Appendix I-B1

KNIGHTS FERRY
HISTORICAL STANDARDS

Adopted by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors

JUNE 23, 1987

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APPENDIX I-B1

KNIGHTS FERRY HISTORICAL STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

Knights Ferry's colorful historic past, along with its unique physical setting, have combined to offer a community worthy of preservation. The primary objective of this section is to develop a base of information relating to the architectural and physical setting that will adequately describe the existing situation and to provide guidelines for new construction and rehabilitation which will assist the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors when evaluating future construction in the Knights Ferry historical designation, thus preserving and enhancing the unique historic and physical setting. The ultimate goal of this plan is to assure that Knights Ferry's heritage will remain a functioning asset to the community through continued use and enjoyment.

The Historic Section is grouped into three categories:

Inventory of Building Details
Identifies the predominant architectural details found within the community.

Suggested Design Principles and Standards for New Construction
Intended to ensure the maximum compatibility of new construction with older buildings utilizing the Inventory of Building Details as a data base.

Suggested Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Buildings
Specific actions to be considered or avoided to ensure the ongoing historic preservation.

Inventory of Building Details
While no single architectural style predominates in Knights Ferry, there does exist strong similarities of style, proportion, scale, material, and detail. These similarities form the basis of this inventory. This inventory will be helpful in understanding the architectural qualities of Knights Ferry and, in turn, will establish a good foundation for new planning and construction in the community.

The streetscapes of Knights Ferry display a variety of design and texture limited by several common "design elements". These elements are **height, proportion and scale, window and door openings, building placement, materials and details, entrances, continuity of street facades, color, and landscaping.**

Height:
The average height of the older residences and commercial buildings is 2 to 2 1/2 stories consisting of a groundfloor, one main story, and sometimes additional attic rooms.

Proportion and Scale:
The heights of most buildings in Knights Ferry are generally at least one and one half times as great as their widths. The primary emphasis is consequently vertical. Scale, which is the relationship of the size of individual parts to one another and to man, is gauged by the building units (wood or stone), the window and door openings and their placement, and the architectural detailing. Most buildings in Knights Ferry have a consistent scale.

Window and Door Openings:
Window and door openings are vertical, reflecting the overall proportions of the buildings.

Entrances:
Door openings are placed at the ground floor level, reached by a short flight of stairs. Entrances are sheltered by a porch usually extending across the entire frontage of buildings.

Materials and Details:
Horizontal wood siding is extensively used in the community. The majority of buildings have steep gable roofs covered by corrugated metal roofing material.

Building Placement (Spacing of Buildings):
The streetscapes in Knights Ferry are composed of a rather random progression of building units. Large lots and vacant lots create voids in the streetscape.

Continuity of Street Facades:
Buildings along Main Street are set back a uniform distance creating a close feeling. Buildings along side streets are setback at random distances. Stone retaining walls create narrow streets with no curbs, gutters or sidewalks.

Landscaping:
Abundant natural vegetation and landscaping are integral parts of the Knights Ferry setting, enhancing existing buildings by creating a "grown in" feeling and acting as natural air conditioners. Most yards utilize a combination of fruit and shade trees, shrubs and fences for defining lots and private space.

Color:
Most buildings tend toward low intensity shades of white and gray, weathered wood, and redwood stain. Stone work is left natural. Roof coverings are generally galvanized metal or composition roofing in grey shades.

When combined with the "design elements", building components such as window and door openings and specific details such as building materials and unique building features help to identify the character unique to Knights Ferry. The components and details include **building lot, exterior features of buildings, roofs, windows and doors, porches, ornamentation, benches, and street furniture and improvements.**

Building Lot:
Most of the residential structures are constructed on relatively large lots sloping towards the river. However, very little cut and fill has taken place, relying entirely on low retaining walls constructed of sandstone, stone, river cobbles, or concrete for slope stability. Large trees, shrubs, and gardens are common due to the relatively large area of the lots.

Exterior Features of Buildings:
Exterior wall covering consists of horizontal wood siding which is either beveled or shiplap type giving a semi-rough texture to wood structures. Masonry buildings are constructed primarily of sandstone or river cobbles, giving them a rough texture. Exposed foundation walls are constructed of stone or concrete adding another textured surface to the exterior appearances.

Roofs:
Gables with relatively steep roofs predominate throughout the community. Vents are found in the apex of the gable. Although the original roofing materials were wood shingles, galvanized metal is the most commonly used roofing material today with some buildings utilizing gray composition roof tiles.

Windows and Doors:
Window and door openings tend to create a vertical dominance. Windows generally are 2 to 2 1/2 times as tall as they are wide extending nearly from floor to ceiling. Exterior framing around window openings is of light construction. Windows are wood frame double hung, having been added at a later date for unknown reasons.

In residential structures, the main entrance is a single door with some glazing in the top half. Wood screen doors are extensively used. Commercial and public buildings have double doors at the main entrance with glazing in the top half. Screen doors are not commonly used.

Porches:
Porches are an integral portion of the overall design of residential, commercial and public buildings. Porches normally extend across the front of the building. Support for porches is provided by 4 x 4 or 6 x 6 posts, sometimes having been given design by being turned on a lathe. The size of the supporting posts is indicative of the light frame construction utilized for almost all buildings. Flooring for the porches is wood.

Ornamentation:
Buildings tend to be of simple design with very little ornamentation. Most ornamentation is found on accessories such as door knobs and fences.

Fences:
In addition to having the most ornamentation of any structure, fences are an important building accessory in Knights Ferry. Both wood picket fences and cast-iron post and wire fences set upon stone retaining walls or curbing are prevalent in the community. Wood fences have posts with caps and pickets with a design cut into their top. Posts in cast-iron are capped by various knobs and foliate their top. Posts in cast-iron are capped by various knobs and foliate designs. The wire in these types of fences have a woven design with scalloped top wire. The fences are very light and at times delicate, enclosing the entire yard without obscuring the buildings behind them.

Street Furniture and Improvements:
All streets in the community, except Main Street, are narrow streets. Sidewalks, curbs, and gutters are not found in Knights Ferry. The combination of narrow streets and lack of curbs and gutters adds to the quaint character of the community which can be distinctively termed "Knights Ferry".

Suggested Design Principles and Standards for New Construction

The use of these design principles and standards is not intended to require new buildings to be an exact duplication of older styles, but to ensure the maximum compatibility of new construction with other buildings in the Knights Ferry historical designation.

Height and Scale

It is important that new buildings should be constructed to a reasonable average height of existing adjacent buildings within established historical districts.

Relationship of Materials

A variety of materials, when properly used, can add to the distinctiveness of the area. Common materials are wood, stone, brick, stucco, or other materials. Used properly, materials can enhance desired qualities such as compatibility, continuity, similarity, harmony, etc.

Relationship to Textures

The texture of a building is an important factor in the overall appearance of the town. The predominant texture is horizontal wood siding with rough (river cobbles), smooth (stucco), and other textures present. Whatever texture is used, its appearance must be considered in relationship to the area to ensure a compatible blending with other styles.

Relationship to Colors

The proper application of a color scheme to a building or a series of buildings can highlight important features and increase their overall appearance. Accent or blending colors on building details is also desirable in enhancing the compatibility of structures.

Relationship of Architectural Details

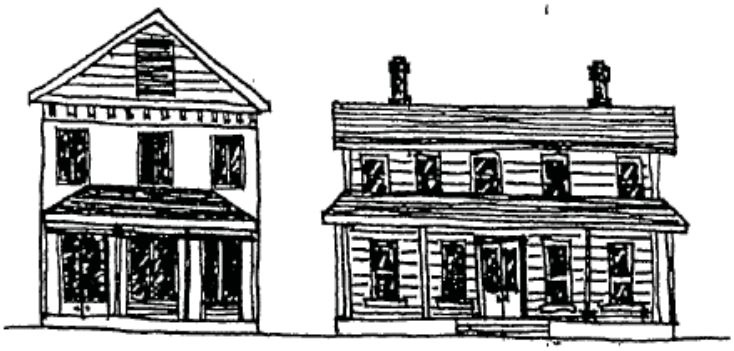
Similarity of architectural detail may be accomplished by the use of cornices, lintels, arches, wrought iron work, chimneys, etc. This similarity of detail is extremely important in ensuring a compatible appearance in new construction.

Relationship of Roof

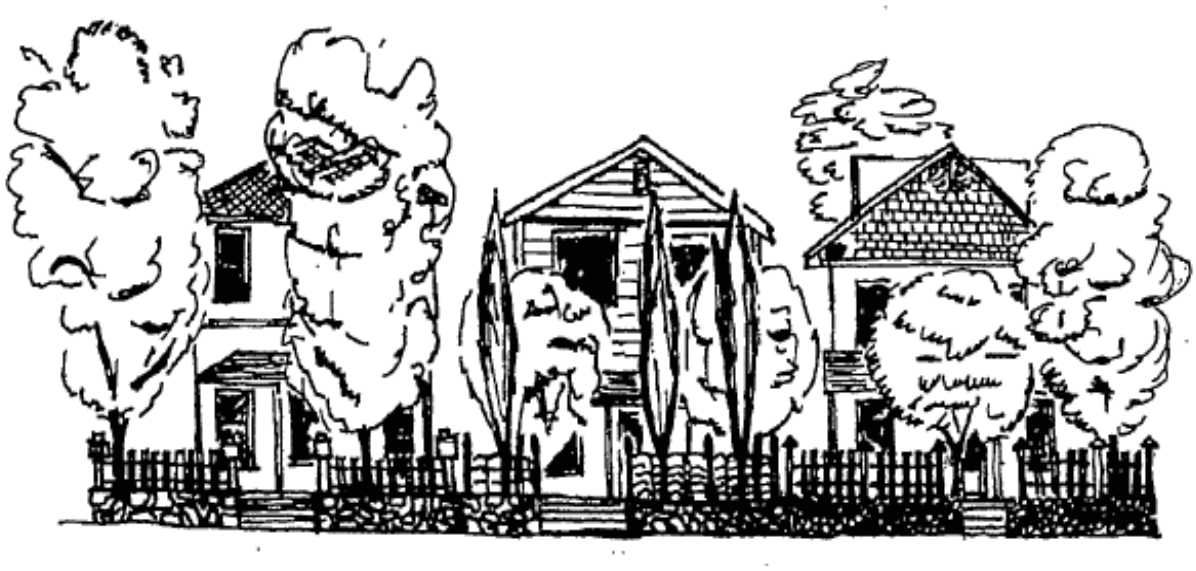
The majority of buildings have gable or hip roofs. Roofs are an important factor in the overall design of a building to help relate items such as height and scale to those of adjacent structures.

Rhythm of Spacing of Building on Street (Building Placement).

Moving past a sequence of buildings, one experiences a rhythm of recurrent building masses to spaces between them. This rhythm is necessary to create an added element of harmony in the town's architecture.



Directional Expression of Front Elevations (Window and Door Openings)
Structural shape, placement of openings, and architectural details should give a predominantly vertical character to the building's facade. Although the front elevation of two adjacent buildings may be different in heights, mass, or both, their overall appearance can be compatible when a vertical direction is achieved by proper use of detail, color, materials, etc.



Continuity
Physical ingredients such as wood fences, wrought iron fences, brick walls, evergreen landscape masses, building facades, or combinations of these form continuous, cohesive walls of enclosure along the street. This factor helps produce a cohesiveness in an area.

Relationship of Landscaping
There is a predominance of a particular quality and quantity of landscaping. The concern here is more with mass and continuity. It is important that landscaping be placed to emphasize design rather than becoming an obscuring factor.

Suggested Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of Buildings and Structures

Although stationary, structures are not static. It is necessary that they function today as they functioned a century ago and, indeed, should function a century hence. Change is inevitable. As structures age, they need maintenance and repair or alteration to accommodate new occupants and uses. This maintenance and change should be a compromise between yesterday and today to insure the architectural integrity of the structures and at the same time to enhance their utility. This category seeks both ends.

The following eight fundamental concepts can be considered basic guidelines for the rehabilitation of historic property. They are followed by a detailed checklist for the application of the guidelines to carry out actual rehabilitation projects. The checklist suggests specific actions to be considered or avoided to insure the ongoing preservation of historic property.

1. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for historic property which will require minimum alteration to the property and its environment.

2. Rehabilitation work should not destroy the historic character of the property and its environment. The removal or alteration of any historic material or architectural features should be held to the minimum consistent with the proposed use.

3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of original features, substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of architectural features from other properties.

4. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize older structures and often predate the mass production of building materials, should be treated with sensitivity.

5. Changes to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the town. These changes may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected.

6. All historic property should be recognized as a product of its own time. Alterations to create an earlier appearance should be discouraged.

7. It is not the intent of these guidelines to discourage contemporary design of new buildings, additions to existing buildings, or landscaping in historic districts if such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the neighborhood, building, or its environment.

8. Wherever possible, additions or alterations to historic property should be done in such a manner that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original property would be unimpaired.

CHECKLIST FOR THE APPLICATION OF BASIC GUIDELINES

These guidelines suggest specific actions which should be considered or avoided when remodeling or restoring existing structures.

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
Knights Ferry	
Retaining distinctive features such as the size, scale, mass, color, and materials of buildings, including roofs, porches, and stairways that give the town its historic character.	Introducing new construction or materials into the town which are incompatible with the character of the town because of size, scale, color and materials.
Using new plant materials, fencing, walkways and street furniture which are compatible with the character of the town in size, scale, material, and color.	Introducing signs, street lighting, street furniture, new paint materials, fencing, walkways, and paving materials which are out of scale or inappropriate to the town.
Retaining landscape features such as parks, gardens, street furniture, walkways, streets, and building setbacks which link historic properties to their environment.	Destroying the relationship of historic properties and their environment by widening existing streets, changing paving material, or by introducing poorly designed and poorly located new street and parking lots, or introducing new construction incompatible with the character of the town.
Inspecting the site carefully to locate and identify plants, trees, fencing, walkways, and street furniture which might be an important part of the property's history and development.	Making hasty changes to the appearance of the site by removing old plants, trees, fencing, walkways and street furniture before evaluating their importance in the property's history and development.
Retaining plants, trees, fencing walkways, and street furniture which reflect the property's history and development.	Over-restoring the site to an appearance it never had.
Basing all decision for new work on actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property found in photographs, drawings, newspapers, and tax records. If changes are made, they should be carefully evaluated in light of the past appearance of the site.	

Consider	TRY TO AVOID
Retaining the basic topography which reflects the character of the property.	Building: Lot Altering the topography by extensive grading and cut-and-fill operations that will destroy the character of the site except where necessary for safety and efficiency.
Repairing and duplicating retaining walls wherever possible.	
Building: Exterior Features (Masonry Buildings)	
Retaining original masonry, or stone and mortar, whenever possible, without the application of any surface treatment.	Constructing new retaining walls which are incompatible with earlier construction in the areas of materials, scale, and texture.
Duplicating old mortar in composition, color, and texture.	Applying waterproof or water repellent coatings or other treatments unless required to solve a specific technical problem that has been studied and identified. Coatings are frequently unnecessary, expensive, and can accelerate deterioration on the masonry or stone.
Duplicating old mortar in joint size, method of application, and joint profile.	Repointing with mortar of high Portland cement content can create a bond that is often stronger than the building material. This can cause deterioration as a result of the differing coefficient of expansion and the differing porosity of the material and the mortar.
Cleaning masonry, or only when necessary to halt deterioration and always with the gentlest method possible, such as low water pressure and soft, natural bristle brushes.	Repointing with mortar joints of a differing size or joint profile, texture, or color.
Repairing stucco with a stucco mixture duplicating the original as closely as possible in appearance and materials.	Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces; this method of cleaning erodes the surface of the material and accelerates deterioration.
	Using chemical cleaning products which could have an adverse chemical reaction with the masonry or stone texture.

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates as closely as possible.	Applying new material which is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as the old artificial brick siding, artificial cast stone or brick veneer.
Replacing missing architectural features, such as cornices, brackets, railings, and shutters.	Removing architectural features such as cornices, brackets, railings, shutters, window architraves and doorway pediments. These are usually an essential part of a building's character and appearance, illustrating the continuity of growth and change.
Retaining the original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces, wherever possible. Brick or stone surfaces may have been painted or whitewashed for practical and aesthetic reasons.	Indiscriminate removal of paint from masonry surfaces. This may be historically incorrect and may also subject the building to harmful damage.
(Frame Buildings)	
Retaining original material whenever possible.	Removing architectural features such as siding, cornices, brackets, railings, shutters, window architraves and doorway pediments. These are, in most cases, an essential part of a building's character and appearance illustrating the continuity of growth and change.
Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.	Resurfacing frame buildings with new material which is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, plastic or aluminum siding. Such material also can contribute to the deterioration of the structure from moisture and insect attacks.
(Roofs)	
Preserving the original roof shape.	Changing the original roof shape or adding features inappropriate to the essential character of the roof such as oversized dormer windows or picture windows.

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
Retaining the original roofing material whenever possible.	Applying new roofing material that is inappropriate to the style of the building and the town.
Replacing deteriorated roof coverings with new material that matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, and texture.	Replacing deteriorated roof coverings with new materials which differ to such an extent from the old in composition, size, shape, color, and texture that the historical integrity of the property is diminished.
Preserving or replacing, where necessary, all architectural features which give the roof its essential character, such as dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, and cresting.	Stripping the roof of architectural features important to its character.
Placing television antennae and mechanical equipment, such as air conditioners, in an inconspicuous location.	Introducing new window and door openings into the principal elevations of historic buildings, or enlarging or reducing window or door steps, openings to fit new stock window sash or new stock door sizes.
(Windows and Doors)	Altering the size of window panes or sash which is part of the structure's historic fabric. Such changes destroy the scale and proportion of the building.
Retaining existing window and door openings including window sash, glass lintels, sills, architraves, shutters and doors, pediments, tools, and all hardware.	Discarding original doors and door hardware when they can be repaired and reused in place.
The stylistic period or periods a building represents. If replacement of window sash or doors is necessary, the replacement should duplicate the material, design, and the hardware of the older window sash or door.	Inappropriate new window or door features such as aluminum storm and screen window combinations that require the removal of original windows and doors or the installation of plastic or metal strip awnings or false shutters that disturb the character and appearance of the building.

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
Building: Exterior Features (cont.)	
(Porches and Steps)	
Retaining porches and steps which are appropriate to the building and its development. Porches or additions reflecting later architectural styles are often important to the building's historical integrity and, whenever possible, should be retained.	Removing or altering porches and steps which are appropriate to the building and its development and the style or styles it represents.
Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated architectural features of wood, iron, cast iron, terra-cotta, tile, and brick.	Stripping porches and steps of original material and architectural features, such as hand rails, balusters, columns, brackets, and roof decoration of wood, iron, cast iron, terra-cotta, tile, and brick.
Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates as closely as possible.	Applying new material which is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as the old artificial cast stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, or plastic or aluminum siding.
Building: Interior Features	Enclosing porches and steps in a manner that destroys their intended appearance.
Retaining original material, architectural features and hardware, whenever possible, such as stairs, handrails, baluster, mantelpieces, cornices, chair rail, baseboard, panelings, doors and doorways, wallpaper, lighting fixtures, locks, and door knobs.	Removing original material, architectural features and hardware, except where essential for safety or efficiency.

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
Building: Interior Features (cont.)	
Repairing or replacing, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible.	Installing new decorative material which is inappropriate or was unavailable when the building was constructed, such as vinyl, plastic or imitation wood wall and floor coverings, except in utility areas such as kitchens and bathrooms.
Retaining original plaster, whenever possible.	
Discovering and retaining original paint colors, wallpapers and other decorative motifs or, where necessary, replacing them with colors, wallpapers or decorative motifs based on the original.	Destroying original plaster except where necessary for safety and efficiency.
Color	
Discovering and retaining original paint colors, or repainting with colors based on the original to illustrate distinctive character of the property.	Repainting with colors that cannot be documented through research and investigation to be appropriate to the building and neighborhood.
Plan and Function	
Using a building for its intended purpose.	Altering a building to accommodate an incompatible use requiring extensive alterations to the plan, materials and appearance of the building.
Finding an adaptive use, when necessary, which is compatible with the plan, structure, and appearance of the building.	Altering the basic plan of a building by demolishing principal walls, partitions, and stairways.
Retaining the basic plan of a building, whenever possible.	

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
New Additions	
Keeping additions to historic buildings to a minimum and making them compatible in scale, building materials, and texture.	Making unnecessary additions to historic property.
Designing additions to be compatible in materials, size, scale, color, and texture with the earlier building and the area.	Designing additions which are incompatible with the earlier building and the area in materials, size, scale, and texture.
Using contemporary designs compatible with the character and mood of the building or area.	Imitating an earlier style or period of architecture in additions, except in rare cases where a contemporary design would detract from the architectural unity of an ensemble or group. Especially avoid imitating an earlier style of architecture in additions that have a completely contemporary function such as a gas station.
	Causing unnecessary damage to the plan, materials, and appearance of the building when installing mechanical plan services.
Mechanical Services: Heating, Electrical, and Plumbing	
Installing necessary building services in areas and spaces that will require the least possible alteration to the materials, and appearance of the building.	Installing vertical runs of ducts, pipes, and cables in places where they will be a visual intrusion.
Installing the vertical runs of ducts, pipes, and cables in closets, service rooms, and wall cavities.	Cutting holes in important architectural features, such as cornices, decorative ceilings and paneling.
Selecting mechanical systems that best suit the building.	Installing "dropped" acoustical ceilings to hide inappropriate mechanical systems. This destroys the proportions and character of the rooms.
Rewiring early lighting fixtures.	

CONSIDER	TRY TO AVOID
Mechanical Services: Heating, Electrical, and Plumbing (cont.)	
Having exterior electrical and telephone cables installed underground.	Having exterior electrical and telephone cables attached to the principal elevations of the building.
Safety and Code Requirements	
Complying with code requirements in such a manner that the essential character of a property is preserved intact.	
Investigating variances for historic properties afforded under some local codes.	
Installing adequate fire prevention equipment in a manner which does minimal damage to the appearance or historic fabric of a property.	

FOR FURTHER REFERENCE

The following books, magazines, and organizations will provide sound, basic information about the rehabilitation and care of historic property.

Books

Bullock, Orin M., Jr., The Restoration Manual: An Illustrated Guide to Preservation and Restoration of Old Buildings, Norwalk, Connecticut: Silvermine Publishers, Inc., 1966.

Cantacuzino, Sherban, New Uses for Old Buildings, London: Architectural Press, 1975.

Criswell, John F., Knights Ferry's Golden Past, United States Of America, August, 1974.

Historic Walker's Point, Inc., Preservation Minded Home Improvements: The Exterior, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Insall, Donald W., The Care of Old Buildings Today: A Practical Guide, London: Architectural Press, 1972.

Stephen, George, Remodeling Old Houses Without Destroying Their Character, New York: Alfred A. Knoff.

Magazine

The Old-House Journal, a monthly publication, published by the Old-House Journal Corporation, 199 Berkeley Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217.

Organizations

Committee on Historic Resources; American Institute of Architects;
1735 New York Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20006

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