1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic name: 1915 Taylor County Courthouse

Other name/site number: 5320

2. LOCATION

Street & number: 301 Oak St.

City/town: Abilene

State: TX  County: Taylor

code: 441  zip code: 79602

not for publication: N/A

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property: Public-local

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 buildings</td>
<td>0 sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>1</em></td>
<td><em>0</em> Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources in Abilene, Texas
4. 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.

_Ye See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official / Date

State Historic Preservation Officer / Texas Historical Commission

In my opinion, the property _x_meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria.

_Ye See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official / Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

_Ye entered in the National Register

_Ye See continuation sheet.

_Ye determined eligible for the National Register

_Ye See continuation sheet.

_Ye determined not eligible for the National Register

_Ye removed from the National Register

_Ye other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper / Date of Action
6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Government Sub: Courthouse
Current: Government Sub: Government office

7. DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification: Classical Revival

Materials: foundation brick
           walls brick
           roof asphalt
           other cast stone

Describe present and historic physical appearance. _x_ See continuation sheet.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Area(s) of Significance: Politics/Government and Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1913-1939

Significant Dates: 1913-1915

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Burnett, George

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. _x_ See continuation sheet.
Description:

The 1915 Taylor County Courthouse is a 3-story brick Classical Revival building with a rectangular plan and a concealed flat roof. The building utilizes a variety of materials on the exterior walls of the basement and three upper stories including brick, cast stone and terra cotta. The building is the lone building on the block, a feature that enhances both its scale and grandeur.

The front, facing west onto Oak Street, features giant order Ionic columns that form a continuous colonnade around the building; a bas relief spandrel connects the columns and forms the break between the second and third floors. A central primary entrance has a tripartite architrave of bracketed hoods crowned by cast stone pediments. Only the center architrave serves as an entrance doorway, however. A string course acts as the architrave of the building’s entablature. A modillion cornice that encircles the top of the building caps the sparsely detailed frieze. Although the original wood sash windows have been replaced with aluminum frame windows that detract from the building’s historic character, the courthouse retains its original fenestration and enough of its integrity to be recognizable to its period of significance.

Statement of Significance:

Erected in 1913-1915, the Taylor County Courthouse is nominated at the local level of significance. The building is eligible under Criterion A in the area of Politics/Government, for its representation of Abilene’s triumph as Taylor County’s leading city and its service as the county’s seat of government until 1972. It is also nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, as an outstanding example of Classical Revival architecture. The building is associated with the historic context "The Railroad and Abilene’s Development into a Wholesale and Distribution Center in West Texas, 1881-1939." Abilene’s oldest and most intact governmental building, moderate and easily reversible alterations detract only minimally from the historic character of the courthouse and it retains its most important architectural features.

When Texas & Pacific Railroad officials established Abilene in 1881, Buffalo Gap at the eastern center of the county was the seat of government. Two years later, county residents voted to move the county seat to Abilene where the railroad ensured the city’s success. A 2 1/2-story courthouse, designed by Martin Byrnes and Johnston, was built on Block 31 of the original townsite.

This first courthouse building remained a prominent landmark in the community until the early 1910s when citizens of Abilene called for the construction of a new courthouse. A report presented to County Commissioners in 1913 confirmed suspicions that the building was unsafe, although some doubt remains whether or not the building truly was a hazard to the public. In fact,
Martin Byrnes and Johnston designed and built several courthouses and jails throughout the state that are at least 100 years old, yet they remain in good and stable condition. Possibly, citizens of Abilene wanted a new courthouse that would be more symbolic of the city’s progressive and modern character. Voters approved a bond package to finance the construction of a new courthouse (Commissioner’s Courts Minutes).

The County considered four architectural firms: E.G. Withers of Stamford, C.H. Page and Brother of Austin, L.L. Thurmann of Dallas and George Burnett of Waco. Although Withers initially was recommended, the Commissioners finally decided upon Burnett and a contract was prepared that included a provision for the Architectural School of the University of Texas to approve the plans (Commissioner’s Courts Minutes).

The early courthouse was demolished to make way for the new one and county offices relocated temporarily to the Grace Hotel (National Register, Abilene Commercial Historic District, 1991). Bids for the actual construction of the courthouse were received from a number of firms. A.Z. Rogers’ bid of $119,785 (later reduced to $117,900) was the lowest and his company was hired.

Construction work took two years and on May 12, 1915 the new building was officially designated as county courthouse. It served in that capacity until 1972 when another facility was erected. The county still uses the 1913-1915 courthouse to house offices.

The 1913-1915 Taylor County Courthouse is an excellent example of Classical Revival architecture, a popular design used by governmental entities during the era. Classical columns and symmetrical facades are features typical of classically inspired architecture.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

_x_ See bibliography for associated historic context.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
  _ 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 (Texas Historical Commission)
  _ Other state agency
  _ Federal agency
  x Local government (City of Abilene Planning Department)
  _ University
  x Other -- Specify Repository: Abilene Preservation League

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>3589960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbal Boundary Description:
Abilene Original Townsite, all of Block 30

Boundary Justification:
The boundary includes the area that has been historically associated with the property and that retains its historic and architectural integrity.

11. FORM PREPARED BY (assisted by Amy E. Dase, Historian, THC staff)

Name/Title: David Moore, Historian
Organization: Hardy Heck Moore
Street & Number: 2112 Rio Grande
City or town: Austin
Date: June 1989; January 1992
Telephone: 512/478-8014
State: TX Zip: 78705
James M. Radford Grocery Company Warehouse
101 Oak
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore
Winter 1989
Negative with Texas Historical Commission
Northwest oblique, camera facing southeast
Photograph 33 of 48

Ed S. Hughes Company Warehouse
135 Oak
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore
Winter 1989
Negative with Texas Historical Commission
West facade, camera facing east
Photograph 34 of 48

1915 Taylor County Courthouse
301 Oak
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore
Winter 1989
Negative with Texas Historical Commission
Southwest oblique, camera facing northeast
Photograph 35 of 48

First Presbyterian Church
402 Orange
Abilene, Taylor County, Texas
Photographed by David Moore
Winter 1989
Negative with Texas Historical Commission
Southeast oblique, camera facing northwest
Photograph 36 of 48
Abilene MPS
TEXAS

1915 Taylor County Courthouse
Abilene Christian College Administration Building
Abilene Commercial Historic District
Abilene Fire Station No. 2
Abilene Street Railway Company Barn
Abilene and Northern Railway Company Depot Barn
Ackers, William and Mary, House
Blanton, Thomas L., House
Boyd--Hall House
Caldwell Hall
Cash, W. A. V., House
Castle, David S., House
Chambers, Samuel A., House
Davis, George R., House
Dillingham, O. D. and Ada, House
Dodd--Harkrider House
Evans, J. W., House
Federal Building
Finley, Eugene L., House
First Presbyterian Church
Fritz, David C. and Docia, House
Fulwiler, William J., House
Goodloe, Albert S. and Ruth, House
Green, Roland A. D., House
Higginbotham, J. G., House
House at 1127 Ash Street
Hughes, Ed S., Company Warehouse
Jones, A. T., House
Lanius, C. A., House
Luce Hall
Magee, J. D., House
McDaniel, George W. and Lavina, House
McDonald Hall
McMurry College Administration Building
Minter, William A., House
Motz, Charles, House
Parramore, D. D., House
Radford, James M., Grocery Company Warehouse
Reading, J. H., House
Roberts, Nathan J. and Nancy, House
Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Date Listed: 12/10/41
REQUESTED ACTION:  NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME:  1915 Taylor County Courthouse

MULTIPLE NAME:  Abilene MPS

STATE & COUNTY:  TEXAS, Taylor

DATE RECEIVED:  2/19/92  DATE OF PENDING LIST:  3/06/92
DATE OF 16TH DAY:  3/22/92  DATE OF 45TH DAY:  4/04/92
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER:  92000225

NOMINATOR:  STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:  N  DATA PROBLEM:  N  LANDSCAPE:  N  LESS THAN 50 YEARS:  N
OTHER:  N  PDIL:  N  PERIOD:  N  PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:  N
REQUEST:  N  SAMPLE:  N  SLR DRAFT:  N  NATIONAL:  N

COMMENT WAIVER:  N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT  3/23/92

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOMMENDATION_________________________
REVIEWER_______________________________
DISCIPLINE______________________________
DATE______________________________

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N
CLASSIFICATION
__count  __resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION
__historic  __current

DESCRIPTION
__architectural classification
__materials
__descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period
Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates
Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

__summary paragraph
__completeness
__clarity
__applicable criteria
__justification of areas checked
__relating significance to the resource
__context
__relationship of integrity to significance
__justification of exception
__other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
__acreage  __verbal boundary description
__UTMs  __boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION
__sketch maps  __USGS maps  __photographs  __presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

______________________________ Phone __________

Signed ______________________ Date ______
Please refer to the map in the Multiple Property Cover Sheet for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500625