

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name New Castle Historic Commercial District

other names/site number NA

Related Multiple Property NA

2. Location

street & number Main Street and Main Cross Street

NA

not for publication

city or town New Castle

NA

vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Henry code 103 zip code 40050

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title Craig Potts/SHPO Date _____

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
29	2	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
29	2	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

1 (Henry County Courthouse)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Residential/domestic: single dwelling
- Commerce: business
- Commerce: Financial institution
- Commerce: general store/department store
- Government: courthouse

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- Commerce: Financial institution
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7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commercial Style
- Log House
- Italianate

- foundation: Stone, concrete masonry units
- walls: Stone/Brick/wood
- roof: Asphalt shingle, metal standing seam
- other: _____

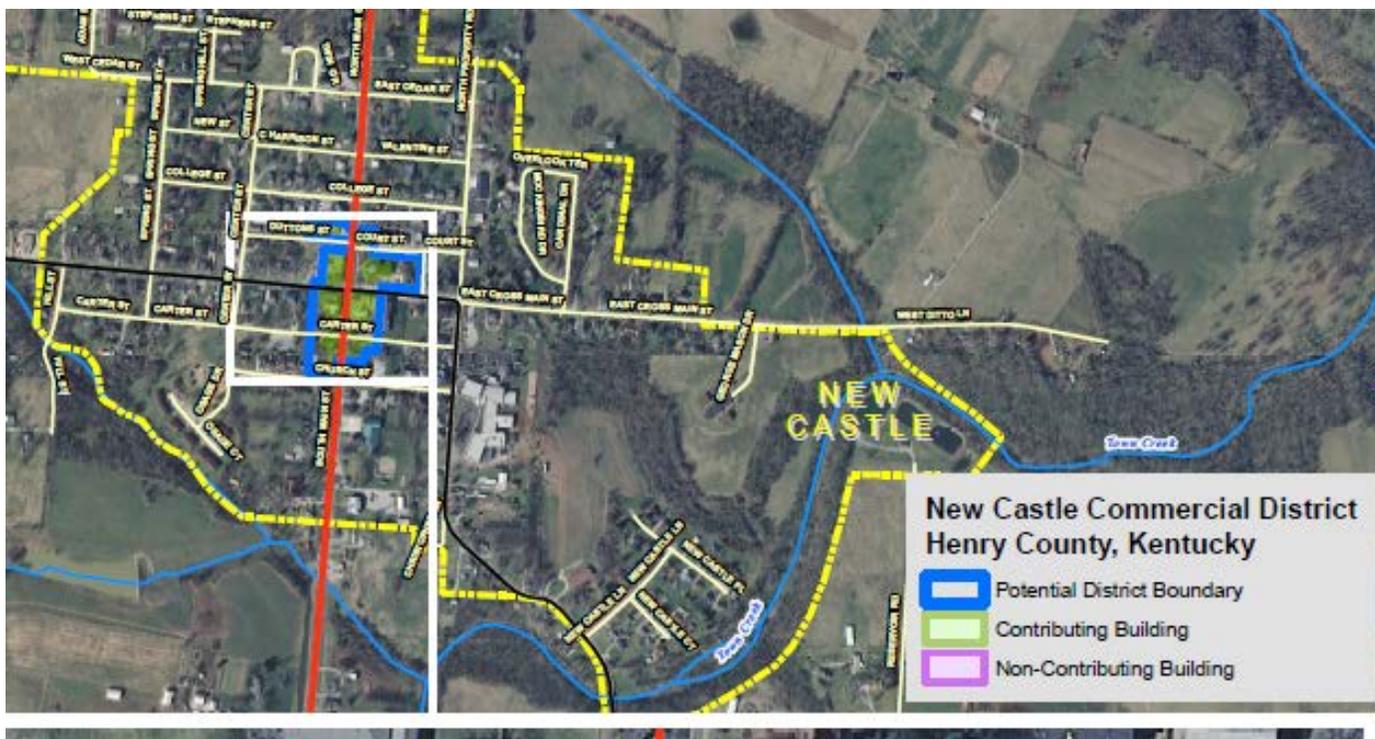
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Narrative Description

Summary

The New Castle Commercial District contains 26 properties along Main Street and 6 properties along Cross Main Street in New Castle, seat of Henry County, Kentucky. Approximately 6.24 acres make up the district, which consists of 30 contributing buildings, including the already-listed courthouse, and 2 non-contributing buildings. Each of the 32 buildings has served some commercial purpose at some point throughout New Castle's history. The majority of structures are constructed from brick and all are 1-2 stories, with the exception of the Henry County Courthouse. The three oldest buildings in the district are log structures, two of which have been covered with siding. The years of construction range between 1790 and 1978. The Henry County Courthouse was listed on the National Register in 1977 (NRIS 77000621).



Early Development in the District

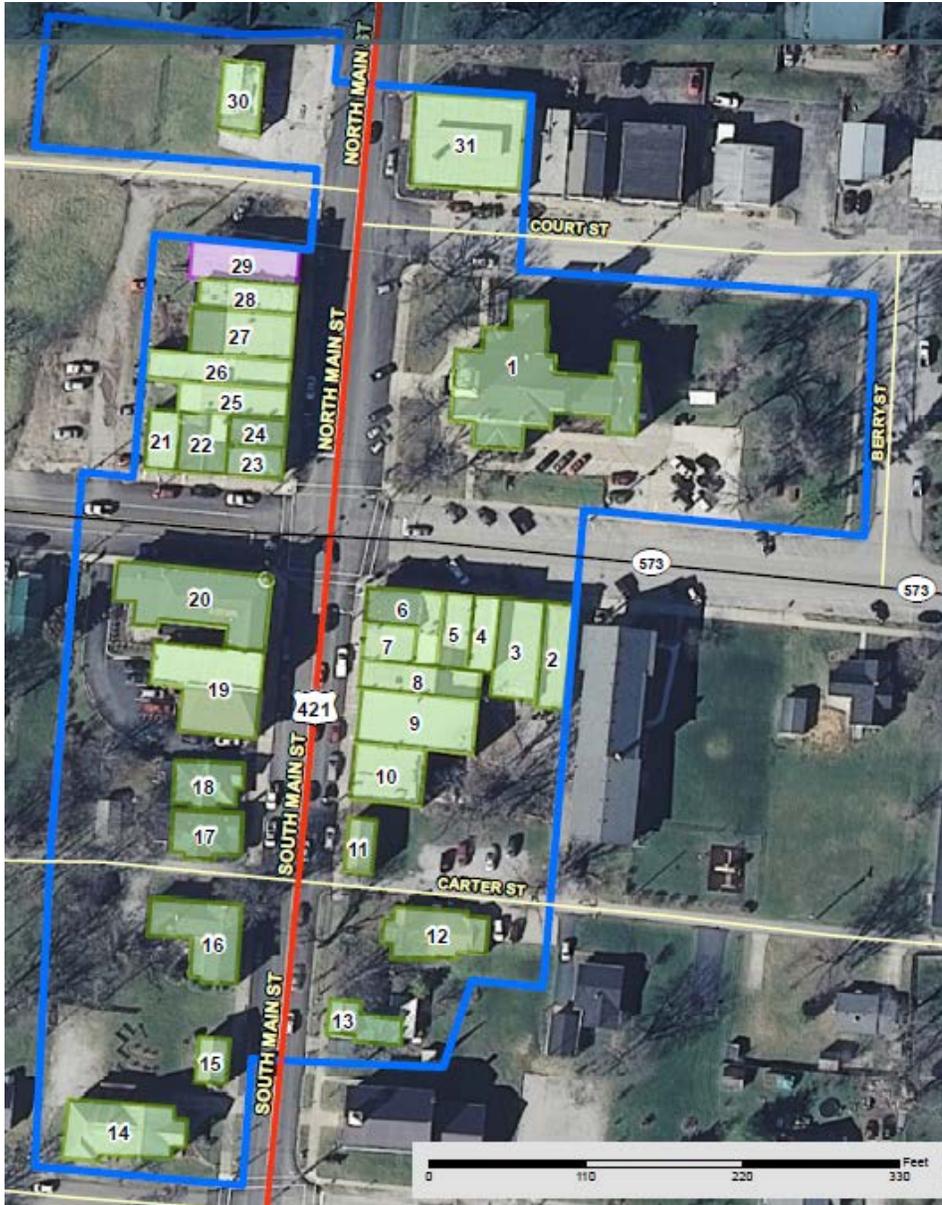
The first plat of New Castle was recorded in 1801. Planned around a grid, the center was the courthouse, with the original thoroughfares being Main Street running north and south and Cross Main Street running east and west. The current layout of the town and street names conform to this plan.

James and Thomas Pearce, two pioneers from Virginia, built four two-storied log cabins and settled in what is now New Castle in the early 1790s. Three of the four log cabins still stand, remaining the oldest buildings in town. The Pearce's were self-sufficient and business savvy, using the cabins for trading posts as well as residences. One of James Pearce's grandsons said that their father told them, "the government then gave a bounty on all wolves' scalps collected, and that from the cabin door they shot deer and other game." James Pearce would later become a successful merchant-tailor, working and selling merchandise out of one of

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the original cabins. The Pearces' pioneering spirit was instrumental in founding the location of New Castle; as was their business entrepreneurship in helping establish its early commercial history.



The following information sources were used to compose the Description Inventory:

Sources: D.J. Lake, Atlas of Henry and Shelby Counties (1882); Drane, Maude Johnston, History of Henry County (1948); NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES; Kentucky Heritage Council, Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory (1981); Tom Bond; Martha Washington Oldham (Mrs. Vernon) Valentine; Barbara Harrod; Henry County Local (March 9, 1972); John M. Berry, Jr.; Henry County Courthouse National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form (April 11, 1977)

Inventory of District Features

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#1 Henry County Courthouse (HYNC-24), 30 N. Main Street, National Register listed (Contributing Building)

This Italianate style structure is actually the third courthouse built in Henry County, the first was built of logs in 1799, and the second in 1806 of brick. The current structure was built circa 1875 and designed by H. P. McDonald. The brickwork is double pile construction. The courthouse is a six-bay two-story structure on a stone foundation. Two-story wings protrude off the north and south sides of the main section forming a "T" shape. Narrow brick interior chimneys are placed along the side and end. A bracketed cornice extends around the main block and the wings. The upper story windows have rounded arches. The front entrance is centered in the façade and is composed of double doors with a large round-arched transom above. The entrance is sheltered by a small one-story porch supported by two belted columns on round cut-stone blocks and with square pilasters against the wall. Brick pilasters capped with stone are located at the corners and between each bay. A narrow strip of stone and a course of raised brick, just below the top of the windows and directly below them, run horizontally across the front. The windows on the first floor are long and narrow rectangular openings with flat stone lintels and narrow stone sills. Above the first floor openings are three courses of corbelled brick which connect the pilasters. The fenestration on the sides of the main block is the same as the front. The windows in the wings are the same as those in the façade, although they are placed singly rather than paired. Sometime in the early-20th century, a one-bay two-story addition was made to the end of the north wing. Centered above the central bay of the façade and the east wing are shallow pediments. Rising behind the pediment in the façade is the full bell tower, with four identical sides. It rests on a cubic base with applied brackets and a row of five circular louvered vents above. A round clock face is centered in a panel and flanked by pilasters. Crowning the clock panel is a triangular pediment. There are squat urns in the corners at the base of the clock stage. The tower itself is capped by a tall, slightly rounded mansard roof and a decorative iron cresting. The indented corners of the tower reflect those of the main blocks below. The Henry County Courthouse design came at an important

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transitional period between the typical post-Civil War Italianate or Second Empire courthouse and the Richardsonian Romanesque vogue of the late 1880s and early '90s. The original tower clock for the Henry County Courthouse, made by the E. Howard Clock Company of New York City, is still on display in the entrance hall of the courthouse to this day. It is displayed in a cherry wood and glass case made by a local artisan. The clock was purchased in 1877 for \$460. The original check is on file at the Henry County Historical Society in New Castle. The clock was found in the attic of the courthouse and was completely restored by a professional clock maker before it was placed on display.



#2 New Castle Public Works Office (HYNC-23), 37 E. Cross Main Street (Contributing Building)
This 1½-story brick structure was originally the town's fire station. This is indicated by the stone tablet "N.C.F.D." which is in the wall over what used to be the door for the fire truck. The two-bay façade now has a door and the previous fire-truck door has been infilled with a bank of three windows. The three windows each have three vertical parts: a storefront's bulkhead, a one-over-one double-hung wooden windows, and a decorative transom. Above both openings on the façade are stone lintels the thickness of three courses of bricks. The building's façade has pressed bricks, i.e., a finer quality of bricks than the remaining common bond brickwork on the sides. The remaining brickwork is common bond with a row of headers every six rows. Date of construction is circa 1900.



#3 New Castle City Hall (HYNC-22), 31 E. Cross Main Street (Contributing Building)
This 1½-story brick commercial building has a three-bay façade: a recessed glass door with sidelights, and flanking store front windows. Round metal posts accent the edges of the three bays. The transom area above the windows and entry appear to retain their original configuration but have been painted. Above the transom is a modern treatment with inverted dentils and slightly recessed squares and rectangles in a solid wall. Clay tile provides the cornice cap. The brickwork is common bond and the front had a wooden storefront at one time. The date of construction is circa. 1900.

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#4 Fitness Center (HYNC-21), 23 E. Cross Main Street (Contributing Building)

This two-story brick commercial building was constructed between 1870 and 1880. The front façade has four bays on the first floor with a side and center entrance. Metal forms the structural elements of the storefront. The brickwork is common bond. Three upper façade openings light the upper floor space. Two are windows, with 1-over-1 double-hung sash with limestone lintels and sills. The central opening is a door, with a metal storm door on the outside. There is no exterior platform or other walkway for a person who might exit the door to stand, making the reason for the door a mystery. The structure was originally a small restaurant and later a grocery store.



#5 Commercial Building (HYNC-20). 21 E. Cross Main Street (Contributing Building)

This two-story brick commercial building was built around 1880. The front facade is four bays wide with entrances in the central and right-side bays. Both entrances have a full-width transom. The storefront was wooden at one time, but now is metal. A fixed-light 2-over-2 storefront window is situated on either side of the central entry door. The upper floor has three one-over-one double hung windows. The brickwork on the upper floor is common bond. There is a wooden cornice with small brackets capping the front. Plain limestone lintels and sills frame the windows in the upper story. This is one of two original facades in New Castle.

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#6A Owned by George, Leslie & David Mason, 10 & 12 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

#6B Zaring & Sullivan Law Office, 19 E. Cross Main Street (Contributing Building)

Zaring & Sullivan Law Office (Formerly Harrod & Harrod Law Office) - This building (now divided into a lower floor and three partitioned upper floors, all separately owned) was at one time a grocery store owned by William Long, later becoming a hardware store. In the 1930's it housed the Telephone Exchange. The second story housed the original or very early New Castle Post Office, and later the Selective Service Office. The building is a two-story commercial building with four-bay sections. The brickwork is common bond. Three windows light the upper story with 1-over-1 double-hung vinyl sashes. The west side windows have limestone lintels and sills. On the north side are 3 double-hung 1-over-1 vinyl windows on the second floor, as well as a bay window on that second floor. On the north is only one window at the ground level, a smaller display window similar to those found on the western side. The building has a corner entrance. On the west side is a plate glass display window whose size has been reduced over time. Also on the west side is a 4-panel wooden door with a transom over it. That door opens to the stairway to the second floor.



#7 Henry County Helping Hands Thrift Store (HYNC-4), 16 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

Date of construction circa 1880. This two-story brick commercial Mesker building has been the home of Holland Pharmacy since 1906. From 1928 – 1960 it was known as the Holland-Valentine Drug Store. The building is four bays wide with entrances in the center part of the building. The brickwork is common bond. The structure has a cast iron front façade and cast iron cornice. Windows are 2-over-2 double-hung wood sashes with limestone lintels and sills. The interior has been altered significantly, with the old soda fountain having been removed in 1964.

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**#8 Leslie's Pub (HYNC-3), 18 S. Main Street
(Contributing Building)**

This one-time grocery store and pool hall is a two-story brick commercial Mesker building built in the 1880s. The front is three bays wide. Two doors share the recessed entry—one enters the store, the other provides access to the upper floor. Both doors have a one-pane transom. The brickwork is common bond. The vinyl windows have 1-over-1 double-hung sashes with limestone lintels and sills. On the interior the building has a pressed tin ceiling. The structure has an iron cornice. During recent renovation they found and installed original transom windows.



**#9 Old (Meat) Locker (HYNC-2), 24 S. Main Street
(Contributing Building)**

This structure, once home to the New Castle Implement Co. and later the Henry County Food Locker, was built in the 1850s–1870s. It's a two-story brick commercial Mesker building with a five-bay façade on the first floor, and four windows on the upper level. The storefront level has been changed in the last 20-30 years, with the display windows shrunk, leaving two windows flanking each side of the main door. The first floor now has a tile façade. A very small transom hovers over the main entrance. Another entrance is on the far right of the façade, leading to the stairway to the upper floor. That entrance has two narrow doors, each with two long windows. The brick work is common bond and windows have 1-over-1 double-hung sashes with limestone lintels and sills. A very subtle denticulated cornice is covered by a metal cap.

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#10 Odd Fellows Lodge (HYNC-1), 32 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This two-story brick building was constructed sometime between 1850 and 1870 for commercial use. The façade is four bays wide, with entrances in the center and on the side bays. A two-pane transom resides over the entranceways. The brickwork is common bond and the upper floor windows have 2-over-2 double-hung wood sashes with limestone sills. The store front is cast iron with a cast iron cornice. Flat arches are over the first floor bay windows. There are internal chimneys. The upper floor has been the meeting room for the African American Odd Fellows Lodge, Washington Lodge #1513 since 1886. The lodge was formed in 1872 by former slaves just seven years after the end of the Civil War.



#11 Pearce/Capito Cabin (HYNC-35), 42 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

Capito Cabin- This home was built circa 1790. This two story log house which is covered in weather boarded is believed to be the oldest dwelling in New Castle. The building is a two-story building with a fieldstone foundation. The center ridgeline chimney is constructed from brick. The windows are 9-over-6 double-hung wood sashes. The building is currently vacant.



#12 The Norvell Building Law Office (HYNC-94), 106 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

Ivers & Harrod Law Office (Formerly Norvell Clinic) - Dr. Wyatt Norvell constructed this building for a family practice clinic just after World War II. This may have been the site of the third cabin built by the Pearce Brothers during New Castle's earliest days. Martha Carroll tells of the "Barnes cabin" that was torn down because it kept "sinking into the ground." Mrs. Drane relates that one of the Pearce cabins was razed a few years before the publication of her book in 1948. The house has a central passage plan in Cape Cod form with a pedimented one-bay-wide porch covering. That porch overhang is supported by light metal posts. The house is covered in clapboards, with a side gable roof. The entry door has two-light sidelights, and a single 6-over-6 double-hung window is placed on either side of the door.

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#13 The Pearce Homestead Gift Shop (HYNC-36), 122 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This log dwelling may have been built around 1790. The two-story structure has been weather boarded and a one-story framed ell has been added. The main house's plan is hall-parlor. The windows are 6-over-6 double-hung sash, and appear to be original. The exterior gabled-end chimney is on the west side. The home has a limestone foundation. The entrance door has a transom over it, and above that, a gable-roofed porch overhang, supported by wooden brackets. Several additions and alterations have been made such as a one-story addition on the rear and a one-story front addition on both sides of the ell. A one-story car port has also been added on the north side.



#14 Heritage House Antiques (HYNC-95), 137 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This Neoclassical Revival house was built in 1947 by D. L. Ricketts and used for many years as a funeral home. In recent years it was the location of the Heritage House Antiques. This two-story painted-block structure faces east, and has a three-bay front façade. The house has a side gable orientation, with a two-story addition continuing toward the rear of the lot, and metal covering the entire roof. The front façade's central bay houses the main entry and a two-story portico with pedimented gable, supported by three square-wood columns per side, and a pilaster. The elaborate entry has a large wooden door with a 5-light transom, 12-light sidelights, and a pronounced cornice. Above the entry are two windows in an 8-over-8 double-hung sash configuration, apparently original. Coach lights flank the door. The outside bays of the front façade each have an 8-over-8 double-hung-sash window on both the first floor and the second floor. The sill on the second-story windows is limestone, and the sill on those first-floor windows is unpainted brick. The South side has paired sets of 8-over-8 double-hung windows indicating three bays, with second-story windows largely repeating this pattern. The gable return on the south side forms a broken pediment. Toward the rear of the house is another entry on the South side, as well as a partially-below-grade garage. The North side of the building divides into two parts, a portion on the left, under the broken

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	<p>pedimented gable, and a carport and entry on an addition, to the right. A mixture of window sizes, types, and rhythms puncture the wall, with 8-over-8 double-hung windows being the most common choice. Double doors give entry to the building under the carport.</p>
	<p>#15 Pearce Log Cabin (HYNC-32), 129 S. Main Street (Contributing Building) The current Berry Center Book Store was one of the original Pearce cabins. This log building is considered to be one of the oldest structures in New Castle, having been built by the Pearce family around 1790 in what was to become the original city limits. The profile is single pile; the layout is hall parlor plan; the roof is side gabled. The building has 1/1 windows on the façade. The foundation is fieldstone. It has an exterior end chimney that pierces the center of the southern ridgeline. There are boxed cornices with returns. It was remodeled in 1990 and is now used in conjunction with The Berry Center next door.</p>
	<p>#16 Oldham House (HYNC-33), 111 S. Main Street (Contributing Building) Oldham House- This dwelling two-story brick was built around 1820 with a mixture of Federal and Greek revival architectural influences. This house has a two-story brick ell and a two-story brick addition on the rear of the ell. The five-bay structure has a single pile profile and central hall plan. The entrance way is recessed with a rounded jack arch. A one-light transom lights the entry. The front façade has Flemish bond brickwork and common bond on the remainder of the structure, with header rows every five courses. The first floor façade windows are 2-over-2 panes with wooden lintels and sills and a vinyl-clad storm window exterior to the wood window. The second floor façade windows are 2-over-2-light double-hung sashes with wooden sills. The main building has interior gable end chimneys, one that pierces the north and the other piercing the south end of the ridgeline. The roof is gabled, the cornice is boxed with returns and brackets and dentils. The foundation is limestone. The ell and two-story brick addition on the rear of the ell have common bond brickwork with header rows every five courses. The brick addition has jack arches. The ell windows are 2-over-2-light double-hung sashes with wooden trim. The two-story brick</p>

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	<p>addition has 6-over-8 windows with rounded arches and boxed cornices. There are two outbuildings on the property. One is a 1½-story brick smoke house constructed of common bond brickwork with header rows every five courses. It is one-bay plan with a fieldstone foundation. The other outbuilding is an earthen root cellar.</p>
	<p>#17 Yates Law Office (HYNC-34), 45 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)</p> <p>Built ca. 1910, this building is a T-plan wood frame and clapboard covered house. It was the home of one of the local doctors for many years in the first half of the 20th century. It has been converted into a commercial-office use. Windows are simple 1-over-1 double-hung wood sash, apparently original. The roof has multiple gables, two of which face east, toward the street, one setback from the other. Two chimneys are visible, one venting the center of the house, the other on the north side of the structure. A porch covers the front entry and wraps around to the midpoint of the south side. Four round wooden columns with Doric capitals support the porch roof, and a limestone foundation supports the porch floor, and the rest of the house.</p>
	<p>#18 Insurance Office (HYNC-96), 33 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)</p> <p>This building was built in the first decade of the 20th century as a dwelling. As the neighbor at 45 S. Main Street, this is also a 1½-story frame structure with a T-plan. Both buildings also have two offset small gables facing forward, giving them the profile of a bungalow. The windows have 1-over-1-light double-hung sashes with wooden architectural trim. The chimney is interior and the foundation is limestone. The first story has a bay window on the north right side.</p>

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#19 United Citizens Bank (HYNC-11), 25 S. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This structure was built in 1903 as The Bank of New Castle. It has two stories faced in sandstone with prominent arches. The first floor has a pedestrian door and large central window, and an implied door to the right, which appears to have been filled in originally. All three of these features are topped with semi-circular arches. Separating the first and second floors is a sandstone dentil course. Above that, four double-hung replacement windows with 1-over-1-light sashes. The arches over those four windows are decorated with a keystone. The building's prominent cast iron cornice has brackets of two sizes, and is quite intact in comparison with many buildings of this style and vintage.

An addition was constructed on the south side of the historic bank. It has two bays and interior connection to the historic bank. The addition was built in 1975, after a fire destroyed the structure on the lot. A door and a non-opening window punctuate the addition's front. Both openings have large arches. The main material of the building is a buff-colored brick. A drive-up window with a pent roof is the only feature on the south side. The addition has a modified hipped roof and asphalt shingles.



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**#20 New Castle Hotel, 15 Main Street
(Contributing Building)**

This two-story common-bond brick structure was built around 1902 as the "New Castle Hotel" by the Downs Brothers of Eminence. The site was the former location of "The Gray House," which had burned around the turn of the century. A two-bay storefront extends southward from the building's corner, and is cast iron. Entry doors are found on the building's North and East sides, as well as on the corner. The street corner portion of the structure was the town's post office from circa 1920 until the mid-1960s. The old hotel lobby served as the city's bus stop from the 1930s until that same time period. The windows are 1-over-1-light double-hung sashes with limestone lintels and sills. Also part of original hotel is the pressed tin-sided building that once housed the hotel's kitchen. The façade is four bays wide with 1-over-1-light double-hung wooden sashes. Numerous chimneys rise from the building's roof slopes. The rear entrance has a one-pane transom. It also retains a remarkable second-story turret, faced in wood shingles, and terminating in a conical roof, which is original to the structure.



**#21 Buddy's Restaurant (HYNC-8), 18 W. Cross
Main Street (Contributing Building)**

This building has common bond brickwork and a cast iron front façade and was built circa 1880. It is a one-story three-bay building. The cast iron façade was constructed by G.L. Meskers and Company from Evansville, Indiana. The bulkheads, store window openings, and transom area over the display windows, seem to retain their historic configuration, though the transoms no longer transmit light. The subtle dentil and brick work give interest to the cornice.

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#22 Illumination Resources , 10 W. Cross Main Street (Contributing Building)

Building #23 has common bond brickwork and a cast iron front façade and was built circa 1880. It is a two-part building. The left (west) portion is three bays and 1½ stories building. The cast iron façade was constructed by G.L. Meskers and Company from Evansville, Indiana. It retains much of its historic storefront system: small bulkhead, large display windows, and relatively large transom areas over the door and windows. The cornice is a virtual duplicate of the one found next door, on 18 W. Cross Main Street. The eastern portion of the building appears contemporaneous, but lacks the cast iron structural members. Its cornice is simpler, with a two-course brick banding, covered with non-original clay tile.



#23 Henry County Chamber of Commerce & Tourism (HYNC-12), 11 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This building was constructed around 1880. A brick two-story corner building with an east face on North Main Street, and a south face on West Main Cross Street, its North Main Street façade spans three bays. On that side are two entranceways, each with a one-pane transom. The second-floor windows on both sides are 1-over-1-light double-hung sashes with limestone sills and lintels. There is a wooden cornice capping both sides, and the brickwork is common bond. The southern side of the building has two windows on the second floor, and a historic door that has been taken out of service through being bricked up.

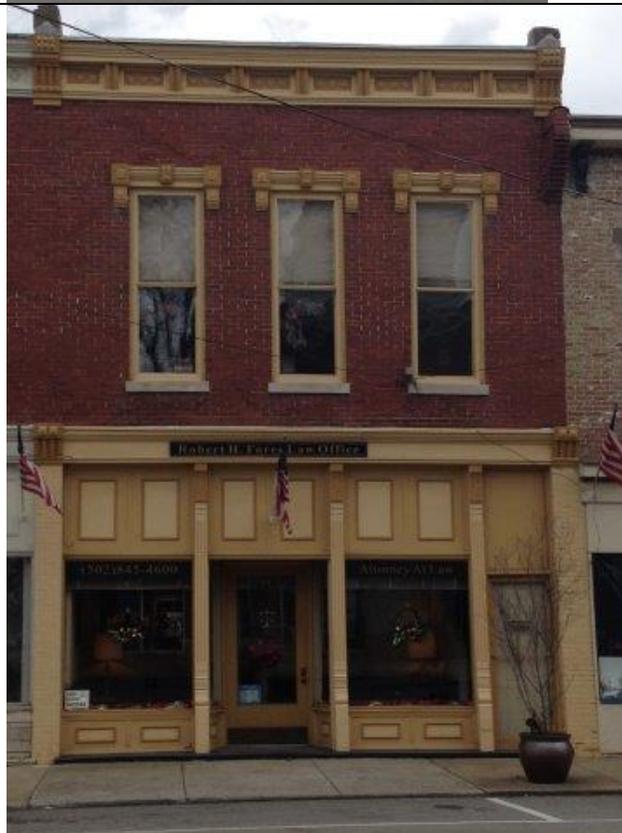
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#24 Clubb Pharmacy (HYNC-13), 13 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This Mesker building, and its neighbor at 19 North Main Street, are nearly identical in their design. The building at 13 North Main Street has more change at its storefront level. The building has 4 structural bays on the first floor defined by cast iron posts, three hooded 1-over-1 double-hung-sash windows on the second floor, and a decorative cornice top. Non-historic aluminum doors occur in the first and third bays (counting from left to right). Another change is the bulkheads in which stone in an ashlar pattern is attached, and the transoms have been filled in with wood panels, preventing the infiltrating of light. Hood molds cover the 2nd-floor windows. The chimneys are interior. The lower floor of 13 N. Main was the M. V. Long Grocery at the turn of the 20th century.



#25 Robert H. Foree Law Office (HYNC-14), 19 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

The Mesker buildings at 13 and 19 North Main Street have been partitioned into two units, and are separately owned. The façade stretches eight bays with entrances on the sides and central bays. The storefronts are cast iron. The brickwork is common bond. The cornices are cast iron. The windows are 1-over-1-light double-hung sashes with prominent hood moldings and simple rectangular limestone sills. The transom over the side entrance has been covered with wood. The chimneys are interior. The Henry County Board of Education occupied the lower floor for many years. The building has been recently remodeled, with new treatments for the bulkheads and the transoms over the door and display windows.

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#26 Commercial Building (HYNC-98), 29 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This building was erected circa 1880. It's a two-story brick commercial building with common bond brickwork and a three-bay facade. The upper floor windows are 1-over-1-light double-hung sash with limestone lintels and sills, apparently the original sashes. The cornice is bracketed. The storefront has undergone much surface change, but its basic configuration of solids and voids are recognizable. At one time the building housed one of New Castle's many grocery stores. It served as an auto parts store for several years.



#27 Simpson Masonic Lodge #189 (HYNC-15), 32 & 35 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This building was constructed circa 1880. It is two stories tall, has four divisions on the first floor, with entrances in the central and right-side bays. The brickwork is common bond. The cornices are bracketed. The windows are 1-over-1-light double-hung sashes with segmental brick arches. There is a two-row brick belt course below the bracketed cornices. The storefront was remodeled ca. 1950, and contains a non-historic aluminum door, new bulkheads, and very light aluminum frames for the display windows. The upper floor has been the location of the Simpson Masonic Lodge # 189 for many years. It is one of the oldest Masonic lodges in the state, believed to have been organized here in the 1820s.

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#28 Insurance Associates & 2nd-Floor Apartment (HYNC-16), 39 & 41 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This two-story Mesker building's storefront is a three-part cast iron system which does not span the entire front of the building. The storefront is organized with entry doors flanking a large central plate-glass window. The doors have glass transoms, but the central window does not have a transom over it. The doors have aluminum frames. The building was constructed in 1872 for \$785.00 as the National Bank of New Castle. The bank vault was purchased from Hall's Safe Company of Cincinnati for \$1,000.00. The single window on the second floor is a tripartite fixed-glass full-round arch; the two dividing members are wood, a limestone sill is at the bottom, and a soldier course forms the arch. The cornices are bracketed. The old bank vault is still intact. The interior ceiling is pressed tin. The bank relocated in 1903, and James H. Bovard purchased the building, and operated a jewelry store there until 1944.



#29 Eddie's Hair Salon (HYNC-17), 45 N. Main Street (Non-contributing Building)

This is 1½-story building is New Castle's most changed commercial structure. Its front does not exhibit any historic fabric. Its façade exhibits no historic building material. The original storefront was removed and in its place is a collection of aluminum framed glass openings—fixed windows and two main doors. The original cornices have been removed. The historic brick on the building's north side is completely intact, and laid in common bond. That side has no windows nor openings. The open lot beside (north of) the building indicates that a neighboring building once stood beside 45 North Main Street. The neighboring commercial building served as a coal and lumber company and then a real estate office before being razed. The building was once a general merchandise store.

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#30 Buckman's Automotive (HYNC-46), 115 N. Main Street (Contributing Building)

This is a concrete block gasoline and service station consisting in three bays and facing east. The office bay is indicated by a 6-light-by-6-light bank of metal framed windows and a pedestrian door. To the right of that on the front façade are two garage bays, denoted by movable garage doors with 12-glass panes each. The building has a rectangular plan, a red unadorned cornice, and two bathrooms on the south side. The area between the front door and the roadway is wide enough to have had gasoline pumps at one time; they are not present now.



#31 A-1 Service Center Garage (HYNC-19) , 34 Court Street (Contributing Building)

This 5500- square-foot brick building has a brick foundation and wood structural frame. It was built in the 1920s for commercial use as an auto dealership. The structure has a storefront and windows facing toward Main Street to the west and Court Street to the south. On the south side, the five bays consist of two banks of three windows each, and then three garage-door openings. The west side consists of a triple bank of windows, a double door, then two triple banks of windows. A canopy wraps the two bays on each side closest to the corner, the automobile display space. Previous uses included an automobile garage. The 1½-story pressed brick commercial building is situated on a corner lot. It has five bays facing Court Street and four bays on the Main Street side. Segmental arches cover each opening. The windows have fixed frames, and a number of them are replacements. Chimneys are placed on the interior.

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Inventory #	KHC Survey HYNC-#	Building Name	Parcel ID	Status
1	-24	Henry County Courthouse	028-60-05-001	Contributing
2	-23	New Castle Public Works Office	028-60-07-010	Contributing
3	-22	New Castle City Hall	028-60-07-009	Contributing
4	-21	Fitness Center	028-60-07-008	Contributing
5	-20	Vacant	028-60-07-007	Contributing
6a	-5	John W. Coomes & David G. Mason	028-60-07-006 & 028-60-07-007.1	Contributing
6b	-5	Zaring & Sullivan Law Office	028-60-07-007	Contributing
7	-4	Henry County Helping Hands Thrift Store	028-60-07-005	Contributing
8	-3	Leslie's Pub	028-60-07-004	Contributing
9	-2	Old (Meat) Locker	028-60-07-003	Contributing
10	-1	Odd Fellows Lodge	028-60-07-002	Contributing
11	-35	Pearce/Capito Cabin	028-60-07-001	Contributing
12	-94	The Norvell Building Law Office	028-60-08-007	Contributing
13	-36	The Pearce Homestead Gift Shop	028-60-08-006	Contributing
14	-95	Heritage House	028-30-07-003	Contributing
15	-32	Old Pearce Cabin	028-30-07-002	Contributing
16	-33	Oldham House	028-30-07-001	Contributing
17	-34	Yates Law Office	028-30-06-004	Contributing
18	-96	Insurance Office	028-30-06-003	Contributing
19	-97	United Citizens Bank NON-CONTRIBUTING NEWER ADDITION	028-30-06-002	Contributing
20	-6 & -39	New Castle Hotel	028-30-06-001	Contributing
21	-8	Buddy's Restaurant	028-30-05-010	Contributing
22	-9 & -10	Illumination Resources	028-30-05-009	Contributing
23	-12	Henry County Chamber of Commerce & Tourism	028-30-05-008	Contributing
24	-13	Clubb Pharmacy	028-30-05-007	Contributing
25	-14	Robert H. Foree Law Office	028-30-05-006	Contributing
26	-98	Vacant	028-30-05-005	Contributing
27	-15	Simpson Masonic Lodge #189	028-30-05-005 & 028-30-05-005	Contributing
28	-16	Insurance Associates & Second Floor Apartment	028-30-05-003	Contributing
29	-17	Hair Salon	028-30-05-002	Non-contributing
30	-46	Buckman's Automotive	028-30-04-002	Contributing
31	-19	A-1 Service Center Garage	028-60-04-001	Contributing

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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.
- 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 grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1798-1960

Significant Dates

1875

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

McDonald, H.P.

McDonald Brothers

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance begins with the establishment of the County, 1798, and ends at 1960, well within the 50-year limit for the historic period. The historic district in New Castle was significant in local commerce during this entire span of time, and the earliest buildings in the district have been said to have stood since the 1790s.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): N/A

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Summary Paragraph

The New Castle Historic District meets National Register Criterion A. It is significant within the context Commerce & Community Development of Henry County, Kentucky, 1798-1965. Within that context, two Henry County towns stand out as significant places of commerce—Eminence and New Castle. Eminence rose to prominence by being a stop on the Louisville & Cincinnati Railroad, later known as the Louisville & Lexington Railroad. New Castle, on the other hand, did not have access to railroad service, and gained its commercial prominence through its function as the county seat town. While both towns are significant in local commerce, Eminence’s ability to demonstrate that significance has recently suffered through the demolition and redevelopment of a substantial part of that district. New Castle, on the other hand, retains a high degree of its historic materials, and thus, provides us a good insight into local historic commercial townscape patterns. Beyond the local context, New Castle is one of only a few Kentucky county seat towns that never had railroad service. By around 1920, the railroad had arrived to most of the county seats that it would reach. Those towns would be profoundly reshaped by it, not only through the clearing of land to allow the corridor to enter, but later, as land close to the railroad escalated in value, the development of new commercial, industrial, and warehouse buildings that took advantage of the possibilities brought by the railroad. Commerce could thrive in county seat towns even without a railroad prior to 1920, as it did in New Castle. New Castle and these few other county seats provide something valuable to our interest in understanding the process of planning and developing in Kentucky’s towns: they have the ability to show us early-to-late-19th-century townscapes, which those county seats without railroads cannot do so well. Records such as Sanborn Insurance Maps began to document Kentucky towns very near to the time that the railroads began to reshape the communities, but before 1870, mapping of county seat towns might be confined to the original town plat. These county seats without railroad service can provide a valuable insight into a difficult to understand subject: town development patterns in Kentucky’s pre-railroad era. New Castle is one such town.

Historic Context: Commerce & Community Development of Henry County, Kentucky, 1798-1965

New Castle remains one of the oldest communities within the Commonwealth of Kentucky, with the original settlement taking place during the early 1790s. In 1798, Henry County was created out of a portion of Shelby County and New Castle was founded, also becoming the county seat. The first courthouse was built from log in 1799, only to be replaced in 1806 by one constructed from brick. The current courthouse was built circa 1875 and designed by H.P. McDonald. The courthouse served as a stronghold for law and order in Henry County and even as a “preaching place” for several Christian denominations before churches could be constructed. The early influence of the courthouse became instrumental in forming the strong legal heritage in New Castle and established it as the town in Henry County with the highest number of law offices and practicing attorneys. The presence of county government in New Castle sustained the commercial aspirations of its citizens, enabling it to remain one of the county’s two main commercial towns, even though the railroad bypassed the community.

One of Henry County’s first millionaires, Thomas Smith, helped initiate some of the earliest forms of commerce for the area. Riding on horseback to Baltimore, Maryland he bought large amounts of goods and merchandise, shipped it by flatboat to Carrollton and Milton and then brought it to New Castle via wagon. The

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fact that this "Merchant Prince of the West" resided in New Castle greatly helped spur the early commercial activity within the community and the county at large. The city became incorporated in 1817, and a year later in 1818, Smith built a large Federal style brick house on East Cross Main Street. The building was placed on the National Register in 1977 (NRIS 78001343). Smith's business strategy of "selling by wholesale," or in bulk, from Baltimore markets and shipping goods to New Castle established the town as a distribution center and a point of commerce for many residents of Henry and surrounding counties. Smith also became one of the largest stockholders and the first president of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company and was responsible for its tracks coming through Henry County instead of the cut-off route that was later constructed through Shelbyville in Shelby County. The Pearce brothers and Thomas Smith were important business pioneers who initiated some of the first commerce in Henry County and also helped develop New Castle as the main hub for commercial activity within the county.

During the early 1800s, steamboat travel became the fastest and most efficient way to travel by waterways in the United States. Commercial activity thrived in river towns. The Ohio and Kentucky Rivers became major routes for steamboats moving people and products from place to place. Business districts grew in nearby river towns of Carrollton, Kentucky and Madison, Indiana as more people traveled along the river on steamboats. Riverboat transportation increased down the Kentucky River through Henry County. Several towns along the river began to grow with the increased number of travelers needing accommodations and services. Port Royal, Drennon Springs and Lockport were three Henry County locations that experienced commercial development and population growth from the steamboat as a new preferred mode of transportation.

Port Royal and Franklinton are Henry County's second and third oldest settlements after New Castle, being established circa 1810. Bantatown, was also founded around the same time as these settlements. Bantatown was a Dutch Colony that was established near where the town of Pleasureville would later be built. The exact date of Franklinton's founding is unknown, but it was thought to be an English settlement due to the many English surnames of its early residents. Franklinton was originally known as Drennon Ridge and had enough people in the area to form the Drennon Ridge Baptist Church (HY-60) in 1801. Even though this early settlement provided its rural residents with some businesses such as a dry goods, farming and tobacco buyers, a blacksmith, druggists, physicians and grocers, Franklinton never developed an actual town center or strong commercial district. The town is not along the Kentucky River and never had a railroad track come through it, so it inevitably lost out on population growth to other cities that were growing around it because of their proximity to those two transportation corridors.

Most historical documents record Port Royal as being established "prior to 1811," making it one of the earliest settlements in Henry County. The town is not actually located on a river, despite its having the word "port" in its name. Captain Wash Perry is known to have said the reason was that "when we built Port Royal, we didn't know exactly where the river would run." Lane's Landing is the actual port associated with Port Royal and is located a mile away on the Kentucky River. During the era of steamboat travel, Port Royal experienced its largest amount of commercial activity. It never had a rail line run near or through it, yet it has served as a community gathering place for residents of northeastern Henry County. A strong farming heritage has helped fuel the economy of Port Royal, much like that of New Castle, but it did not see the construction of as many commercial buildings or the legal influence that New Castle does. The United Citizens Bank Port Royal branch and Rick's Farm Center & Restaurant are the only two historic commercial buildings remaining in the town today. There are also two churches and a post office. No historic buildings in the town have been documented.

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Lockport and Bethlehem, like New Castle, are two other Henry County towns or communities that never had rail access in their history and, thus, did not experience the commercial development from that corridor. Lockport did get to experience some commerce from steamboats, as the town lay along the Kentucky River. U.S. Lock No. 2 was constructed at Lockport circa 1840 and allowed river boat travel from the Ohio River all the way up to Beattyville, Kentucky. Even though Lockport flourished as a small town during the height of river boat travel and was a well-known fishing spot all over Henry County, it could not sustain its commercial center after the railroads and then the automobile came to dominate regional transportation. The locks on the Kentucky River are now only manned during the summer months. Physical inspection of the town revealed that no historic commercial buildings currently stand in Lockport.

Similar to New Castle, Bethlehem is not located along a waterway and never had rail access. The town was originally named Mobley Stand, after the Mobley family that owned the land where the town was established. A post office was erected there in 1862 and the name of the town was officially changed to Bethlehem. The town center had a blacksmith shop, two carpenters, two general stores, a physician, a barber, a postmaster, several tobacco dealers and even a steam grist and saw mill at one time. The mill, known as the Sewell Mill, was the primary economic catalyst for the town, operating from 1839 until the mid-1930s. It was destroyed by high winds in the 1950s. Bethlehem served as a viable crossroads community, standing at the intersection of Highway 22 and 573. However, when the interstate system came through and expressway travel replaced many secondary roadways, Bethlehem's commercial presence dissipated. Today, besides Marsh's Corner Deli & Store, there are no historic commercial structures remaining in the town.

Three communities in Henry County grew commercially as a result of being stations along the Louisville & Cincinnati, the Louisville & Lexington or the CSX Railroads: Jericho, Sulpher and Turner's Station. All of these communities became incorporated towns between 1842 -1876, primarily because the railroad provided them with traveling consumers and opportunities for commerce. All three of these communities had plenty of commercial properties in them, as long as the railroad remained a major transportation network for people and goods in the region. Sulpher in particular sprang up as a busy distribution location on the railroad between Louisville and Cincinnati. Eight commercial buildings were recorded there since the 1980s. Inevitably all three of these bustling train station towns began to decline with the emergence of the automobile as the preferred way for personal travel and trucks used to move goods. They are all now considered unincorporated communities with little to no commercial activity. There is only one structure that would be considered a historic commercial building remaining in all three of these communities.

Excluding New Castle, all four of the other cities that are presently incorporated in Henry County have had a train station and railroad service. Pleasureville, Campbellsburg, Smithfield and Eminence were all transformed commercially and economically with the expansion of the railroad system through or near their business districts.

Pleasureville had a post office constructed there circa 1828 and was founded in 1842. However, when the railroad came through in 1858 to connect Louisville and Frankfort, the Pleasureville post office was officially moved to the new location of the depot, which was a mile south of where the original settlement was. This circumstance of creating two towns, a North and South Pleasureville, is a prime example of how dominant the railroad was at dictating where development would occur in rural settings. When the community eventually grew, another post office was built in North Pleasureville, the original settlement. However, it closed when the two towns finally consolidated in 1962.

Most of the southern tip of Pleasureville is actually in Shelby County. Being at the southernmost edge of Henry County gave the city of Pleasureville the ability to be closer to some of the farmers and consumers/customers in Shelby County and to receive their patronage as well. The Pleasurevilles were viable

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and productive communities that offered a wide array of commercial services and economic opportunities for their residents and the surrounding farming families residing in the countryside. The railroad station thrived while in operation and there were plenty of businesses such as grocery stores, restaurants, general stores, banks, pool halls, clothiers, barber shops, beauticians and more. While Pleasureville succeeded as a small town with railroad service, New Castle continued to prosper as well without being a stop along the rail line. However, the decline in rail travel also meant the decline of commerce for much of Pleasureville and when the tracks were removed and the station shut down, most of the businesses eventually followed suit.

Campbellsburg saw much of the same commercial development pattern that Pleasureville experienced. Originally known as Chiltonsville, the town did not have much in the way of commerce until the railroad passed through in 1869. The name was changed to Campbellsburg after the railroad came through, paralleling what happened in Pleasureville, to match the town's name with that of the depot a half a mile away. The location where Chiltonsville stood is now referred to as Old Campbellsburg. Campbellsburg began to flourish at its new location thanks to the assistance of the railroad. At one time during the height of the railroad era, Campbellsburg boasted two hotels, two warehouses, nine grocery stores, three blacksmith shops, one butcher shop, a buggy shop, dentist, drug store, funeral home, a picture show, a factory that manufactured glass knobs for telephone poles and a bustling slaughter house across the railroad where turkeys were killed and shipped by cold storage to Cincinnati, Lexington and Louisville.

Fires and natural disasters took a toll on Campbellsburg. Fires nearly completely destroyed all the commercial buildings in the town two or three times. Campbellsburg's business district thrived during the railroad era but struggled to stay competitive after the dawn of the automobile age. Campbellsburg's location along US Route 421 and near the even-busier US Route 42, a major roadway connecting Cincinnati to Louisville, helped to keep some commerce going in the town even after the decline in railroad activity. Then, in the late 1960s, I-71 was completed, replacing US 42 as the major roadway from Cincinnati to Louisville. Campbellsburg became one of only two exits off of the new interstate in Henry County and many residents held the hope that the town was poised to recoup some of the commerce it had lost. That hope was extinguished on April 1, 1974 by a severe tornado, which destroyed most of the Campbellsburg business district as well as many residences in town. Only the historic old depot was spared from the tornado's destructive path. The town has remarkably rebuilt itself after the devastation the tornado brought and today has several businesses, a bank and a small park next to where the train station used to be. The city is one of the only ones that still has an active railroad that comes through town, which is now only used for freight shipping. Even though Campbellsburg was once a viable rail town with many commercial structures, none of them remain today and the historic commercial significance of the town is undetectable on the landscape.

Smithfield had the same commercial fate as both Pleasureville and Campbellsburg. Incorporated in 1842, Smithfield is located in the southwest portion of Henry County and was a stop along the L & N Railroad. The town was named after the millionaire merchant from New Castle, Thomas Smith, because he owned many acres in Henry County at the time and donated the land on which the railroad was laid. Much like the man Smithfield was named after, the town was industrious and touted several thriving factories: "a hemp mill, a chair factory, a cigar factory, a feather processing plant, a broom factory and a chewing gum factory" (*History of Henry County 1798-1995*). During the railroad era, Smithfield had a good amount of manufacturing businesses and skilled tradesmen within its town limits. In the early 1900s there was a community blacksmith/farm mechanic, a dry goods store, a general store, a couple of restaurants and several carpenters. There were also several livestock dealers in Smithfield who would help local farmers sell their cattle and swine and load them onto train cars. The Smithfield depot was used for transporting farm produce and livestock almost as much as it was for people during the zenith of rail travel in Henry County.

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Since Smithfield had been such a working class town with many agricultural and manufacturing factories helping to run its commerce, the decline of the railroad in Kentucky hurt its business district tremendously. Shop after shop closed down after the tracks were taken up and the depot torn down. One staple factory that did not close its doors until 1987/88 however, was the Smithfield Milling Company. The mill was well known for the flour it made named Our Best Flour. There is currently a restaurant in Smithfield named "Our Best" which is housed in the mill's renovated old warehouse across the street. The mill has been vacant for 28 years. As of today there are only two other historic commercial buildings in Smithfield besides the abandoned flour mill and the "Our Best" Restaurant. One served as Wilder's Corner Grocery for years and is now vacant and the other is vacant and was most recently used as a storage space for a landscaping company. There is still a post office. Today, "Our Best" Restaurant stands alone, proudly serving as the only commercial establishment in the town of Smithfield. Only one site in the town, generically titled Commercial Building (HY-187), has been recorded.

Much like all of the other currently incorporated cities in Henry County besides New Castle, Eminence was also profoundly shaped by the railroad. It was a sparsely populated community made up of only a few businesses, a church, a hotel, a small college named Giltner's College and several residences at first. However, like Pleasureville, Campbellsburg and Smithfield, when the railroad came through in 1847, the town of Eminence was restructured and its commerce amplified.

New Castle resident and businessman, Thomas Smith, worked diligently during his lifetime to improve his city's commercial significance. Smith was the main influence and force behind getting the Louisville & Nashville railroad to run through his home county of Henry, instead of the direct route through Shelby County and the city of Shelbyville. Smith surely had the economic future of his home town of New Castle in his thoughts when he was structuring the deal with the founders of the railroad. Inadvertently, his good intentions paid off in dividends for the neighboring younger city of Eminence and ended up inhibiting the growth of his own town of New Castle.

The layout of Eminence immediately began shifting to center around the railroad tracks and the new depot. After the Civil War there was a turntable located adjacent to the depot where an express freight train from Louisville would turn to retrace its course for commercial distribution purposes. "During those first days a great deal of freight came by train for New Castle, which was then a thriving business center" (*History of Henry County 1798-1995*). From the time the railroad was constructed in Eminence until after the Civil War, commercial activity grew at about the same rate between the two towns. However, after the war, rail usage surged and a lot of the commerce simply stayed in Eminence around the largest rail hub in the county, instead of making its way four miles north to the county seat of New Castle like it traditionally had done. The railroad became an extreme catalyst for development and growth in Eminence, and it quickly burgeoned into Henry County's largest city, surpassing New Castle's population circa the late 1800s. Some businesses in other Henry County towns who did not want to compete with the surge in commerce from Eminence simply packed up shop and relocated there since the customer base was greater. Even the first county paper, *The Constitutionalist*, which was founded in New Castle in 1868, moved to Eminence after it became the largest city with the most commerce. It would not take the business owners and leaders of New Castle long to organize and publish their own new paper called *The Henry County Local*. This currently remains the county paper, currently in Eminence.

From the late-1800s, when Eminence surpassed New Castle as the largest city in the county, until the end of the railroad era in Kentucky (circa 1930s/'40s), it also boasted the largest amount of commercial buildings than any other Henry County town. So many in fact, that in 1978 its business district was placed on the National Register of Historic Places as the only "historic commercial district" in Henry County (NRIS

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790000994). At the time of listing, there were 28 buildings in the district. Since then, little has been done to protect the integrity of the district, and the condition of the historic commercial buildings within it. Twelve of the twenty-eight historic buildings have been completely demolished, eight of which were destroyed so that a McDonald's and a CVS Pharmacy could be built. As of today, there are only 24 historic commercial structures still standing, exactly $\frac{3}{4}$ the number of buildings that are being nominated in the New Castle Commercial District to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

New Castle's Commercial History

Unlike its now bigger neighbor, Eminence, and the three other incorporated cities in Henry County, New Castle's current commercial district is very intact. There has never been a fast food restaurant, chain retail store or strip shopping center that alter the architectural integrity or density of New Castle's historic business district. One recent exception is the collapse of the Odd Fellows Lodge's roof after a heavy snowfall in March of 2015. This nomination serves as one effort to assist the Odd Fellows Lodge's rehabilitation, so that it can be a functional resource for the community once again. To this day, the only buildings destroyed in New Castle have been by fire or other natural causes. None have been razed to build newer cheaper commercial developments. The New Castle City Commission has found "that there is concern about the future of the central business district...and has begun a Main Street Program in cooperation with the State government to help the central business district." (*New Castle Code of Ordinances*). The Main Street Manager for New Castle is working to invigorate the historic buildings so that they can continue to be thriving examples of local commerce.

New Castle is the oldest city in Henry County and had the first origins of commerce and community development in the area. This is most likely why it was made the county seat right away when Henry County was created in 1798. It is the historic initial node and original crossroad community of Henry County. Before the steamboat populated the shoreline along the Ohio and Kentucky Rivers, and before the railroad transformed sleepy country towns into bustling business centers, New Castle was the center of commerce and trade in Henry County. The courthouse propelled a legal heritage in New Castle that helped lead to its affluence and solidified a sense of social order for its residents. "After the Civil War, New Castle developed the strongest bar of any rural town in the state....and members of the local bar were second to none in Kentucky. At one time, New Castle had the chief justice of the Court of Appeals, a judge of the Superior Court, circuit judge, and a county judge" (*History of Henry County 1798-1995*). Having the highest number of practicing attorneys in the county made it a lot easier for a New Castle businessman to start his business, because he had legal expertise on hand to help get started. The legal tradition has carried on to this day, with four out of the 25 occupied historic commercial buildings in the proposed district still housing law offices. The influence from the courthouse and the successful attorneys in New Castle aided in helping many economic and social associations in Henry County to become established and recognized for their efforts. The Agriculture Conservation Association, the Henry County Farm Bureau, the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association, the Future Farmers of America and the Falls City Credit Association were all associations that would not have reached their fullest potential in assisting the farming community in Henry County if it were not for the dedicated workers in the legal field in New Castle that fought for their needs and best interests.

After the majority of railroads were taken up around Henry County, ending the era of rail travel, New Castle was once again on level playing field with the other cities that once thrived by of being a stop along the line. People began moving farther away from town centers and would drive to the small town of their choice to do their shopping or conduct business. Marie Avery, who wrote about her hometown of New Castle during the early 1940s said,

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“Our town had lots to offer in those days. There were always two or three grocery stores. I remember on Main Street one building after another was used for some kind of business. There were doctor’s offices, clothing stores, a feed store, a drug store, a beauty shop, a blacksmith and cattle feed store, two gas stations, a place to buy shoes for the family and also a jewelry store. The first Veterinarian to come to town was J. L. Karnes who opened up a small little place on Main St. We had several restaurants in town with jukeboxes. We had places to go eat at until 10:30 p.m. It was busy at night. We didn’t go out of town for nothing to eat. Good times were had by all.” (Marie Avery - page 17).

By the 1940s, automobiles supplanted railroads as the country’s primary transportation network, changing development patterns once more. Residential properties began to move farther away from small-town business districts and the Main Streets of many towns began to shrink, as people drove to regional trade centers outside of the county. Farm land at the edge of town was lost, due to sprawling residential subdivisions. As a consequence of these changes, many of the older commercial buildings in Henry County towns became abandoned. Henry County railroad towns such as Pleasureville, Campbellsburg, and Smithfield, would suffer severe population losses and would lose many or most of the historic commercial properties that once gave them their identity. Eminence, being the largest town in the county, would look to reinvent its economy in order to better accommodate the demand for automobile travel. The McDonalds and CVS Pharmacy that took the place of rows of historic buildings along Broadway and Main Street in Eminence give the feel of a modern 21st century intersection one may find in any suburban neighborhood, and the character and historic identity of the city has been drastically altered because of it.

Evaluation of the Commercial Significance of the New Castle Historic District within the Context of Commerce & Community Development in Henry County, Kentucky, 1798-1965

In a review of the commercial efforts of communities in Henry County, New Castle and Eminence both stood above the other small towns. It is recognizable that transportation advantages favored some towns over others. Yet, transportation advantage alone does not completely account for New Castle’s rise. Whether the county’s other towns lie along the changing transportation corridors—the Kentucky River, railroad, toll roads, and main highways, New Castle prospered without direct access to the railroad, which seems to have sparked the greatest growth in the county’s other communities where it traveled.

New Castle and Eminence offer two different paths to continuing their commercial significance. Eminence has placed its hope in new construction, and the national chain businesses that occupy those buildings. New Castle, by contrast, has focused its efforts upon local home-grown businesses, and the historic commercial buildings in which those businesses take up residence. Where once Eminence and New Castle both had roughly the same number of historic commercial buildings, New Castle now has roughly twice the amount that were spared in Eminence. It is possible that New Castle’s retention of historic buildings does not completely demonstrate a preservation ethic, but is a product of its small size. With almost three times New Castle’s population, Eminence would be a better candidate for the national chain businesses, where New Castle would be viewed by such corporate entities as too small a market for that level of investment.

Besides Eminence, whose commercial district is already on the National Register, no other incorporated city, unincorporated town or small crossroad community in Henry County has anywhere near the number of historic commercial buildings that New Castle has remaining, most of which are also still being

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utilized today. In that their owners continue to invest in the buildings testifies to the ongoing commercial significance that the district manifests for Henry County's citizens.

The nationally recognized and highly published Henry County writer, environmental activist and farmer, Wendell Berry, who grew up in New Castle, said, "Our history will help us to think of what we should try to become." Through preserving the historic commercial district in New Castle, it is the hope that its residents can hold on to the past that helped form their cultural identity while also dreaming of a better future where commerce will continue to evolve and flourish in their community.

Evaluation of the Integrity of New Castle Commercial District's Significance in Light of its Physical Character

This nomination aims to distinguish which part of New Castle retains the strongest evidence of commerce and community development efforts during the historic time period of 1798-1960. The proposed boundary of the New Castle Commercial District defines such an area. With this district meeting Criterion A, the integrity evaluation will focus upon how the property maintains associations with commerce. The factors which reinforce this sense of the district's significance will be integrity of location, setting, materials, design, and association. If the district retains integrity of location, setting, materials, and design, then it will have the core integrity—its physical presence today conveys its historic significance—and become eligible for listing.

The district retains integrity of **location**. The buildings that a town or city constructs are important because they most fundamentally create the place where human interaction occurs and where community development can take place. How that city maintains and preserves those structures provides evidence of how much that specific commercial center means to them and how much they are willing to preserve it. Despite the damage done by age, deterioration, natural disasters, and even owner choice, to a few buildings in the district, the New Castle Commercial District retains integrity of location. New Castle has the highest density and retention of historic commercial buildings than any other city in Henry County.

Certainly the New Castle Commercial District contains integrity of **location** because it has never moved from its environment. This may seem a minor preservation accomplishment, but we have already seen in the historic context narrative how modes of transportation, especially the railroad, altered the location and layout of many Henry County towns. Town plats and road patterns in Henry County drastically changed with the introduction of railroad and highway transportation systems, but New Castle's commercial district stayed intact and viable throughout all these transformations in travel. Its location was very centralized within Henry County as well, which made it more accommodating for all county residents to access.

The parcels within the New Castle Commercial District have not been altered much at all since their conception from when the first parcels were developed in the area around the courthouse. The expansion and paving of streets and the addition of city sidewalks altered parcel sizes some over time, but no drastic changes were made. The fact that density and parcel size remained stable over time indicates that community development and planning decisions revolving around commerce established a sufficient integrity of **setting**. Development opportunities flourished by New Castle's status as the county seat. Law firms opened up within the business district to support the county courthouse's function and then general stores and other businesses followed, to cater to the demand of services needed by residents and nearby rural farming families. Much of the building stock that constitutes the commercial district was constructed in the late-1800s and early-1900s, during a period of demand, growth, and expansion for New Castle as a center of commerce in Henry County. The fact that these same buildings remain and are still used to house commercial uses, gives definition to the strong integrity of setting that is formed by their preservation and utilization. Not much has changed in the quality of the setting since the end of the Period of Significance (1960) to rob it of its ability to demonstrate

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the district's significance. Since 1960, most new development in New Castle has been residential and outside of the commercial district.

The integrity of **design** can be found by the sufficient retention of overall recognizable design and preserved historic character within the New Castle Commercial District's structures. These creations from the Period of Significance illustrate the lives and commercial values of its residents and showcase locally crafted materials that were used to build several of them. Unlike many other county seat towns and commercial centers established around the Commonwealth of Kentucky, New Castle was not altered by the introduction of steamboat traffic after 1820, nor by railroad expansions in the late-19th century. Thus, the incorporated city of New Castle has preserved much of its early form and configuration, allowing it to look not much different from an early, albeit more developed, crossroad community. The district as an individual entity, the sum of all its parts, retains a vibrant sense of its overall design identity and integrity. Although some of the buildings are still vacant and a few are in need of major rehabilitation and repairs, the quality of design is still intact and once the dilapidated buildings are restored can be improved upon even more.

Some parts of the New Castle Commercial District have a lower integrity of **materials** than design. Several of the buildings have been altered from their original design. On some, great detail and attention was paid to restoring them to their historic look, while others have had stucco applied, covering their entire façade or have had cheaper, less aesthetically pleasing materials, used to replace older ones. Although a few of the historic commercial buildings within the district require some restoration and new materials added for support and infrastructure needs, the preservation ethic of the New Castle residents is gaining momentum. This is evidenced by the city's implementation of a preservation ordinance in 2002—quite an achievement for a town of its size. As of today the integrity of materials for the New Castle Commercial District is evident.

The integrity of **feeling** names the way in which one can sense the historic nature of the commercial built environment encompassing them, when they are standing in the heart of the district, on the corner of Main Street and Cross Main Street. This feeling is definitely strong and very much alive, more so than in any other incorporated city or unincorporated town in Henry County. The feeling one would have walking in the core of the New Castle Commercial District would not be much different from that feeling which one would have felt in 1960.

Since the New Castle Commercial District exhibits integrity of location, setting, design, materials and feeling, it therefore contains integrity of **association**. Since this strong link to an association with events in commerce and community planning and a significant contribution to the patterns of history in Henry County have been made, it is thus concluded that the New Castle Commercial District is eligible for National Register listing.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous Research at the Kentucky Heritage Council

- Kentucky Historic Resource Individual Building Survey Forms for New Castle, Henry County, Kentucky

National Register Nominations

- Eminence Historic Commercial District, Henry County, Kentucky, Feb. 14th 1979
- Henry County Courthouse, Henry County, Kentucky, April 11th, 1977

Secondary Sources

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- Avery, Marie. (2007) *Handwritten Notes on Life in New Castle from 1941 to 2007*. Henry County Historical Society. 18 pages.
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- Drane, Maude Johnston. *History of Henry County, Kentucky*. Published by Eminence, 1948.
- Kleber, John E. *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1992
- Henry County Historical Society. *Henry County, Kentucky. 1798-1995 A History of Our Heritage*. Henry County Historical Society, 1995. McDowell Publications 11129 Pleasant Ridge Rd. Utica, KY 42376
- Legislative Research Commission. "*Fiscal Court; County Government in Kentucky*." Informational Bulletin No. 115. Frankfort, Kentucky, 1996.
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- Perrin, W.H., Battle, J.H., and Kniffin, G.C. *Kentucky; A History of the State*. Louisville: F.A. Battey and Company, 1887.
- Smith, Earl T. "Hammer" and Pat Wallace with Introduction by Wendell Berry. *Historic Images of Henry County*. Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Henry County Historical Society, 2006

Web Sites

- www.history.henrycounty.com
- www.henrycountygov.com
- www.kyinfolk.com/henry
- www.newcastleky.com
- www.eminencekentucky.com/history
- <https://www.ket.org/trips/belle/related/belle-steamboats-ohio.pdf>
- http://www.nkyviews.com/Other/pdf/Railroad_of_Kentucky_Strategier.pdf
- <http://www.kyinfolk.com/henry/cemetery.html>
- <http://www.american-rails.com/ky.html>
- <http://www.cityofcampbellsburg.org/>
- www.henryweb.com

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 # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 6.25 acres

New Castle quad

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UTM References calculated via ArcGIS Explorer

UTM Coordinates according to NAD 27: Zone 16; Easting 659 733.65; Northing: 4255 272.33

UTM Coordinates according to NAD 83:

1 16 659 729.61 4255 478.98
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description:

The New Castle Commercial District’s boundary line extends from Church St. on the south end of the district to just north of Dutton St. on the North end. The Bowman Automotive property is on the corner of Dutton Street and North Main St. and creates the northwest corner of the district. The A1 garage across the street from Bowman Automotive, holds the corner of North Main St. and Court St. and designates the north end of the district. The west boundary line of the district runs along the back property lines of all of the historic commercial properties along the west side of North and South Main St. from Church St. to the Bowman Automotive property. The eastern boundary line of the district runs along the property line of the Henry County courthouse and then cuts across East Cross Main St. while running along the back property lines of the historic commercial structures along the east side of South Main St. The eastern boundary line then crosses Carter St. to include the Iver’s Law Office and Pearce Home Antiques building parcels before slicing sharply across South Main St. in front of the Berry Center bookstore to also include the Heritage House Antiques building on the southwest corner of South Main St. and Church St. The only building along South and North Main St. in between Church and Dutton St. that is not included in the district is the New Castle United Methodist Church which is across the street from the Heritage House Antiques building and holds the southeast corner of South Main and Church St.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the New Castle Historic Commercial district was created by discerning where the bulk of historic commercial structures were within the incorporated city’s limits and each one’s contribution to the significance of the commercial history in New Castle. Since the city of New Castle, KY has maintained and revitalized most of the historic commercial structures within their business district, it was fairly easy to designate the boundary around the dense intersection of North Main St. running north and south and Cross Main St. running east to west through the center of the district. The other commercial buildings within the incorporated city of New Castle that were not placed within the district did not fall within the historic timeframe necessary for nomination or were farther out from the business district and served as commercial properties functioning independently. The Henry County Courthouse was added into the district because of its strong influence on the legal profession and commerce that helped solidify the law and order and commercial presence of the county seat. Only one non-contributing building was included and this was only because it was

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an addition to the United Citizens Bank & Trust in 1978. The overall density of commercial uses within the district is exceptional for a town the size of New Castle in rural Kentucky and the manner in which most have been preserved helps demonstrate the historical value and commercial significance of the town for the communities and farmers of Henry County.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Justin Carter
organization KIPDA date March 1, 2016
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city or town Louisville state KY zip code 40299
e-mail justin.carter@ky.gov

Photographs:

Same information for all photographs:

Name of Property: **New Castle Commercial District**
City or Vicinity: **New Castle**
County: **Henry**
State: **Kentucky**
Photographer: **Justin Carter**
Date Photographed: **2015 & 2016**

Description of Individual Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing east
- 2 of 32: Main façade from East Cross Main St., shot facing south
- 3 of 32: Main façade from East Cross Main St., shot facing south
- 4 of 32: Main façade from East Cross Main St., shot facing south
- 5 of 32: Main façade from East Cross Main St., shot facing south
- 6 of 32: Side façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 7 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 8 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 9 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 10 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 11 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 12 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 13 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing east
- 14 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 15 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 16 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 17 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 18 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 19 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 20 of 32: Main façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing west
- 21 of 32: Main corner façade from Highway 421/South Main St., shot facing southwest
- 22 of 32: Main façade from West Cross Main St., shot facing north

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- 23 of 32:** Main façade from West Cross Main St., shot facing north
- 24 of 32:** Main façade from West Cross Main St., shot facing north
- 25 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing west
- 26 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing west
- 27 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing west
- 28 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing west
- 29 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing west
- 30 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing west
- 31 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing northwest
- 32 of 32:** Main façade from Highway 421/North Main St., shot facing east

Property Owner:

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____