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

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

890

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 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 Sunnydale

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 334 South Trade Street not for publication N/A
city or town Tryon vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Polk code 149 zip code 28782

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.)

Jeffrey J. Crow SHPO 10/18/11
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
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:

✓ 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 Edson H. Beall Date of Action 12.7.11

Sunnydale
Name of Property

Polk County, North 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)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCIAL/Restaurant
OTHER/Dancehall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rustic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
roof Asphalt Shingle
walls Log
other Wood/board-and-batten

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

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)

_ **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.)

Property is:

_ **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

Period of Significance
Ca. 1930

Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Searles, J. Foster – architect
Kell, J. S. - builder

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

X State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
X Other

Name of repository:
Polk County Public Library, Columbus, NC
Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.59 acres

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	387260	3896170
2			
3			
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 Clay Griffith

organization Acme Preservation Services, LLC date September 2, 2011

street & number 825-C Merrimon Ave., #345 telephone (828) 281-3852

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items withthe 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 Lane-Tryon LLC, c/o Robert C. Lane

street & number 2080 Wappoo Hall Road telephone 843-795-5232

city or town Charleston state SC zip code 29412

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.

Description

Sunnydale is a Rustic Revival-style restaurant and entertainment building located at 334 South Trade Street (US Highway 176) in the small town of Tryon in southern Polk County. Situated on the west side of the road, facing east, the building stands outside of Tryon's downtown business district, which ends where Trade Street crosses the Norfolk-Southern Railroad tracks. Sunnydale is part of a mixture of commercial, residential, and industrial development that extends along South Trade Street from downtown Tryon to the South Carolina state line, a distance of less than one mile. In 2010 a previous owner subdivided the Sunnydale property, and a Dollar General store was constructed on the new lot to the north. A small commercial strip building and a 1950s supermarket stand immediately to the south of Sunnydale. The building sits at the back of its lot with a new paved parking area in front. Prior to subdivision of the property, parking was located on the north side of the building, and the area in front of Sunnydale was a sloping grass lawn. The lawn, which featured a low stone retaining wall to help mitigate the slope, has been graded into a level lot. The Sunnydale property backs up to Woodland Park, a ten-acre wooded park with trails that was part of the Gillette Woods development. Located across the street from Sunnydale is a group of modest bungalows and Minimal Traditional houses, interspersed within additional commercial development.

Sunnydale is a one-story, side-gable log building with setback side-gable wings at both ends of the building. The building is constructed with saddle-notched peeled logs and concrete chinking. The end gables of the two side wings are sheathed with unpainted board-and-batten siding, but the visible gable ends of the central block are log. Sunnydale rests on an irregularly coursed stone foundation and is topped by an asphalt-shingle roof. The roof structure consists of tongue-and-groove decking and exposed log purlins supported by log trusses on the interior. The central block of Sunnydale is five bays wide and the side wings are each two bays wide. An interior stone chimney is located between the central block and south wing of the building, and an exterior stone chimney—with an exterior fireplace—is located on the north elevation, sheltered by an attached one-story shed-roof side porch. The windows and doors feature simple flat-board surrounds. Windows throughout the building are typically original six-over-six double-hung sash in singles and pairs. The few compatible replacement windows include the two façade windows in the north wing, one façade and one rear window in the south wing, the lower sash of two windows on the south elevation, and a window in the south gable end.

A front-gable porch shelters the three center bays, including the replacement single-leaf entry door and sidelights. The porch roof is composed of exposed log framing supported by four square wood posts. The gable end is covered with board-and-batten siding. The porch was enclosed in the late-twentieth century when the building was in use as a restaurant, but it has been reopened as part of ongoing rehabilitation work.

A front terrace extends the width of the central block and consists of a concrete slab on an irregularly coursed stone base with stone piers. Three stone steps are located at each end of the terrace, but a portion of the steps on the north side have been covered with a concrete ramp for handicap access. A board-and-batten, shed-roof addition for kitchen storage and commercial freezers was constructed in the 1940s on the rear of the building. A concrete-block shed-roof bathroom addition was added on the south side of the kitchen addition in the 1960s. A frame, hip-roof storage room was built on the end of the side porch, adjoining the kitchen addition in the late twentieth century. The storage room is accessed through a replacement metal door on the rear elevation. At the south end of the rear elevation of the building, an elevated wood deck was constructed in late 2010 to access a new rear doorway with a stained glass transom, which replaced one of the window openings. An exterior brick flue rises against the south elevation of the building, and an interior brick flue is located on the rear slope of the main roof near the bathroom addition.

The attached shed-roof porch at the north end was enclosed in the late-twentieth century but has since been reopened. Square wood posts and beams support the log rafters of the porch roof, and the corner posts rest on stone piers. Two new multi-light single-leaf doors flank the exterior fireplace. An original four-light window is located on the north elevation at the east end. The concrete slab floor rests on a low stone foundation.

On the interior, Sunnydale features exposed log walls with painted chinking. The interior space consists of a large open room that extends into the north wing. The south wing is separated by the massive stone fireplace and tapering chimney, with openings into the wing located on either side of the chimney. A segmental arch with stone voussoirs and keystone forms the fireplace opening, and the fireplace is lined with brick. The hearth is composed of two stone slabs. Corbelled stone blocks support the simple stone mantel. Two segmental-arch niches are located on the back side of the chimney. Exposed king post trusses support the roof structure and contribute to the spaciousness of the interior. Logs forming the truss beams are spliced together at the center and bolted through to the king post. An opening in the rear (west) wall leads to the restrooms. A broad opening extends the main room into the north wing with another opening in the rear (west) wall accessing the kitchen storage and freezers. During its previous use as a restaurant, the north wing was partitioned from the main room for use as the kitchen and a dropped ceiling was installed. The dropped ceiling has since been removed and the space opened to the main room. A small closet of wood studs and wood sheathing is located in a corner of the north wing where it abuts the central block and has been converted to a mechanical chase in 2011. A similar chase was constructed at the same time in the south wing in the west corner where it abuts the main block. The floor in the main room and wings is wood that has been patched in some areas with flooring of a similar type and size. The restroom addition was rehabilitated in 2011 with replacement glass block windows and new tile floors, new fixtures, and new beaded board and stuccoed walls. The restrooms are entered from a small vestibule located off the main room. The vestibule is finished with vertical wood sheathing and the doors are replacement paneled wood doors. The storage room

addition displays a ceramic tile floor, sheetrock walls, and a new paneled wood door sealing it from the north wing.

Harold Shelnutt built Sunnydale around 1930 as an entertainment venue, which hosted dinners, dances, receptions, and theatrical performances throughout its operation. In the 1970s, Sunnydale began full-time operation as a restaurant with a succession of eateries occupying the building until 2009. Since July 2010, the current owner, Lane-Tryon LLC, has undertaken a complete rehabilitation of the structure. The work on Sunnydale included reopening the front and side porches, removing the non-historic front deck, removing the interior restaurant partitions, and renovating the rear additions. The owner has retained as much original material as possible, and the majority of the logs were filled and sealed to prevent further checking and deterioration. Severely deteriorated or water damaged logs were replaced to match the existing materials. Following the rehabilitation project, Sunnydale retains a high degree of integrity with the removal of many non-historic materials and reopening of the enclosed front and side porches. Replacement windows and doors are compatible with the original materials, and new exterior construction and materials, including a wood deck, are primarily confined to the rear of the building. The overall effect of the rehabilitation project has been to return the building more closely to its original appearance.

Statement of Significance

Summary

Constructed around 1930 for Harold Shelnutt, Sunnydale is a one-story Rustic Revival-style building located at 334 South Trade Street (US 176) south of downtown Tryon, North Carolina. Shelnutt operated Sunnydale as a restaurant and entertainment venue, hosting dinners, dances, and theatrical performances at the site. In 1941, Ernest A. Kerhulas purchased Sunnydale and operated it as a popular eating establishment for more than thirty years. The comfortable atmosphere of Sunnydale's log construction, open plan, and large stone fireplace made it a popular gathering place for dining, as well as the many social and civic gatherings hosted there. Sunnydale meets National Register Criterion C as an intact example of the Rustic Revival style of architecture, which enjoyed extensive popularity in the mountainous regions of western North Carolina during the early twentieth century. The log construction, exposed structure, and natural materials combine past building traditions, local materials, and modern functionality. The Rustic Revival style architecture of Sunnydale served to reinforce the image of Tryon as a popular mountain retreat and seasonal tourist destination. The period of significance for Sunnydale is ca. 1930, when the locally significant building was constructed.

Historical Background

The small mountain town of Tryon, North Carolina, lies in the far southern section of Polk County, just north of the North Carolina/South Carolina state line. Polk County is relatively small in area, covering only 237 square miles, and ranges in elevation from 750 feet above sea level in the south to 3,238 feet above sea level at its highest point in the northwest. The crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains forms the northern boundary of the county, which is drained by the Pacolet and Green rivers. Lying on the southern slopes of the Blue Ridge, Polk County enjoys characteristics of both the mountain and Piedmont regions. Thermal belts occurring in the county provide frost-free areas that allow farmers to grow a wide range of crops. The natural and geographic conditions strongly influenced agriculture and tourism as important components of the county's economy. The variety and influence of geography in Polk County is manifested in the two towns of Tryon, a popular winter resort, and Saluda, a summer resort only eight miles to the north.[1]

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[1] D. William Bennett, ed., *Polk County, North Carolina, History* (Tryon, NC: Polk County Historical Association, Inc., 1983), 5. Bill Sharpe, *A New Geography of North Carolina*, Volume III (Raleigh, NC: Sharpe Publishing Company, 1961), 1536-1538. Elizabeth Doubleday Frost, *Tryon Memories* (Tryon, NC: Polk County Historical Association and Tryon Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 7-10, 27-28.

Located approximately three miles southwest of the county seat of Columbus, the town of Tryon remained a modest settlement through much of the nineteenth century. The community began to take shape following the arrival of the Asheville-Spartanburg Railroad, which reached Tryon in 1877. Built with the intention of connecting South Carolina ports and markets with people and resources in North Carolina, Tennessee, and the Ohio Valley, the railroad had a dramatic impact on the economic and social development of Tryon in the late nineteenth century as the trains between South Carolina and Asheville began to expose a wide range of visitors to the community. Located at the base of the Saluda Grade, the steepest mainline railroad grade in the country, Tryon became a regular stopping place as northbound trains prepared for the grueling climb and southbound trains cooled their wheel bearings and brakes. As a result of the frequent stopovers, a hotel was erected and boarding houses were opened to accommodate the accidental tourists and Tryon's reputation as a pleasant resort quickly grew.[2]

Following its incorporation in 1885, Tryon was laid out in a circle around the railroad depot, which was located on the east side of the tracks near their intersection with South Trade Street (roughly opposite the current Tryon Theatre). Trade Street, the town's original commercial street, ran parallel to the railroad tracks on the east and northeast side and was the location of T. T. Ballenger's dry goods store and his blacksmith shop. Ballenger, who was one of the town's most prominent citizens and its first mayor, built Oak Hall (originally known as the Tryon City Hotel), the first building constructed specifically as a hotel for visitors to Tryon, with John Garrison in 1882. The hotel, a local landmark until its demolition in 1979, was a large frame structure with Italianate- and Queen Anne-style ornamentation that was restrained yet stylish for its day.[3]

Early visitors to Tryon were also served by the McAboy House, a popular inn located north of town near the community of Lynn. Dr. L. R. McAboy, a Presbyterian minister from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, purchased the Dr. Columbus Mills House in the 1870s, added a third story, and converted it into an inn that became popular among visitors from the north. McAboy House attracted many guests seeking a cure for respiratory ailments, especially tuberculosis, in the late nineteenth century. Asheville was renowned for its sanitoriums, but Tryon began attracting patients who were disillusioned with Asheville's unpredictable weather and wanted a more relaxed environment in which to convalesce. The poet Sidney Lanier (1842-1881) transferred from Asheville to McAboy House in 1881, as he was dying of tuberculosis. Lanier's

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[2] Diane E. Lea and Claudia Roberts, *An Architectural and Historical Survey of Tryon, North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History, 1979), 1-3. Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 186-188 and 191-192.

[3] Lea and Roberts, 9. Frost, 20-21.

widow and two sons moved to Tryon after his death, and contributed significantly to the town's reputation in literary and cultural circles.[4]

In 1889, several new Tryon residents saw the need for a public library and formed a club of community members to promote a library and provide a focus for intellectual and cultural activities. Club members decided to name the group in honor of Sidney Lanier, and Mrs. Lanier responded by donating two volumes of her husband's poems for the library, known today as the Lanier Library. In addition to founding the library, the Lanier Club worked to establish the town cemetery, educate people about tuberculosis, and beautify the depot. The club also hosted popular fundraising events, which often featured dramatic or musical performances.[5]

In the first decade of the twentieth century, Tryon had a year-round population of more than 300 people, and development of the commercial area along Trade Street began to reflect the needs of a growing population. A substantial number of residents first came to Tryon as visitors, either by accident or specifically for the salubrious climate. These visitors frequently became enchanted with the community and decided to buy property for seasonal or year-round use. Many of these new residents, including artists, writers, and industrialists, came from the North or upper Midwest regions of the country and helped to solidify and spread Tryon's reputation as a first class resort town in the early twentieth century. Carter Brown, a Michigan transplant who came to Tryon in search of a new resort property to develop, opened the Pine Crest Inn (NR, 1982) from October to May beginning in 1917. The Pine Crest Inn exemplified the unpretentious comfort that made Tryon so popular among it well-to-do clientele. Brown became an important promoter of Tryon, especially with the formation of the Tryon Riding and Hunt Club in the 1920s, and his efforts to popularize equestrian activities in the area greatly contributed to Tryon's continued association with these pursuits.[6]

Tryon gained recognition from a number of sources, including the Lanier Library and the *Tryon Daily Bulletin*, a local newspaper organized in 1928 by Seth Vining Sr. At 5½ inches by 8½ inches and only four pages in length, the *Bulletin* was touted as the world's smallest daily newspaper. Eleanor Vance and Charlotte Yale, who had formed Biltmore Industries in Asheville, relocated to Tryon and organized the Tryon Toy Makers and Wood Carvers in 1915. The Tryon Toy Makers helped initiate a crafts revival in Polk County that led to the formation of other groups such as the Blue Ridge Weavers, a crafts guild organized in 1922 for the production and promotion of local handcrafts including textiles, basket weaving, and ceramics.

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[4] Lea and Roberts, 2-7.

[5] Lea and Roberts, 2 and 4-5.

[6] Claudia P. Roberts, "Pine Crest Inn" National Register of Historic Places Nomination (1980). Lea and Roberts, 6-7.

Prominent Broadway actor and playwright William Gillette first came to Tryon in the 1890s and began acquiring land in the town. By 1925 he had purchased more than 700 acres that was sold to a group of businessmen who subdivided the land for a residential development known as Gillette Woods.[7] Local resident Harold Shelnutt purchased a lot on the edge of Gillette Woods where he erected Sunnydale as a dance hall and recreation center. Local contractor J. S. Kell oversaw construction of the building, which may have been designed by local architect J. Foster Searles.[8] A swimming pool was started on a site to the south of the building, but was never completed. According to tradition, Shelnutt named the property for his daughter's friend, Dale, who was known for his sunny disposition. In addition to the social functions, Shelnutt later operated a restaurant there known as Sunnydale Refectory. Sunnydale was truly a community gathering place as it hosted dinners, wedding receptions, proms, Rotary Club meetings, New Year's Eve celebrations, and the Little Theater-in-the-Round performances. An advertisement in the *Tryon Daily Bulletin* indicates that the Tryon Theatre showed films at Sunnydale in 1937 while the theatre was being rebuilt after a disastrous fire.[9]

Shelnutt served as treasurer of Jackson & Jackson Cloth of Gold, a local textile manufacturer, and his family was known for being up-to-date on popular culture and entertainment. The Shelnutt's regularly traveled to Spartanburg to see the latest movies. Charged with embezzling from his employers, Shelnutt lost the property to the owners of Jackson & Jackson in 1938. As a result of the court settlement, the property was sold in 1941 to Ernest Kerhulas, a Tryon businessman. Kerhulas emigrated from Greece to the United States in 1903 and came to Tryon in 1926. While living in Union, South Carolina, Kerhulas married Christiana Goodman in 1913. Upon arriving in Tryon it was suggested to Kerhulas that a restaurant was needed in town and he subsequently opened the Tryon Café on Trade Street, which became a popular eating establishment and meeting place. The convivial Kerhulas later expanded his business by opening restaurants at Sunnydale and the Lake Lanier Tea House, which opened in the mid-1920s amid the fever of real estate development in western North Carolina. Prospective real estate buyers were brought to Lake Lanier to look at property and were treated to sandwiches and tea at the Tea House. Kerhulas purchased the Tea House in the 1930s, after the development had been crippled by the stock market crash of 1929. Kerhulas operated the

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[7] The Gillette Woods Association website (http://www.gillette-woods.org; accessed January 11, 2011).

[8] Michael McCue, personal communication, March 4, 2011. Local historian McCue notes similarities between Sunnydale and Searles' design for the Lake Lanier Tea House, which was erected around the same time. Searles is best known for his work with the Tryon Toy Makers and Wood Carvers, which McCue has researched extensively. McCue, *The Tryon Toy Makers and Wood Carvers, 1915-1940* (Columbus, NC: Condar Press, 2004).

[9] Polk County Register of Deeds Book 54, p. 327 (June 16, 1928). Anna Pack Conner, *Tryon: An Illustrated History* (2009), 104. *Tryon Daily Bulletin* (October 11, 1937).

restaurant at Sunnydale during the winter months and in the summer months moved his operation to the Tea House.[10]

Ernest Kerhulas actively participated in the social and civic life of Tryon. He served several terms on the town council and one term as mayor pro-tem. He was a charter member of the Jeff L. Nelson Masonic Lodge, follower of high school athletics, and a supporter of the Tryon Riding and Hunt Club's horse shows. Kerhulas provided food at the annual horse shows, and Sunnydale hosted numerous horse show balls. During World War II, both Sunnydale and the Lake Lanier Tea House were popular night spots for service men from Camp Croft, a United States Army infantry training facility in Spartanburg, South Carolina, roughly thirty miles to the south. Sunnydale and the Tea House offered a friendly social respite from the rigors of training camp. Ernest and Christiana Kerhulas raised four children in Tryon—Margaret, Elizabeth, Theo, and Kathryn. Mrs. Kerhulas died in 1958, and in the early 1970s, Ernest Kerhulas divided his property between the children with the Tea House going to his son, Theo, and Sunnydale passing to his daughters. Mr. Kerhulas died in 1979.[11]

Following the death of Ernest Kerhulas, his daughters appear to have rented Sunnydale to the Pereira family, who operated the Hearthstone Inn restaurant in the building until 1986. Theo Kerhulas, along with his two sons, continued to manage the Lake Lanier Tea House until his death in 2005. The Kerhulas heirs sold Sunnydale in 1986 to Norman and Marian Bannon, who opened the Vineyard Restaurant (Deed 191/1593). In 1991, the Bannons closed the Vineyard and sold Sunnydale. A series of subsequent owners and eating establishments—El Jalisco, El Chile Rojo, and Plenty of Fish—occupied Sunnydale until 2009 when the building was vacated. The current owners, Lane-Tryon LLC, purchased Sunnydale in July 2010 (Deed 381/1211) and soon began a complete rehabilitation of the building.[12]

Architecture Context

Sunnydale is one of a small group of Rustic Revival style commercial buildings in the Tryon area and one of the most intact remaining examples of the style. The other prominent examples of the Rustic Revival

[10] Hope Metcalf, personal communication, March 4, 2011. Deed 54/613 (June 7, 1941). Bennett, 233-235, and Conner, 104.

[11] Bennett, 233-235. Garland O. Goodwin, *Fat Fenders and Reflection* (Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 2008), 168. Polk County Register of Deeds.

[12] Polk County Register of Deeds. Dudley Brown, "Lake Lanier Tea House Full of Memories," GoUpstate.com (May 5, 2010) (http://www.goupstate.om/article/20100506/ARTICLES/100509800; accessed January 14, 2011).

style used for commercial structures include the Tea House at Lake Lanier, the clubhouse at the Tryon Country Club, and the Blue Ridge Development Company office (now known as the Rock House Art Gallery). While Sunnydale and the Tea House are located approximately one mile from each other, the Tea House is located across the state line in Landrum, South Carolina. Both the Tryon Country Club clubhouse and Blue Ridge Development Company office have been altered and enlarged over the years.

The use of the Rustic Revival style was not uncommon for private houses, especially seasonal residences that would allow the owners a sense of escape to the mountains without completely forgoing modern conveniences. The style appeared less frequently on commercial buildings unless the business specifically drew upon mountain culture as part of its function or marketing image—themed motor hotels and restaurants being frequent examples. While architectural trends reflected nationally popular styles and influences, specific conditions such as the availability of building materials and skilled craftsmen also dictated a number of regional distinctions. In particular, the wealthy visitors who were largely responsible for the area's growing tourist economy fashioned much of the new architecture with romantic notions about mountain lifestyles. Comfort and luxury overwhelmed the vague notion of "roughing it." Architects and skilled craftsmen, who were often brought in to work on various projects, coexisted with local builders and craftspeople and together introduced rustic interpretations of architectural styles that were suited to the mountain landscape and climate.

The Rustic Revival style in North Carolina owes a debt to the natural and rustic style of construction and engineering work developed from the National Park Service's design standards for national parks, which emphasized a close harmony of built structures and natural environment. The style was manifest in low, horizontal buildings constructed using native stone or rock, massive logs, and heavy timbers. Developed in the early twentieth century and instituted as policy in the 1920s, the Park Service's rustic architecture was heavily promoted through the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s. The CCC, a federal relief program, worked extensively in western North Carolina constructing buildings, structures, trails, and roads in the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The forested and mountainous region and tourist-driven economies of small towns along the Blue Ridge found widespread acceptance of the Rustic Revival style, which combined traditional building methods and natural materials with modern functionality.[13]

Local Tryon architect, J. Foster Searles, who designed the Lake Lanier Tea House in 1925, is believed to have also designed Sunnydale. The two buildings share several features, including their saddle-notched log construction, stone foundations and chimneys, and setback side wings. The wings of the Tea

[13] William C. Tweed, et al, *Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942* (National Park Service, Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resource Management, 1977).

House, however, are angled forward, perhaps in an attempt to afford greater views of the lake from the interior. Searles was best known for his English- and Tudor-influenced picturesque dwellings in Tryon, often in association with the Tryon Toy Makers and Wood Carvers, a handcraft organization formed in 1916. Searles designed the Toy House in 1925 to house the workshop of the Tryon Toy Makers. The stuccoed walls, hooded chimneys, and eyebrow dormer over the entrance of the Toy House contribute to its English cottage-influenced appearance. Searles' design for the Woodcarver's House, which was built for craftsman Frank Arthur, is more Tudor Revival in style with its multiple gables and dormers, applied half-timbering, and the carved raking boards and window frames executed by Arthur. Both the Tea House and Sunnydale are considerably different in style and level of detail than Searles' residential work, but their function as seasonal entertainment facilities certainly contributed to the architectural character of the two buildings.[14]

Sunnydale is the best surviving example of a Rustic Revival-style commercial building in Tryon and retains a high degree of integrity. The comparable Lake Lanier Tea House, as noted previously, stands across the state line at 351 East Lakeshore Drive in Landrum, South Carolina. Designed by Searles in 1925, the Lake Lanier Tea House is a one-story, side-gable log building with two side wings that angle forward to take advantage of views across the lake to the west. The façade of the building has been altered with modern replacement windows and doors to fully capture the lake views. The two other prominent examples of the style as used for commercial buildings have both been altered and enlarged over the years. Located at 393 Country Club Road, the clubhouse of the Tryon Country Club was built in 1922 as a one-story log structure with a main open room dominated by a stone fireplace and chimney. Renovations to the clubhouse in the 1950s updated the locker rooms and kitchen facilities; in 1968 the original cedar shake roof was replaced with asphalt shingles, lessening the overall rustic feel of the building. Built around 1926, the Blue Ridge Development Company office at 107 Pacolet Street in downtown Tryon is a one-and-a-half-story stone building with an attached porch of log timbers. The company promoted a resort development on Hogback Mountain, but soon closed with the stock market crash of 1929. The building was used as the Mountain Industries Gift Shop before Josephine Sibley Couper, an artist, purchased it for a home and studio. She divided the building into two apartments, installed false ceilings, and added a wing with two kitchens in the 1940s. In the early 2000s, the building was renovated for use as a single-family residence.

[14] Lea and Roberts, 13, 19, and 30.

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property for Sunnydale contains the full extent of Polk County tax parcel T12-E6. The property boundary, encompassing 0.59 acre, is defined as Lot B and delineated by a heavy black line on the accompanying survey map, "Survey for JR LEX, LLC," prepared by Butler Associates and dated January 7, 2009 (revised March 25, 2010).

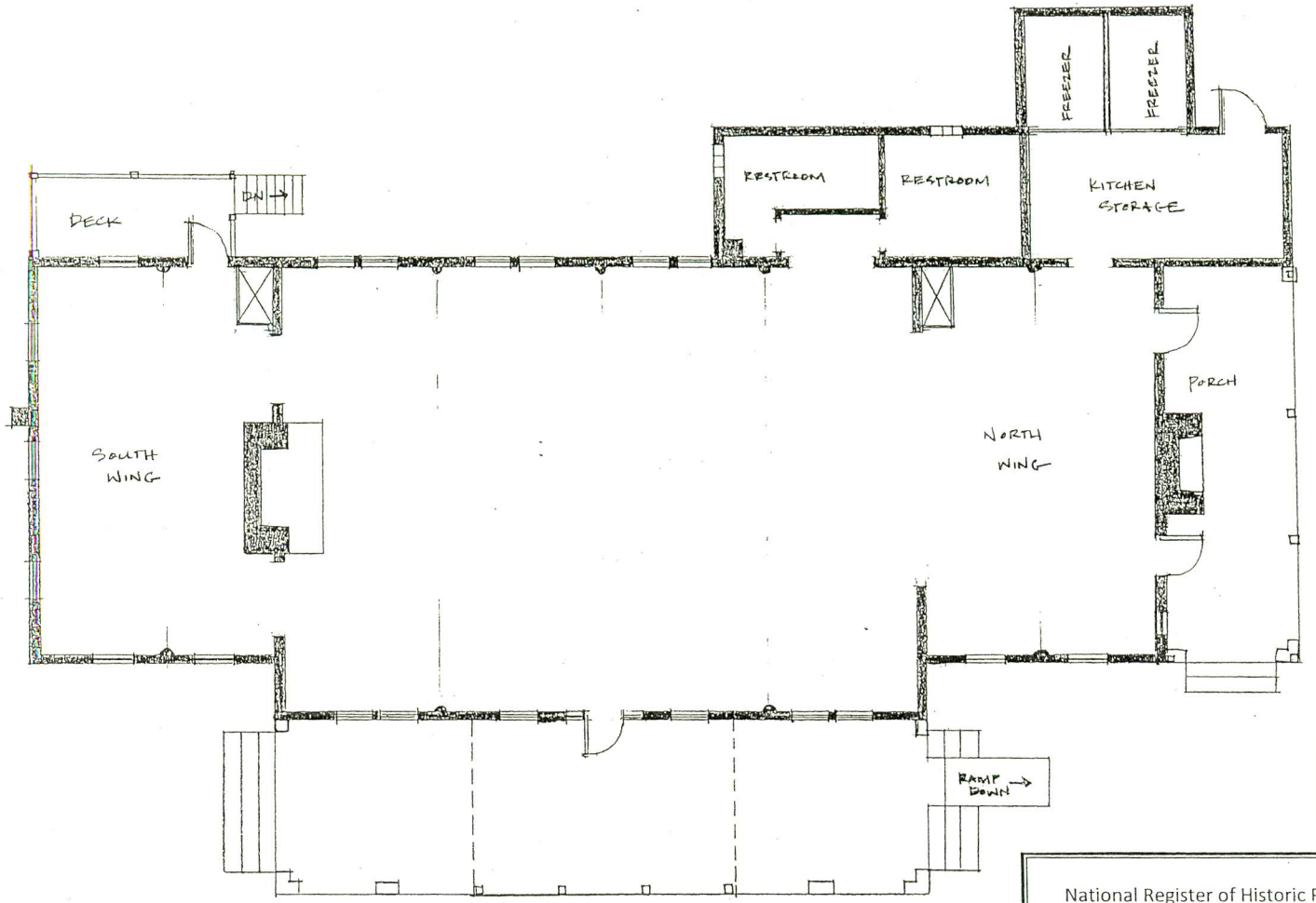
Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property includes the residual property historically associated with Sunnydale and provides an appropriate setting.

Photograph Index

All photographs of Sunnydale, 334 South Trade Street, in Tryon, North Carolina by Clay Griffith of Acme Preservation Services. Exterior photographs were taken on September 9, 2011 and interior photographs on April 21, 2011. Digital images kept at the Survey and Planning Branch of North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh, North Carolina.

1. Façade, view to west
2. Oblique front view to southwest
3. South end elevation, view to north
4. Oblique rear view to north
5. North end elevation, view to south
6. Interior – main room, view to south
7. Interior – fireplace in main room, view to southeast
8. Interior – oblique view of east wall, view to northeast
9. Interior – restroom vestibule from main room, view to northwest
10. Interior – south wing, view to west
11. Interior – north wing, view to southwest
12. Interior – kitchen addition, view to southwest



National Register of Historic Places Nomination

SUNNYDALE

334 South Trade Street
Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina

FLOOR PLAN

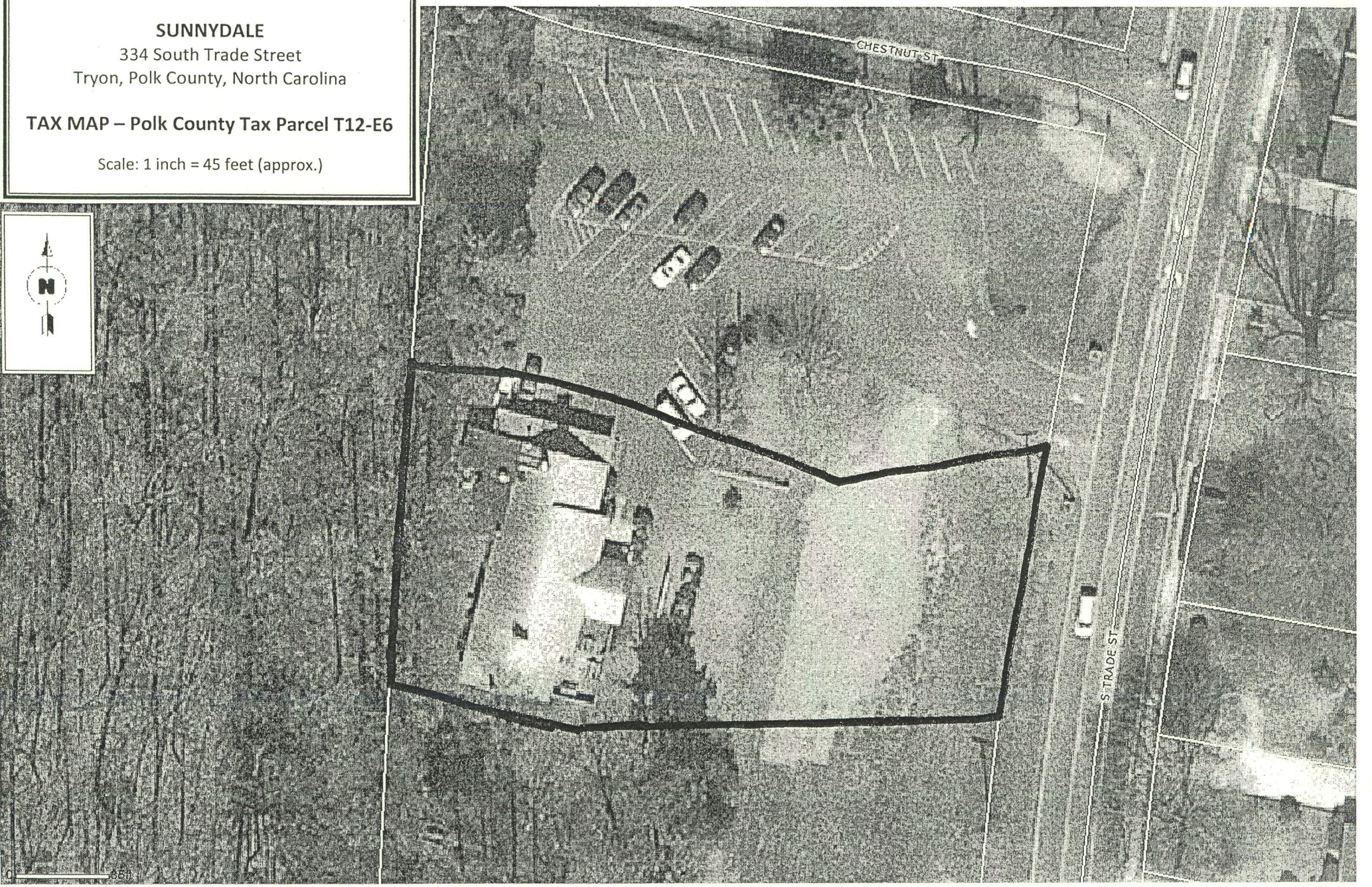
Base drawing prepared by Brady/Trakas Architects
Revised by C. Griffith, Acme Preservation Services
(Not to scale)

National Register of Historic Places

SUNNYDALE
334 South Trade Street
Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina

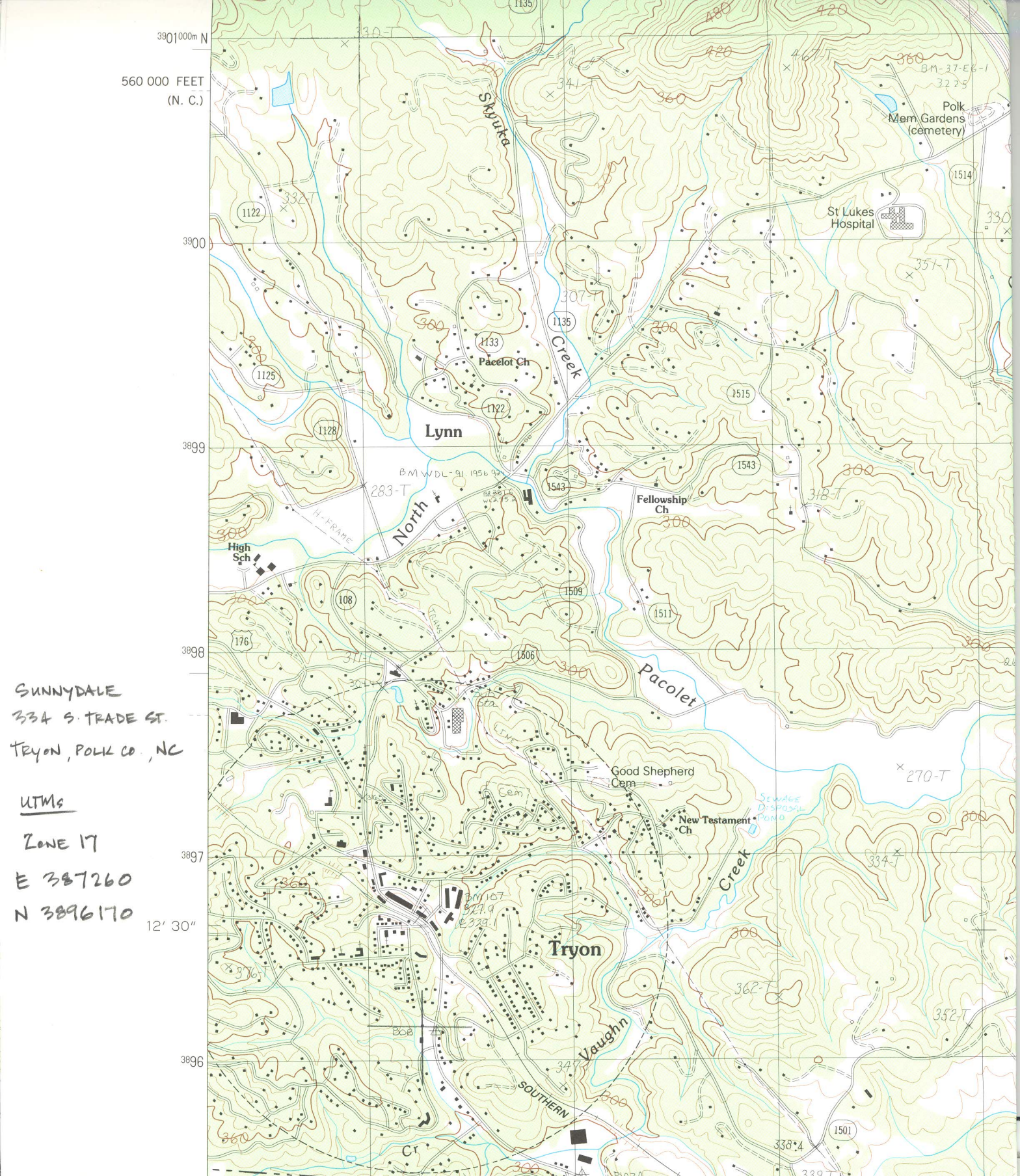
TAX MAP – Polk County Tax Parcel T12-E6

Scale: 1 inch = 45 feet (approx.)



EXIT

EXIT



SUNNYDALE
334 S. TRADE ST.
TRYON, POLK CO., NC

UTMs
ZONE 17
E 387260
N 3896170