NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED
FEB 25 2000
NATIONAL REGISTER
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

289

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 any 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 Ram Cat Alley Historic District
other names/site number Seneca Downtown Historic District

2. Location

street & number Ram Cat Alley and North Townville Street not for publication ____
city or town Seneca vicinity ____
state South Carolina code SC county Oconee code 073 zip code 29679

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination __ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets __does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant __ nationally __statewide X locally. (_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 2/18/2000
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

X entered in the National Register — Edson H. Beall — 3/24/00
__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):

Ram Cat Alley Historic District
Name of Property

Oconee County, South Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
- __ public-local
- __ public-State
- __ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- __ building(s)
- X district
- __ site
- __ structure
- __ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
18	3	buildings
	1	sites
		structures
		objects
18	4	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)

Category:	Subcategory:
Commerce/Trade	Department Store
Commerce/Trade	Specialty Store

Current Functions
(Enter caregories from instructions)

Category:	Subcategory:
Commerce/Trade	Department Store
Commerce/Trade	Specialty Store
Commerce/Trade	Restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	Brick
walls	Brick
roof	Asphalt, Metal
other	Wood
	Metal

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

Ram Cat Alley Historic District — Oconee County, South Carolina
Name of Property — 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)

_X_ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
__ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
_X_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period,or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
__ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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

__ a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
__ b removed from its original location.
__ c a birthplace or a 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)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance
ca. 1887-ca. 1930

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance
Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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
_X_ Local government
__ University
__ Other

Name of repository:
City of Seneca Planning Department , Seneca, S.C.

Ram Cat Alley Historic District
Name of Property

Oconee County, South Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property **Approximately 3 acres**

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	321210	3839730	3	17	321083	3839575
2	17	321221	3839619	4	17	321066	3839719

___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 Christopher Knopf and Walter Scharer, with the assistance of SHPO staff
organization City of Seneca Planning Department date 25 August 1999

street & number 221 E. North First Street telephone (864) 885-2726
city or town Seneca state SC zip code 29679

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 the SHPO or FPO.)
name See continuation sheets
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

The Ram Cat Alley Historic District is a collection of twenty-one commercial buildings in the downtown area of Seneca, South Carolina, a town in eastern Oconee County. The district is centered on Ram Cat Alley and also includes properties on North Townville Street. Eighteen buildings contribute to the character of the historic district, while three buildings and one vacant lot are noncontributing. The contributing properties reflect the development of the downtown area as the center of commerce in Seneca and the surrounding county from ca. 1887 to ca. 1930.

The following properties contribute to the character of the Ram Cat Alley Historic District (inventory numbers correspond to the accompanying district map):

RAM CAT ALLEY

1) **Patterson Building, 106 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This two-part, one-story brick veneer building, laid in running bond, features four pointed-arched, louvered ventilators above which are two elongated, rectangular brick panels. The left bay of the commercial storefront has a typical recessed and canted inset entrance with flanking display windows, while the right bay contains a brick bulkhead and a triple arcaded glass inset; both bays have a soldier course lintel.

2) **Herbin Building, 109 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This one-story building features a multi-colored brick facade with an elongated panel surrounded by vertical header and rowlock courses. A soldier course divides the storefront and upper facade. The storefront consists of a recessed and divided entrance accessing both shops featuring Mission style wood and glass doors and canted display windows. The facade is capped with a concrete coping. This building was originally a general store.

3) **Harper and Jones Building, 113 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1897)**: This two-part, two-story brick commercial block features two flush storefronts with glazed entrance doors flanking a central brick pier and divided plate glass display windows and divided light transoms. The second story has two sets of paired windows with six-over-six light, double-hung sash and segmental arched heads. It also features a single, elongated brick panel with projecting surround above both window sets. A double corbeled course is still visible at the top of the facade. This building was a general store operated by J.W. Harper and a grocery store at the turn of the twentieth century.

4) **C.F. Adams General Store, 112 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1920)**: This one-story brick building features brickwork in seven-to-one American bond and is topped with a granite coping above a crenelated and triple-pedimented parapet. The upper facade is decorated with three glazed terra-cotta lozenge-shaped motifs corresponding to the three pediments above, and ten glazed

terra-cotta square rosettes, and a white glazed terra cotta soldier course above the three bay facade. The storefront a central-bay recessed and canted entrance and flanking glazed and paneled side bays (a later alteration). This building was originally a general store operated by C.F. Adams.

5) **Phinney Building, 111 Ram Cat Alley (1930)**: This one-story stuccoed brick building features on the lower portion of its facade a typical central entrance with canted recess and flanking display windows. The upper portion has a recessed panel with inset marble datestone, while the entire facade is flanked with stuccoed piers extending above the parapet. These, as well as the remainder of the facade are capped with a cast stone coping.

6) **Cafe, 115 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1897)**: This one-story brick building features an inset entrance on the storefront with flanking display windows. The upper portion of the facade includes a rectangular panel with rat-tooth corbels and two square ventilators. Steel beams are also visible above the storefront inset. This building has been a restaurant for most of its existence.

7) **Fred Hopkins's Meat Market, 117 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1908)**: This two-story brick building's facade features on its second story three two-over-two light, double-hung sash windows with segmental arched heads, three elliptical ventilators, and a recessed rectangular brick panel. The first-story consists of a glass storefront with recessed entrance and display cases. A steel beam is visible just over the storefront. The first floor was originally Fred Hopkins's Meat Market, while the second floor served as Hopkins's residence. The locals gave this section of Main Street the name Ram Cat Alley because the meat and fish at Hopkins's market attracted so many cats to this section of downtown Seneca.

8) **P.C. Skelton Grocery, 120 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This two-part, two-story building features a painted brick facade. The second story of the facade contains three windows with one-over-one light, double-hung sash, cast stone window sills and lintels, three corresponding elliptical-shaped louvered ventilators, and corbeled blocks at either extremity of the facade's parapet. The commercial storefront, divided from the upper portion of the facade with a soldier course, features a double-leaf glass-paneled entrance within a shallow inset entrance, flanking display windows, a recessed stair entrance accessing the upper floor at the far right, and a prismatic glass transom spanning the entire commercial bay. The building was originally a grocery store operated by P.C. Skelton and was the first grocery in Seneca to deliver to customers' homes.

9) **Little Star Cafe and Taylors Market, 121 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This one-story brick building features one glass storefront and one enclosed storefront and has a decorative recessed panel with brick rat-tooth corbels on the upper portion of the facade. The building was originally a cafe and a grocery store.

10) **Harper and Patterson Building, 122 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This one-story brick building features eight-to-one American bond. The upper part of the facade contains two elongated brick panels with slightly protruding surrounds, four elliptical louvered ventilators and a flat central pediment. The lower part of the facade consists of two storefronts divided by a central brick pier, with a soldier course separating it from the upper portion. The left (eastern-most) storefront contains two double-leaf glass doors while that on the right (western-most) has a recessed central entrance and flanking divided light display windows and glazed transoms. This building was originally Harpers 5&10 Cent Store and the L.C. Patterson General Store. The Harpers 5&10 Cent Store was the original store and headquarters of what became a successful regional chain.

11) **Osborne Building, 124 A-C Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This one-story brick building features a seven-to-one variant of American bond. The building has a commercial storefront divided from the upper portion with a soldier course. It contains three entrances, the one at far left having a single-light transom and accessing the basement level, the one at right of center being recessed and accessing the main floor, and the one at far right, also recessed, accessing an upper level loft. The upper portion of the facade features an elongated recessed brick panel and a corbeled cornice.

12) **Main Street Barber Shop, 125-A Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1887)**: This one-story brick building features brickwork in an American bond variant. It originally served as a barber shop, boarding house, and grocery in its first twenty-five years of existence.

13) **Old Seneca Post Office, 126 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This one-story brick building features on the upper portion of its facade an elongated rectangular panel with slightly protruding brick surround, and a soldier course frieze and corbeled brick cornice. The lower storefront facade has a central inset entrance, wood arched panels over single-light display windows, pilasters and a pent roof, all of which is a modern alteration. The building was built by J.E. Harper and then sold to house the Seneca Post Office in 1921.

NORTH TOWNVILLE STREET

14) **Nimmons and Field Building, 103 North Townville Street (ca. 1917)**: This one-story brick building features on the upper portion of its facade an elongated rectangular panel with slightly protruding surround, and a heavily corbeled corner blocks and cornice in the Romanesque Revival style. The commercial storefront is a modern plate glass variety with double-leaf central entrance. The building was originally built tor W.P. Nimmons and later served as a general store specializing in tires made by E.H. Field.

15) **Nimmons Building, 105 North Townville Street (1917)**: This large two-story brick corner building features on its North Townville Street facade a two-bay wide elevation with first level openings now brick-infilled and upper floor windows covered with corrugated metal. An inset corner entrance is interrupted only by a heavy brick pier. The Ram Cat Alley facade consists of some window enclosures on the first level and nine segmental arched nine-over-one, double-hung sash windows. The uppermost portion of both street facades boasts a highly articulated Romanesque Revival corbeled cornice. The building served as a large-scale farm supply store and housed Seneca's first freight elevator, capable of transporting carriages to the second story.

16) **Austin Building, 119 North Townville Street (ca. 1920)**: This two-part, two-story commercial brick building features a running bond pattern with elaborate mitered-corner brickwork surrounding the building's two inset entrance commercial fronts, between which is a double-leaf glazed upper floor entrance with semi-circular arched prismatic glass transom. A cast stone belt course separates the two levels visually and serves as a continuous sill for the second level's one-over-one, double-hung sash windows. Each of the upper floor's four paired window sets contains stack-bond and soldier course surrounds. The building's parapet boasts four small cast or carved stone cartouche, above which are corresponding battlements. Basketweave brick panels, a central peaked pediment featuring a larger stone cartouche or crest, and a beveled cast stone peaked coping all adorn the uppermost portion of the facade. This building was originally the Seneca Pharmacy for sixty-two years and then the Hopkins Pool Room. The second floor served at one time as headquarters for the South Carolina Medical Association.

17) **Richardson Theater, 121-123 North Townville Street (ca. 1920)**: This two-story, two-part brick building features decorative brickwork surrounding the two modern commercial storefronts. The stepped facade includes five one-over-one, double-hung sash windows on the upper level, soldier coursing and header bond brickwork, a simple cast stone drip moulding band, and an unadorned brick parapet with concrete coping. This was the first motion picture theater in Seneca.

18) **Collins and Glenn Building, 125-127 North Townville Street (ca. 1917)**: This one-story brick building features a running bond brickwork and a simple corbeled cornice. 125 North Townville Street has a flushed commercial storefront with a double-leaf glazed door entrance at the far right, while that for 127 North Townville contains a cornered entrance with heavy brick corner pier.

The following properties do not contribute to the character of the Ram Cat Alley Historic District:

NORTH TOWNVILLE STREET

19) **Citizens Bank Building, 111 North Townville Street (1905, extensively altered ca. 1960)**: This two-story yellow brick building features brick pilasters with limestone Corinthian capitals on both the first and second floor levels, large segmental arched windows with carved limestone drip mould. A full entablature, consisting of egg-and-dart moulding, an unadorned frieze, and a denticulated and modillioned cornice, still exists on both the North Townville Street and Ram Cat Alley facades. A simple parapet completes the historic facade. A two-story unsympathetic modern brick and veiled block addition protrudes from the corner of the building and renders it noncontributing. This building was originally a bank and a store on the first floor and an opera house on the second floor, but the facade and left elevation were extensively altered ca. 1960.

RAM CAT ALLEY

20) **A.P. Grant and Company, 118 Ram Cat Alley (ca. 1917)**: This one-story, building has a simple, unadorned facade which is likely a replacement of an earlier one. The building has a modern glass storefront, and the facade is capped with a concrete coping. The building was originally a general store.

21) **123 Ram Cat Alley**: Vacant lot where building once stood.

22) **105 North Townville Street Annex (ca. 1960)**: This one-story brick building, with its recessed entrance and flanking display windows, has a modern entrance and metal awning identical to that at the corner entrance of 105 North Townville Street (#15. Nimmons Building).

The Ram Cat Alley Historic District is significant as an intact public, commercial, and social center of the City of Seneca. The area is a collection of buildings associated with the commercial growth and development of Seneca from ca. 1887 to ca. 1930. The district is a typical example of architectural and commercial development around the growth of the railroad in a small South Carolina town in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ram Cat Alley was so called because of the tendency of cats to gather around the Fred Hopkins Meat Market which was located on that street in ca. 1908.

Named for a tribe of Native Americans who once inhabited the northwest corner of South Carolina, the streets of Seneca City were laid out in 1873 at the junction of the Atlanta and Richmond Airline Railroad and the Blue Ridge Railway. After the town's incorporation in 1874, downtown Seneca (City was later dropped from the name) developed along a grid of streets located across from a central park area adjacent to the railroad depot. The area along Ram Cat Alley between North Townville and North Fairplay Streets eventually became the core of Seneca's commercial and social activity. Ram Cat Alley was home to various grocery stores and general stores, a theater, a pharmacy, a barber shop, and a bank.

Most early buildings in downtown Seneca were constructed of wood. After ca. 1887, as the town developed into an agricultural center for Oconee County, the wood structures began to be replaced with more elaborate brick buildings. Development continued into the mid-1920s along Main Street, Depot Street, and North First Street which now constitutes the largest commercial area in downtown Seneca. In the 1970s a bypass was built so that US Highway 76/123 would be diverted around the town of Seneca. This contributed to the economic decline of Seneca's downtown. In the 1990s, however, Ram Cat Alley has once again become a popular and important part of downtown Seneca. Revitalization efforts have focused on Ram Cat Alley bringing new businesses and new life to the most architecturally intact part of downtown Seneca. This revitalization effort has returned Ram Cat Alley to its historic role as a center of commercial and social life in Seneca.[1]

[1] Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, "Seneca, South Carolina" (New York, 1889, 1894, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1924); Frances Holleman, Seneca, South Carolina Centennial 1873-1973 (Greenville, S.C.: Briggs and Associates, 1973); Randall C. Blackerby, Seneca Historic Structures Study (Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University, 1994); Oconee County Heritage Book Committee, Oconee County Heritage—S.C. 1868-1995 (Marcelline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Co., 1995).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blackerby, Randall C. Seneca Historic Structures Study. Clemson, S.C.: Clemson University, 1994.

Holleman, Frances. Seneca, South Carolina Centennial 1873-1973. Greenville, S.C.: Briggs and Associates, 1973.

Oconee County Heritage Book Committee. Oconee County Heritage—SC 1868-1995. Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Company, 1995.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, "Seneca, South Carolina." New York, 1889, 1894, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1924.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the heavy black line labeled "Ram Cat Alley Historic District" on the accompanying sketch map, adapted from an Oconee County, S.C., Tax Map.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The district boundaries are restricted to include the contributing properties retaining integrity in the historic core of the Seneca downtown commercial area.

RAM CAT ALLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT PROPERTY OWNERS

Dr. Allan McDonald and
Echo-Leigh McDonald
106 Ram Cat Alley
Seneca, SC 29678

Ms. Anna Moran
109 Ram Cat Alley
Seneca, SC 29678

D.S. & Jeanette Abbotte
PO Box 802
Seneca, SC 29679

A.B. Lowry & Mary B. Williams
811 Marina Pointer
Seneca, SC 29672

Jason & Mary Tannery
8497 Toccoa Road
Westminster, SC 29693

Angela Shadwick & Kathy J. Alexander
P.O. Box 802
Seneca, SC 29679

Mr. Dan Alexander
610 South Oak Street
Seneca, SC 29678

Frederick & Lori Sons
210 South Townville Street
Seneca, SC 29678

Ms. Patricia Finley
550 Restin Creek Way
Seneca, SC 29678

Ms. Sarah G. Grant
202 Mahaffey Drive
Seneca, SC 29672

Wachovia Bank of South Carolina
c/o Trustees L. McMahan & G. Nimmons
P.O. Box 969
Greenville, SC 29602

Ms. Linda Davenport
190 Cross Creek Road
Seneca, SC 29678

Mr. Roger Duncan
P.O. Box 1283
Seneca, SC 29679

Ms. Kate Morgan
P.O. Box 215
Seneca, SC 29679

Mr. George McCracken
2941 Cheshire Drive
Marietta, Georgia

Ms. Nadine Fortune
P.O. Box 277
Seneca, SC 29679

Ms. Marcia Langston
341 Poplar Springs Rd.
Walhalla, SC 29691

Trust of Sue N. Hunt
c/o Wachovia Bank of South Carolina
P.O. Box 969
Seneca, SC 29602

Ms. Betty Alexander
610 South Oak Street
Seneca, SC 29678

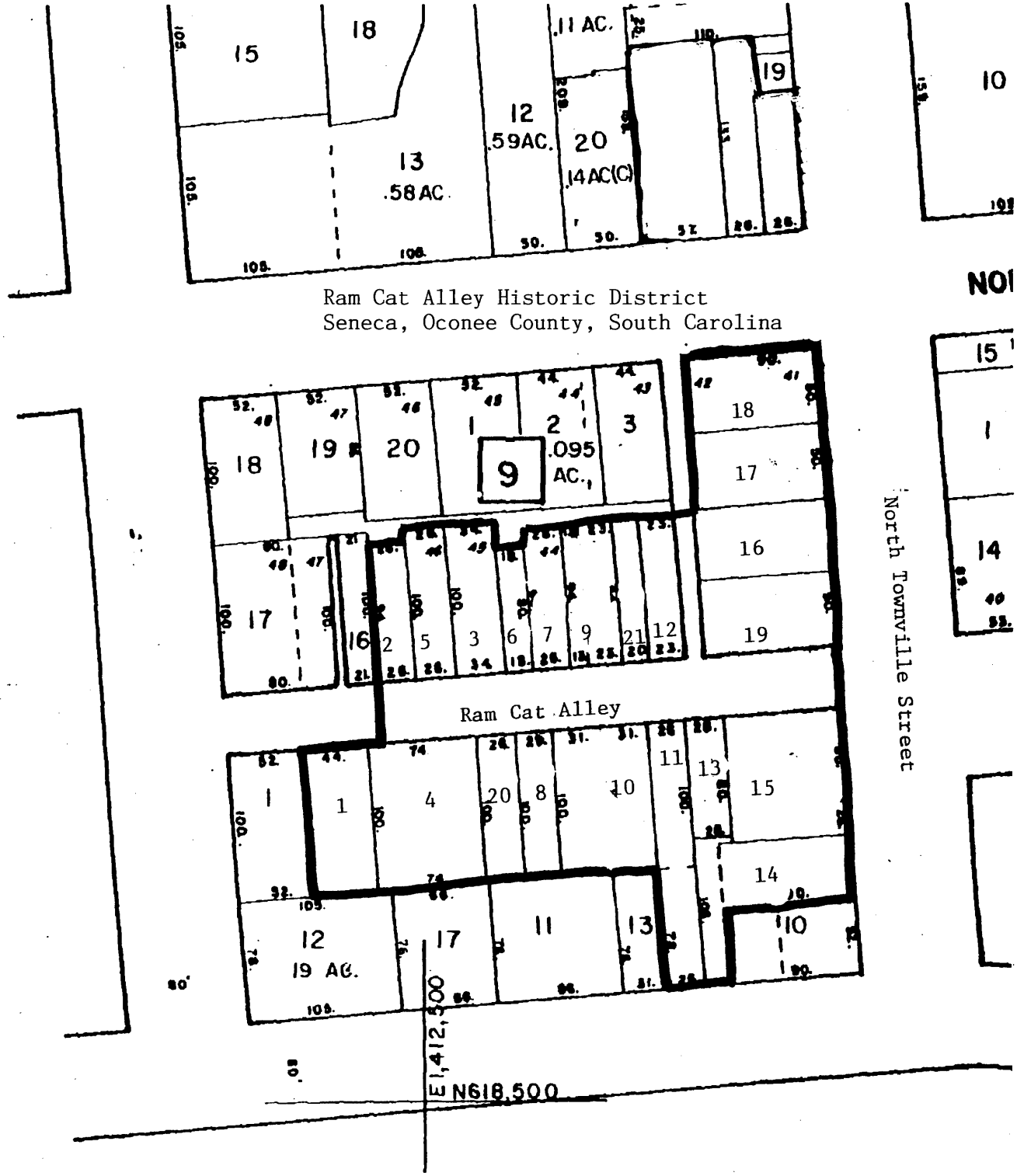
Jerry and Ruth Johnson
108 Cateechee Avenue
Greenville, SC 29605

The Honorable Daniel W. Alexander, Mayor
City of Seneca
221 E. N. First Street
PO Box 4773
Seneca, SC 29679-4773

The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property:	Ram Cat Alley Historic District
Location of Property:	Seneca, Oconee County, South Carolina
Name of Photographer:	Chris Knopf, City of Seneca Planning and Community Development
Date of Photographs:	April 1999
Location of Original Negatives:	City of Seneca Planning and Community Development

1. 106 Ram Cat Alley, Patterson Building
2. 109 Ram Cat Alley, Herbin Building
3. 113 Ram Cat Alley, Phinney Building
4. 112 Ram Cat Alley, C. F. Adams General Store
5. 111 Ram Cat Alley, Harper and Jones Building
6. 120 Ram Cat Alley, P. C. Skelton Grocery
7. 122 Ram Cat Alley, Harper and Patterson Building
8. 124 (A-C) Ram Cat Alley, Osborne Building
9. 125-A Ram Cat Alley, Main Street Barber Shop
10. 126 Ram Cat Alley, Old Seneca Post Office
11. 103 North Townville Street, Nimmons and Field Building
12. 105 North Townville Street, Nimmons Building
13. 119 North Townville Street, Austin Building
14. 123 North Townville Street, Richardson Building
15. 127 North Townville Street, Collins and Glen Building
16. 111 North Townville Street, Citizens Bank Building, **non-contributing**
17. 118 Ram Cat Alley, A. P. Grant and Company, **non-contributing**


15
18
.11 AC.
19
12
.59AC.
20
.14AC(C)
13
.58AC
10
NOI
Ram Cat Alley Historic District
Seneca, Oconee County, South Carolina
15
1
14
18
19
20
1
2
3
9
.095
AC.,
17
16
18
17
16
19
2
5
3
6
7
9
21
12
Ram Cat Alley
North Townville Street
1
1
4
20
8
10
11
13
15
14
12
19 AC.
17
11
13
10
E1,412,500
N618,500