period of history which saw great technological and social changes. While the building dates to the first Main Street commercial activity of Wilton, as modified into a soda shop in the early 20th-century, the Candy Kitchen is not simply a remnant of the past but unbroken link to the future.

Soda Fountain Shop Property Type

Additionally, the Wilton Candy Kitchen is secondarily locally significant under Criterion C as a soda fountain shop property type. While other stores in Wilton such as the Star Drug Store, served ice cream and fountain drinks--sometimes on a seasonal basis only--and homemade candies, the Candy Kitchen remains the only shop in town dating to the first half of this century and the heyday of soda shops, which is still devoted full time to selling soda fountain and ice cream dishes, short order lunches, and candy treats. Additional research may establish statewide significance for the Candy Kitchen as a soda fountain shop property type, however that research has not been done for this nomination.

The building housing the Candy Kitchen was already outfitted with candy making and soda shop equipment when Gus Nopoulos purchased it, and the original mirrored walls can still be seen behind the mirrors Gus Nopoulos installed in 1922. Little specific information has been found about the commercial operations in the building just prior to when Gus Nopoulos opened his soda fountain and candy shop. He utilized the equipment left from the prior shop, replacing it when needed. With the exception of the 1915 tin ceiling installed by Ash Nelson and his employee, John Luethye, major interior components extant in the building date from 1922 and were originally the interior furnishings from the Elite Confectionery in Davenport, Iowa. Equipment and furnishings in the building are listed below. A floorplan showing interior dimensions and major furnishings is attached.

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Wilton Candy Kitchen

Major Commercial Equipment still in use at the Wilton Candy Kitchen:

Pre-1910 equipment & furnishings:

- \*Candy scale, 3#, "Toledo Computing Scale Co." Toledo, Ohio, patented July 28, 1908, style #105-B; no springs
- \*Candy scale, 2#, "Computing Scale Co." patented 4/24/1900, 1903, and 1906, style #166.
- \*Oak and art-glass back bar, "The Liquid Carbonic Co. of Chicago, Ill. made in Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Baltimore, Atlanta, Dallas and Cincinnati."
- \*Oak and glass, 12'x 8' storage and display candy case, lined with lead, manufactured by "Gutman Store Fixture Company, Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill."
- \*Wrought iron and oak free-standing "ice cream parlor" furniture: 4 tables, 15 side chairs, 3 tall counter stools.

1910 - 1919 equipment & furnishings:

- \*"Acme" freezer, manufactured by Ritter Mfg. Co., Philadelphia, Pa. USA, patented February 15, 1910 [a 1-gallon ice cream maker]
- \*record player, "The Brunswick-Balke, Collender Co." model 12 #124516, patented June 4, 1918, Mar. 26, 1918, Sept. 18, 1917 and December 12, 1916, dark oak case

1920s equipment & furnishings:

- \*National Cash Register, \$.05 to \$1.00
- \*Oak and glass display case for chewing gum; provided free with minimum order of gum from L.E. West Gum Co., West's Cream Gum, Rock Island, Ill.
- \*Safe, stamped "Rothschild Brothers", purchased for \$50.00 through an ad in the Chicago Tribune. Price included shipment by train and delivery to the site. Safe was manufactured by the Diebold Safe and Lock Co. of Canton, Ohio, in its Chicago Branch at 122 S. Wells St.. It measures 60" tall by 36" wide by 30" deep.
- \*"Little Giant" ice breaker, model 23-L; still used to chop ice for fountain drinks
- \*neon window signs: "Lunch" in one window and "Soda" in the other; initials "GN" also installed, however the "N" has broken off

1930s equipment & furnishings:

- \*Chrome National Cash Register, \$1.00 to \$9.00
- \*Hamilton Beach Malt Mixers, 3 single-station mixers; 1 3-station mixer
- \*Illuminated, hanging "Coca-cola" interior sign
- \*General Electric wall clock with "GN" initials and "C-A-N-D-Y-K-I-T-C-H-E-N" instead of numbers on the face
- \*Schaeffer Ice Cream display case
- \*Taylor Ice Cream hardening cabinet

Post-1940 equipment & furnishings:

- \*1940s Bromo Seltzer dispenser, model #40-DM-Racine, Wisconsin, patented April 23, 1940
- \*1940s Cigar humidior/case
- \*1951 Taylor Ice Cream Machine, Batch freezer (2 1/2 gal.), model #110, Rockton, Ill.

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\*1951 Bastian Blessing, "All Dry Soda Fountain" model #S-434, manufactured in Chicago, Ill., replaced a bath or water fountain which had coils that need regular flushing to keep the refrigeration area clean.

\*\*Large neon exterior sign hanging over front entrance is from the early 1940s.

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Materials located in Public Collections:

State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City:

Wilton Advocate, 1912-1921.

Franklin Butterfield Collection [BL 67].

Sanborn-Perris Map Co. fire insurance maps, 1895, 1901

Sanborn Map Co. fire insurance maps, 1909, 1922, 1939

Muscatine Daily Journal, Muscatine, Iowa, located at the Public Library, Muscatine.

Private Collections and Interviews:

Nopoulos Collection. Contains letters, photographs, scrapbooks, audio and video tapes, deeds, property abstracts, ephemera. See especially audio-taped interviews of Gus Nopoulos, completed by Ralph Miller 12/20/1976; and by Art Hough, 06/11/1979; and letters from Bill Nelson (Letter to the Editor, *Wilton Advocate*, upon the death of Gus Nopoulos, 07/04/83, and from Gene Moylan, written 06/18/79.

Interviews by Jan Nash of George and Thelma Nopoulos, multiple dates, September-December, 1991.

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Wilton Candy Kitchen

Interviews by Jan Nash of Virginia Cuning, 11/19/91, via telephone.  
Letters, interviews by Thelma Nopoulos, or statements of individuals  
residing in Wilton prior to 1941:

Name	Age/Date of Birth	Date of Interview, etc.
Carlton L. Winter	79/ 10-22-1912	n.d. but ca. 12/15/91
Cora Jacobson	102/ 03-12-1889	11/24/91
Ruth Jipp	80/ 11-10-1911	11/14/91
Dorothy Dickinson	80/ 11-12-1991	11/12/91
Norma Adams -was a child "over 65 years ago"		11/06/91
Irma Wildasin	100/ 1891	11/13/91
Mildred Hill	87/ 08-07-1904	11/25/91
Clarence Fulton*	97/ 1894	11/18/91
*Mr. Fulton passed away one month after the interview, on Dec. 22, 1991.		
Togo Kaufmann	88/ 11-05-1903	11/18/91
Harold Wacker, Sr.	88/ 1903	11/24/91
Mary Alma Benson	71/ 1921	11/30/91
Clarence Duffe	ca. age 72	11/26/91
Zella Abbott	88/ 1903	12/02/91
Jeannette Dice	90/ 1901	12/09/91
Keith Thurston -"memories cover 1930-1943"		12/09/91
Leona Schroeder -"memories since 1929"		12/09/91
John & Josephine McClean both	90/ 1901	12/07/91
Ruth Mickle	88/ 1903	n.d. but ca. 12/10/91
George Nopoulos	71/ 03-19-20	12/10;12/19/91

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description:

That property lying in and being situated in Lots 6 and 7 of Block 45 of Butterfield's Addition to the Town of Wilton, Iowa, to wit: Beginning at the northwest corner of said Lot 6, thence east 80 feet, thence south 25 feet, thence west 80 feet, thence north 25 feet to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the entire parcel of land on which the one contributing building is situated.

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Wilton Candy Kitchen

Wilton Advocate, April 24, 1913



Let the Children Drink All the  
**Soda Water**

And Eat All the  
**Ice Cream**  
and Fruit Sundaes They Want.

These dainties, as we serve them, are wholesome - good for the little "tum-mies"—and we will not serve any child any beverage that contains caffeine or other harmful ingredients.

They won't be children long; let them enjoy this supreme delight of their young lives.

Trust Them in Our Care. We were Children Once Ourselves.

**The Candy Kitchen**

N. N. C. Hold Business Session Saturday

The N. N. C. met Saturday afternoon at the home of Mrs. D. E. Smith, and a business session was held, at which time the officers for the coming

Local Physician  
to Attend Meeting

At the sixty-second annual convention of the Iowa State Medical society which will be held in Des Moines May 7, 8 and 9, Muscatine county will be represented by at least two physicians, Dr. A. R. Leith, of this city, delegate from this county, and Dr. H. M. Dean, of Muscatine, alternate.

Many of Iowa's prominent physicians will deliver addresses at the meeting. Several entertainment features have been arranged. A smoker will be given the visitors on the morning of May 7 and the evening of May 8th a banquet will be served at the Masonic Temple at which Dr. John A. Witherspoon, of Nashville, Tenn., the newly elected president of the American Medical Association, will give an address.

Swift & Co. Will  
Open Branch House

C. C. Morse, of Clinton, Iowa, was in the city Monday in the interest of Swift & Co., of Chicago.

They have made arrangements to open a branch house in Wilton and have rented the Scull building opposite the American theatre. J. E. Mockmore will manage the company's business here and they expect to be ready about May 1st. It will be a general produce house, they buying butter, eggs, cream and poultry.

J. H. Wacker & Co.  
Were Hosts Saturday

J. H. Wacker & Co. entertained nearly one hundred farmers last Saturday at their implement house and later at the American theatre. They were first served with dinner, which was served

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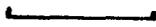
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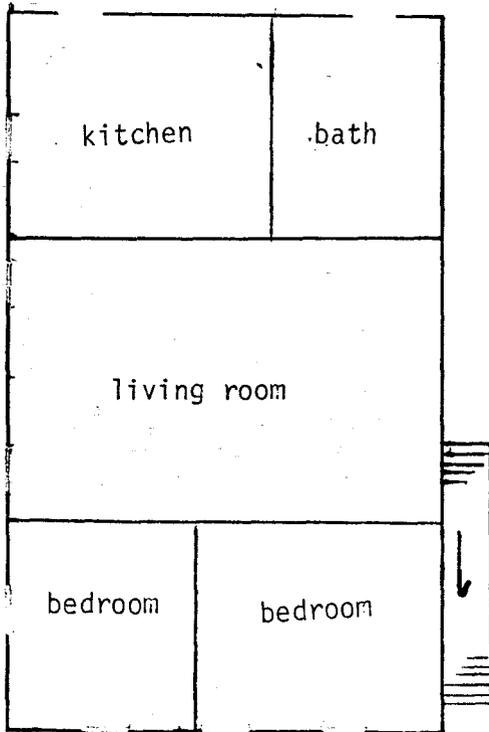
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Wilton Candy Kitchen

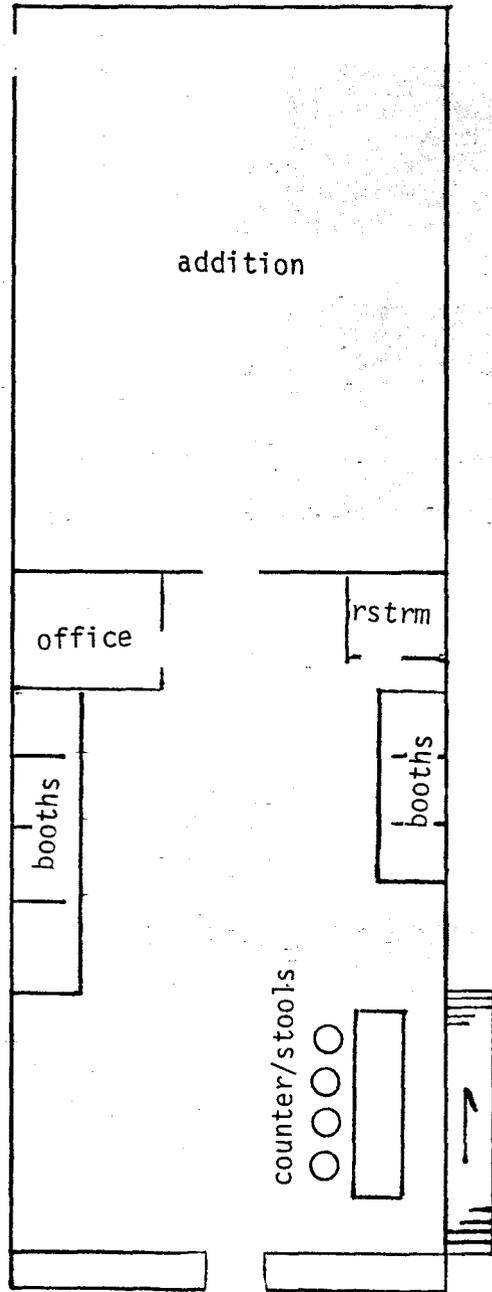
FLOOR PLAN



10'



second floor



first floor

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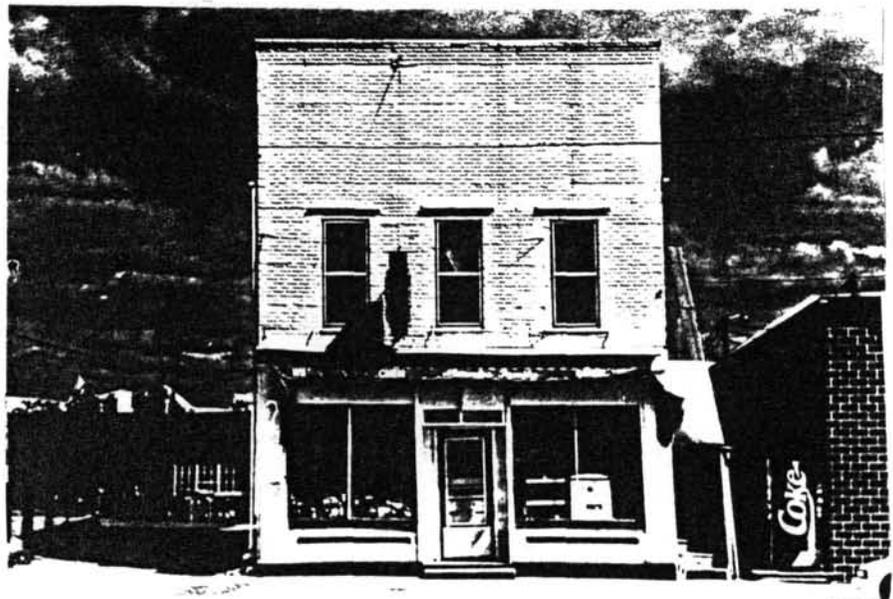
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Wilton Candy Kitchen



"Looking east across Cedar Street, showing the Ross Building and the Candy Kitchen. Photo taken between 1890 and 1900." (Wildasin, p. 177.)

From a photograph taken in 1991.

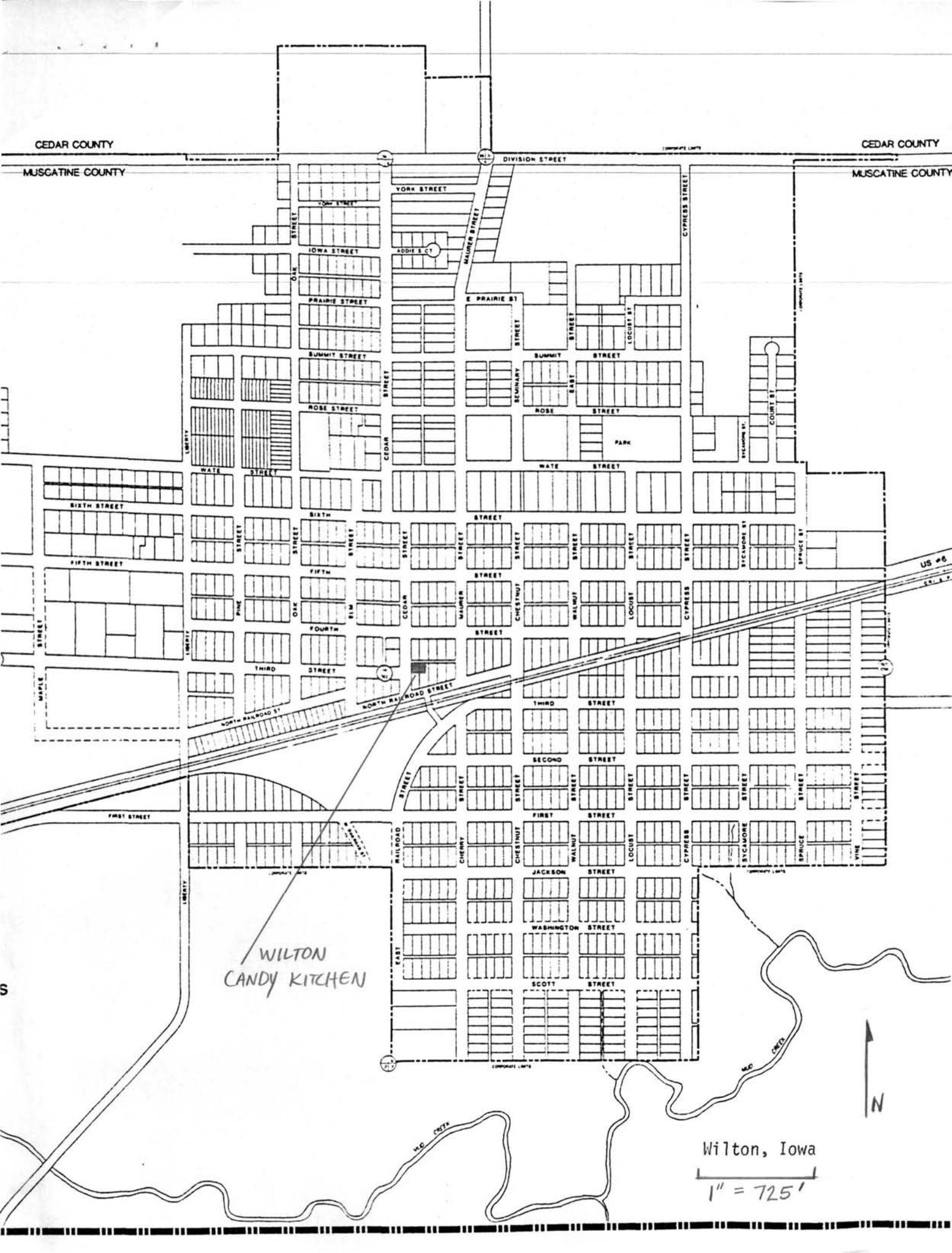


CEDAR COUNTY

CEDAR COUNTY

MUSCATINE COUNTY

MUSCATINE COUNTY



WILTON  
CANDY KITCHEN

Wilton, Iowa

1" = 725'







CANDY  
SODA  
LUNCH







Welcome to the WILTON CANDY KITCHEN & ICE CREAM PARLOR  
SODA FOUNTAIN & ICE CREAM PARLOR  
NOPOULOS FARM  
DOWNTOWN WILTON JCT. IOWA

GO HAWKS!

K&S SUPER SIGNALS

75	85
95	105
115	125
135	145
155	165
175	185
195	205
215	225
235	245
255	265
275	285
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835	845
855	865
875	885
895	905
915	925
935	945
955	965
975	985
995	1005

Grilled  
Chicken  
and  
Cheese  
and  
Coleslaw  
11.95

Specialty Sandwiches  
50¢  
65¢

Specialty Sandwiches  
1.39

Specialty Sandwiches  
1.39