NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

127

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED 2280
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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Jost-Kuhn House

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1354 Madison Street NW

City or town: Washington, D.C. State: DC County: _____

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

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** X **C** ___**D**

DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO 2/19/2016

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

DC 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:

X 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 4/5/16

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
DOMESTIC/Duplex

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
MID-19TH CENTURY/Italian Villa

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick and wood (trim)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The two-story red brick Italianate country villa house, located at 1354 Madison Street and known as the Jost-Kuhn House for its original and subsequent owners, was constructed in 1859 on a 24-acre tract of land in Brightwood in the District of Columbia. Today, the house occupies a much-reduced 8,379 square-foot lot of land (approximately .2 acres) and is sited at a skewed angle to Madison Street, mid-block between 13th and 14th Street with its original front façade facing south to what is now the rear yard of the lot. The house is surrounded by early 20th-century detached, single-family dwellings, namely American Foursquare and craftsman-type dwellings that occupy the surburban-sized lots lining the streets parallel and perpendicular to Madison Street.

The date of construction of the Jost-Kuhn House, its skewed position on the landscape, and its architecture clearly identify it as a historic house that pre-dates the early 20th-century suburbanization of the former Washington County. The former 24-acre Jost-Kuhn property is the only surviving one of several adjacent properties that were purchased in 1910 by developers who laid out the Sixteenth Street Highlands subdivision, platted the land, and advertised the sale of lots in the "new suburb." The Jost-Kuhn property historically comprised other buildings on its tract, including a barn that stood one block north at 1342 Montague Street before it was demolished around 2004.

The house is a substantial, two-story, almost-cube-like brick dwelling designed in an Italian villa style, covered with a low hipped roof characterized by a central cupola and a wide bracketed wood cornice. The house is set upon a low brick foundation, has brick walls laid in 5-course American bond, and features paired, brick inside end chimneys, and single windows with Italianate-style window hood molds. A double-story wood porch with scroll-sawn detailing and a single-story wood porch are located on the northeast and northwest elevations of the house, both facing Madison Street.

Narrative Description

Exterior:

The Jost-Kuhn House is a robust two-story, three-bay-wide brick building covered with a hipped roof with a central cupola. The building is designed in an Italianate style characterized by its cube-like massing and its detailing, including wide overhanging eaves with wood brackets, and wood door and window hoods. Historically, the house featured a wrap-around porch supported by wooden piers with scroll-sawn knee brackets.

The southeast elevation, presently the rear elevation of the house, is the historic front. It is a three-bay wide façade with a central entry door on the first story flanked by two long and narrow window 6/6 wood window openings, and three symmetrically arranged 6/6 wood windows on the second story. Based upon a late 19th century photograph of the house, this elevation featured a full-width porch that turned around the northeast corner of the house. Wooden columns sat upon a set of steps that similarly extended across the front and wrapped around the side wall of the house. The wooden columns had scroll sawn knee brackets that supported the porch roof with a deck and balustrade railing above. Today, the porch and porch stairs are missing, as are the window shutters shown in the photograph, but the windows, door and their surrounds are intact. The central entrance today features a shed roof covering over the door, supported by brackets that appear to have been salvaged from the earlier porch. The entryway is reached by a set of wooden replacement steps that lead to a single opening with the original pair of Italianate style wooden doors. The doors have a single pane window in the upper half and raised wood panels in the lower half. The door opening is framed by narrow side lights and a single-light transom above.

The window openings on the first story are the same length as the door opening and extend from the door sill height to the top of the door transom. The openings have raised wooden panels at the lowest bottom section with long and narrow 6/6 double-hung wood sash filling the majority of the openings. The windows on the second story are shorter than those of the first story, but are similarly filled with 6/6 wood windows. All of the window openings feature slightly projecting wooden cornice boards with wood paneled “dog-ear” drip molds below.

Above the second story windows, narrowly spaced wooden brackets springing from the cornice board support the wide eaves of the roof above. This bracketed cornice extends across all of the other elevations. The brackets terminate at the front edge of the roof soffit with a knob and finial detail. A metal replacement gutter obscures the original edge of the roofline, while downspouts to either side of the façade tie into the gutter.

The northwest and northeast elevations are both oriented to Madison Street at skewed angles to the street. These two elevations offer separate entrances to the two apartments that have been carved out of the former single-family dwelling. The northeast elevation features a pair of 6/6 wood windows in the center of the wall on the second story and a door and 6/6 window on the first story, along with a single 6/6 window opening towards the southeast corner of the elevation. The coupling of the openings on-center was required by the pair of end chimneys whose stacks rise internally corresponding with the front and rear rooms. On the first story, the 6/6 double-hung wood windows both appear original, while the door with altered brickwork around the openings, appears to have been either elongated from a window or newly introduced. A wood and glass door with a large square, single-light transom above it fills the opening. This door, which leads into the ground floor apartment, is reached via a small porch which was constructed to face Madison Street with a lead walk running perpendicular to the street. In order for the porch to run parallel with Madison Street, it is triangular in plan and covered with a half-hipped roof. The heavy, turned porch balusters appear to have been re-used from the original porch that spanned the southeast elevation. An historic photo from ca. 1930 shows that this porch existed at that time, but it also had a roof balustrade with the same turned balusters.

The windows on the first story and those on the second story all have projecting wood cornices with wood drip molds as elsewhere on the house. A metal tie road, capped with a star, is located between the two second story windows at the bed molding of the cornice.

The northwest elevation, similarly skewed to Madison Street, offers an entrance to the second floor apartment and is the most altered of the building's facades. Here, a two-story wood frame addition clad with a pseudo brick cladding material, projects from the center section of the original brick wall. The front bay of the brick wall remains exposed and lit on the interior by the original single 6/6 windows on the first and second stories. The door leading into the second floor apartment is located in the two-story wood frame addition with a larger 6/6 window next to it. This addition was built by 1927 according to the 1927 Sanborn Map, but may incorporate part of the original wing that extended off of this elevation according to historic maps.

This northwest elevation has a two-story porch spanning both floors of the wood addition. The porch with its heavy turned balusters on the first and second floor railings, its knee brackets, appears to have been constructed using the materials salvaged from the historic porch which extended across the southeast elevation. The porch and the wood frame addition are covered under the same shed roof, making the porch integral to this addition. The second floor of the porch is screened in and has a door from the addition opening onto it.

The frame addition with its porch essentially occupies the central part of this elevation wall. The exposed brick wall towards the south end remains exposed with its two, single 6/6 wood windows defining the end bays of the first and second stories. Like on the historic front (southeastern elevation), the first story window is long and narrow with a raised wood panel at the bottom section of the opening, and the second story window is shorter. Unlike the other windows, however, these lack the projecting wooden cornices and drip molds. Instead, the windows are capped by brick lintels. The brick on this elevation appears to have been covered with stucco, or painted at one time.

The southwest elevation includes a projecting bay window on-center of the first story and a pair of 6/6 windows above. Unlike all of the other windows in the dwelling that are historic, these windows have been replaced with 6/6 simulated divided-light sash. The projecting bay sits on a brick foundation, but has wood frame walls articulated in an Italianate style with heavy brackets supporting a projecting cornice. The brackets are similar to the main cornice brackets, but rather than a single large finial drop, these have two smaller ones.

The dwelling is covered by a hipped roof with a central cupola and two interior end chimneys on the southwest and northeast elevations. The end chimneys rise well above the roofline and are brick laid in an all-stretcher bond with a simple brick cornice cap. The cupola, on-center of the roof and constructed of wood frame, is similarly covered with a hipped roof. Pairs of single windows fill all four walls of the cupola, providing views in all directions from the cupola room. At the time of construction of the house in 1859, the cupola would have provided expansive views south to the city, to Rock Creek to the west and to the countryside to the north and east.

The foundation level of the house, above grade, is brick and below grade is stone. The raised brick foundation has windows in it on the southeast side, but these would have been under the original porch floor which was raised above ground level by 24 or so inches.

Interior:

The interior of the Jost-Kuhn House was historically a central-passage, two-room deep plan that has since been altered to accommodate two separate apartments on the first and second floors. In addition, the house has been re-oriented so that the original front is now the rear, and the side and rear elevations now offer access to the two apartments. Despite these changes in orientation and circulation, the interior retains its original window and door trim, historic wood floors, and original Italianate-style marble mantels.

The second floor of the former house is entered from the door on the first floor of the two-story frame addition. This addition essentially provides stair access to the second floor of the main dwelling and to the second floor porch. A central corridor opens onto four rooms and a small kitchen whose window corresponds with the central bay of the original front wall of the house. The room in the southeast corner of the house retains its original and notable white marble mantel. The first floor of the house was not accessible.

The cellar of the house reveals rubble stone walls about six feet tall and a dirt floor. A wooden stair provides access to the cellar from the interior of the house.

INTEGRITY

The Jost-Kuhn House retains high integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The house sits on its original site, and although the context has changed from rural to suburban, the house undeniably reads as a historic country villa. The house sits askew on its lot, distinguishing it from the mid-20th century single-family dwellings facing directly on the street. And although the house has been re-oriented so that the former front is now the rear, the original entry door is intact as are other distinguishing features.

The dwelling retains its high quality design, its distinctive form, including its hipped roof with hipped roof cupola, its Italianate detailing, and a high percentage of its original materials. The two-story frame addition post-dates the end-date of the Period of Significance, but occupies the site of an historic ell.

The Jost-Kuhn House is one of a handful of surviving Italianate-style country villas in the District of Columbia. Most of these however are located within the original city limits and in Georgetown and Anacostia. The Jost-Kuhn House, however, is the only known rural country villa to survive.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

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

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or 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.)
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1859-1919

Significant Dates
1859; 1919

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Jost-Kuhn House is an Italianate-style country villa built on 24 acres of land in 1859 outside of the city limits in the former Washington County, District of Columbia. The house was built in the vicinity of the rural village of Brightwood, just south of the intersection of Brightwood Road (now Georgia Avenue) and today's Military Road at a time when the village was just beginning to attract wealthy Washingtonians who built residences in the country. The house was built by Benedict Jost, a Swiss-born merchant who had a successful business in the city. Jost appears to have built the house for rental purposes, but he and his wife ultimately moved to the country estate where he died. In 1882, Gustav Kuhn and his wife, Louisa, purchased the house and lived on the property, farming the land, while also commuting to and working in downtown.

The Kuhns owned the 24-acre property until 1909 when they sold it to Holmes Central Realty Corporation, a real estate development company that subdivided this and surrounding acreage for its Sixteenth Street Highlands residential subdivision. The house survived the subdivision process, as a lot was carved out around it, making it a rare and important survivor of the pre-Civil War landscape of rural Washington, D.C.

The Jost-Kuhn house meets National Register Criteria A and C for its associations with the suburbanization of the once-rural Washington County, District of Columbia and as an excellent example of an Italianate country villa. The Period of Significance extends from 1859 when the house is known to have been completed until 1919 when James Holmes of Holmes Realty repaired and then sold the house as part of his company's development of Sixteenth Street Highlands.

In addition, as a remnant of a larger pre-Civil War country estate that stood in the vicinity of Camp Brightwood, the property may have the potential to yield archaeological information relevant to our understanding of history; however, no archaeological sites have been identified to-date.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Architecture: The Jost-Kuhn House is significant in the Area of Architecture as an excellent example of a pre-Civil War Italianate-style country villa. The house retains distinguishing features of its style and form, including its cube-like form, its hipped roof and central cupola, and its Italianate-style door and window details, and its bold, wood bracketed cornice.

Community Planning and Development: The Jost-Kuhn House is significant in the Area of Community Planning and Development as a mid-19th century country villa built before the Civil War that survived the early to mid-20th century suburbanization of the Brightwood area in the District of Columbia. The house was built in 1859 and stood as a country residence in the

Brightwood area for fifty years until it and surrounding rural lands were subdivided into the residential subdivision of Sixteenth Street Highlands.

Historic Background: Washington County and Brightwood

At the time of its establishment in 1790, the 10-mile-square District of Columbia included Washington City, laid out by Peter L'Enfant, the port city of Georgetown on the Maryland side of the Potomac, and Alexandria, on the Virginia side. All that area beyond the L'Enfant City and Georgetown on the Maryland side of the Potomac was called Washington County. Although the Organic Act of 1871 consolidated Washington County, Washington City and Georgetown into the single entity of the District of Columbia, the County remained rural and was still considered a separate geographic designation into the early 20th century. Within the County, two villages—Tenleytown west of Rock Creek, and Brightwood, east of Rock Creek—developed as commercial and transportation centers to serve the agricultural community.

Within this rural landscape of Washington County, Brightwood began as an early 19th-century hamlet at the juncture of the 7th Street Road[1] (later renamed Georgia Avenue), Rock Creek Ford Road (formerly known as Milk House Ford), and Piney Branch Road. A post office established there was originally named "Brighton" but was later changed to Brightwood as there were many Brightons in the region. The 7th Street road was a Congressionally-mandated turnpike serviced initially by stage coaches and later by streetcars that traversed the entire length of Washington from the Potomac River waterfront through Washington County to Rockville, Maryland. The 7th Street Road provided direct access for farmers to get their produce to market downtown. Tolls were collected from travelers who, for a time, had to travel over a plank road, an improvement made in 1852 to 7th Street from Boundary Road (Florida Avenue) to Silver Spring just across the District of Columbia line.

Brightwood was bounded on the west by Rock Creek. The longest tributary in Washington, Rock Creek was the best of the "many fast flowing streams to power griste mills" wrote George Washington in justifying the selection for the new capital.[2] During the 19th century, most of the early residents of Brightwood were farmers with small to large holdings, and entrepreneurs in businesses related to farming and milling. There was also an enclave of free African Americans who owned land, farmed and ran a dairy. This community, called Vinegar Hill, included the crossroads of the post office and north of the site. Towards the end of the Civil War, a school for black students was constructed near present-day Military Road School. The 24-acre property owned by Benedict Josh was located just south of the intersection of Brightwood within a tapestry of adjacent farmsteads surrounded by uncut woodland.[3]

In addition to farming, Brightwood became somewhat of a leisure destination in the pre- and post-Civil War years. A horse race track known as the Piney Branch Race Course (later the Brightwood Driving Park or Trotting Park) with betting and its own hotel (the Piney Branch

[1] Seventh Street was also known as Seventh Street Pike, Plank Road and Brightwood Avenue. The toll was abolished in 1871.
[2] Quoted in Steve Dryden, *Pierce Mill: Two Hundred Years in the Nation's Capital*, (Washington, DC, 2009), p.1.
[3] The property is identified as B. Jost on the 1861 A. Boschke Map.

Hotel) was established by 1857 and continued to provide entertainment throughout the Civil War.[4] An 1857 advertisement in the *Evening Star* promoted a new grandstand at the race course, noting, "Great preparations for the comfort of visitors have been made—a large stand having been erected capable of seating one thousand persons." Another *Evening Star* ad in 1863 announced that "stage coaches for Crystal Springs and the Race Course" were operating two trips daily with three on Sundays from various points downtown.[5] The Crystal Springs mentioned in the ad refers to the Crystal Springs resort located just south and west of the race course. According to author David Swerdloff in *Crestwood 300 Acres 300 Years*, the springs were named for an abundant spring that bubbled up out of the ground just west of present-day 16th and Kennedy streets, and were a popular picnic spot as early as the mid-1800s.[6] By the time of the Civil War, a resort complex had been built at the spring that included several pavilions and a hotel. Based on newspaper accounts, the resort appears to have continued in operation throughout the Civil War. An October 1865 account describes the journey to Crystal Springs:

> "After passing forts of all sorts, stockade blockades, guns, soldiers, bayonets, country people in wagons, negroes on foot, babies in arms, and girls in sun bonnets, we brought up an uncultivated but attractive country place known to all men by these presents, meaning the presence of a sign-board over the gateway saying that this was Crystal Spring."[7]

As indicated in the above description, the land around Brightwood, like much of rural Washington County in the District, had been significantly scarred by the Civil War. The Union Army requisitioned existing farmhouses and other structures for hospitals and headquarters, and built fortifications, batteries and camps across the County landscape, clearing the woods, and leaving the land and its buildings after the War in disarray and even ruin. During the War, the Brightwood summer home of Washington's mayor, Matthew Gault Emery who also led a local militia, became the site of Camp Brightwood. The hilltop site was a signal station where soldiers used flags and/or torches to communicate with nearby forts. During the Battle of Fort Stevens in July 1864, Camp Brightwood was a transfer point for the wounded. Throughout the War, the camp was home to the infantrymen who built the local forts and to the troops who patrolled Piney Branch Road and Rock Creek.

After the War, many of the original owners did not return to their land. Some had settled in the city and decided to remain there; others had left the region altogether. The ruined land, the change in land ownership, the labor shortage induced by the end of slavery, and the expanding urban center, all served as an impetus for transformation in the County. While farming after the

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[4] See Lara Otis, "Washington's Lost Racetracks: Horse Racing from the 1760s until the 1930s, *Washington History*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 2012. Although the course is not shown on the 1861 Boschke Map, this is likely due to the fact that the map relied upon surveys conducted in 1857-1859. The course is clearly delineated on the 1867 Michler Map as the Piney Branch Race Course, as well as in later maps.

[5] See "Piney Branch Trotting Course," *The Evening Star*, July 7, 1857; *The Evening Star*, July 1863 and *The Washington Post,* December 6, 1877 as quoted in David Swerdloff, *Crestwood: 300 Acres 300 Years,* (Washington, D.C.: The Humanities Council of Washington), 2013, p.53.

[6] Swerdloff, p. 51.

[7] Swerdloff, p. 52.

War waned, "gentlemen farming", weekending, summering, and related leisure were on the rise. The springs and the race course had survived the War and served to attract Washingtonians not just to come out for day trips, but to settle in the region. Established Washingtonians with the financial means began to purchase former farmland on which to build large country houses.

In 1859, just before the outbreak of the Civil War, and likely drawn to the area's recreational attractions, Jost bought 24 acres of land and built a large and "fashionable" country villa in Brightwood on land immediate north of the race course.

Benedict Jost and Construction of the Jost-Kuhn House at 1354 Madison Street

Benedict Jost, a successful merchant in downtown, D.C., built the house at present-day 1354 Madison Street in 1859 as a country villa for his own personal use and for rental income. Born in Switzerland in 1807, Jost immigrated to America and settled in Washington by 1847, if not before.[8] In that year, Jost lived with his German-born wife Josephine at 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue and, during the 1850s went from being a hotel keeper to a successful merchant.[9] According to his obituary in 1869, Jost operated a saddle and harness business in his early years in Washington, but later ran a wholesale liquor store. As early as January 1850, Jost was running advertisements for his imported wines in the *Daily National Intelligencer,* indicating that he was, by then, already operating the liquor store. The 1850s were clearly successful years in business for Benedict Jost, since by 1859, he had enough money to purchase a 24-acre property in Brightwood and build a large Italianate-style country villa on the site. Jost appears to have built the house for rental income, as an ad in June 1859 offers the house up for rent:

> *For Rent: A new first-class Brick House, built in the best and most convenient manner, containing a large parlor, nine rooms, one bath-room, and two capacious dry cellars. There is a back building attached, containing a kitchen and two bed-rooms for servants; also a pump of pure water and a carriage house and stable. The house is well adapted as a residence for a fashionable family. It is situated in the most healthful part of the District of Columbia, a short distance from the residence of Major Blagden on the Piney Branch road, and within half an hour's drive from the President's Mansion. Possession can be given the early part of July next week. For terms, apply to B. JOST, Wine and Liquor Merchant, no. 131 Pennsylvania Avenue, near Seventeenth Street.*[10]

[8] The first indication that Benedict Jost lived in D.C. is a death notice in the *Daily Intelligencer* in September 1847. As reported by the *Daily National Intelligencer,* Clementine Jost, the "youngest" daughter of Benedict and Josephine Jost died on September 2, 1847. The death notice announced that a funeral would be held at the Jost's residence at 17th and Pennsylvania Avenue. Although the descriptor "youngest" indicates that the Josts had other children, no children are listed in the 1850, 1860, or 1870 Census records. (*The Daily National Intelligencer*, September 3, 1847.) In December 1847, the same paper reported that Benedict Jost took out a license for a shop (*Daily National Intelligencer*, December 24, 1847).
[9] The 1850 U.S. Census lists Benedict Jost as a hotel keeper. The census also lists his place of birth as "Republic Ship," though later census records state his place of birth as Switzerland.
[10] *The Daily National Intelligencer*, June 28, 1859, p. 1.

The 1861 Boschke Map shows the 24-acre parcel under the ownership of B. Jost, though no building is yet shown on the property, thereby confirming that the "new" house advertised in 1859 truly was new.[11] Almost one year later, in May 1860, the house, still referred to as "new", was again advertised by Jost for rent:

> *Country residence for rent: the new Berne Brick Cottage, now elegantly furnished, containing large airy parlors and rooms, on Piney Branch Road, within half an hour's drive from the President's Mansion*.[12]

The description of the house as "Berne" may refer to buildings of Bern, Switzerland, as Switzerland was Jost's ancestral home. However, the house is readily classified today as an Italianate Villa, based upon its cube-like massing, its hipped roof with central cupola, and its heavy bracketed cornice, window hoods and scroll-sawn wood porch trim.

After construction of the house, Benedict and Josephine Jost continued to live downtown above their shop at 17th and Pennsylvania Avenue. In the 1860 U.S. Census, Jost is listed as a wine merchant with $25,000 worth of real estate and $6,000 of personal property. A 30-year old Swiss-born "laborer" and a 25-year old Irish servant lived with the Jost couple. At the time of Jost's death nine years later in 1869, however, he and Josephine may have been living permanently at their property in Brightwood, as Jost's obituary notes that he died "at his residence on the Piney Branch Road…"[13] He is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Georgetown.

The 24-acre property is clearly identified on Civil War-era maps under the name Jost. However, no accounts to-date indicate whether the property was occupied by Union troops, or if the house was requisitioned as a headquarters. The Jost property, located just south and west of Camp Brightwood., was undoubtedly crossed over by soldiers patrolling the area, yet there is no evidence of the use of the property during those years. In fact, little is known about the first ten years of the house other than that Benedict Jost built the house before the Civil War, owned the property through the War, and died at the property in 1869 after the War.

By his will, Benedict Jost left his "personal property and the enjoyment of his real estate" to his widow, so long as she remained a widow. Josephine continued to live in Brightwood for ten years after her husband's death, until 1879 when she remarried and gave up her claim to the property. Before that, according to the 1870 U.S. Census, Josephine lived on the property with a 54-year-old cook from Russia and a 70-year-old gardener from Bavaria. It is likely that Josephine rented out much of the acreage to a tenant farmer.[14] In 1879, when Josephine Jost re-married, ownership of her Brightwood property, according to the terms of Benedict Jost's will reverted to his brother, Niklaus Jost, also a resident in Washington, D.C. However, Jost's other siblings who lived in Switzerland contested the will, filing a lawsuit against Niklaus Jost for their

[11] The 1861 Boschke Map was based on surveys done in 1857, 1858 and 1859, thereby explaining why the 1859-built house is not indicated on the map.
[12] *The Daily National Intelligencer*, May 15, 1860.
[13] *The Evening Star*, September 11, 1869.
[14] 1870 U.S. Census Records.

share of the property.[15] In 1882, at the conclusion of the case which recognized the Swiss relatives as heirs-at-law, the 24-acre Brightwood property including the house, stable and carriage house, were sold at auction. An announcement for the auction noted the sale:

> *On Thursday, the fifteenth of June, he [Thomas Fisher & Co., Real Estate Auctioneers] will sell that tract of land known as the farm of the late Benedict Jost, situated on the Piney Branch road, near Brightwood, containing 24 acres, more or less…This tract is improved by a very comfortable dwelling house and is in good order…"* [16]

Whether as a result of this auction, or another one a few weeks later and similarly advertised in the paper, the former Jost farm was sold by June 1882 to Gustav Kuhn and became home to Gustav Kuhn, his wife, Louisa and their family of seven children.[17] Gustav and Louisa Kuhn were both born in Germany, ca. 1837, but emigrated to the United States in 1857. During the 1860s until the early 1870s, the Kuhns lived in New York, where Gustav worked as a piano tuner and dealer.[18] By 1873, the Kuhns had moved to Washington, where Gustav established himself as a piano dealer at 10th and D Streets, NW.[19] During the late 1880s, Gustav actively advertised his piano business, describing himself in the ads as a "practical piano maker and tuner," and seller of "the noble Krakaner Bros' pianos, Pease pianos and Burdett Organs."[20] After moving to the farm in Brightwood in 1882-1883, Gustav Kuhn continued to operate his piano dealership at 407 10th Street NW, making the Kuhns early suburban commuters.

Although Gustav Kuhn's primary profession is listed as piano dealing and tuning throughout his Washington residency, he also appears to have farmed his property in Brightwood, at least for his family's own personal use if not for sale at market. In 1890, a fire reported in the local press noted that "Gustav Kuhn's barn, carriage house, grain house, grain, carriage, dog-cart, horse and a cow on his farm out near Brightwood, were burned."[21] Despite the loss, the Kuhns continued to own and occupy the property for years, until 1909, when Gustav and Louisa moved to Pasadena, California next door to their 25-year-old son Albert and his family. While the 24-acre Jost-Kuhn farm survived intact into the 20th century under Kuhn ownership, it would soon be purchased by a developer and platted into the residential subdivision of Sixteenth Street Highlands.

Residential Subdivision, the Permanent Highway Plan, and Sixteenth Street Highlands

By the 1880s, as the population in the city was expanding, and the electric streetcar was introduced, Washington County began experiencing a significant real estate boom. Land

[15] The Jost Will Case: His Relatives in Switzerland Recognized as Heirs-at-law," *The Washington Post*, May 9, 1882,p. 2.
[16] *The Evening Star*, May 23, 1882, p. 3.
[17] See "Sales of Real Estate," *The Evening Star*, June 21, 1882.
[18] The 1870 U.S. Census lists Gustaff Kuhn,35, from Baden, Germany as a piano forte maker married to Louisa Kuhn, also from Baden. The census notes that their four children, ages 6, 4, 2, and 2 months were all born in New York.
[19] The first year in which Gustav (then Gustaf) Kuhn is listed in Washington City directories is 1873. He is listed as a piano tuner at 1114 6th Street NW. Gustav Kuhn continues to be listed as a piano tuner and dealer in city directories with his business at 10th and D Streets. In 1883, his home is listed as Brightwood.
[20] See advertisement in *The Evening Star*, March 1, 1888.
[21] "Items of City News, *The Washington Post*, January 10, 1890, p. 2.

speculators and real estate developers bought up County land, including its farm complexes and estates, and began subdividing them for residential development, offering streetcar service into and out of the city. These subdivisions were laid out according to their own established plans, without conforming to the city's street plan, or to adjacent subdivisions. This phenomenon outraged city planners and politicians who sought a plan to control development beyond the L'Enfant Plan. Congress responded, first with the 1888 Subdivision Act, that required that any new subdivision be laid out in accordance with the L'Enfant Plan, and then in 1893, with the Permanent Highway Act which created a street plan outside of the original city limits in the former Washington County. The maps for this street plan were prepared in sections and finalized by 1900. The plan was progressive in its planning principles in that it did not follow a strict grid, but respected the natural terrain, landscape features, and existing residential subdivisions and institutional complexes, yet at the same time, the Plan also straightened existing roads and established new ones with little consideration for the cultural landscape and its built environment. While the implementation of the 1893 Plan was years in the making, its establishment essentially spelled an end to the County's rural character and opened it up to suburban residential development.

In July 1909, after living on the property for more than 25 years, the Kuhns sold their Brightwood property to Holmes Central Realty for $100,000.[22] Just two months later, in September 1909, Holmes Realty had already filed a subdivision plat for the property consistent with the Permanent Highway Plan that included the east-west Longfellow, Madison, Montague Streets and a sliver of Nicholson Street, the north-south 14th and16th Streets, and Colorado Avenue. In addition, the subdivision plan also incorporated an existing farm road that historically provided access from properties east of Rock Creek to the 7th Street Road (Georgia Avenue) that was simply renamed Manchester Lane. The company named the subdivision Sixteenth Street Highlands.

The Sixteenth Street Highlands subdivision included five squares and generally offered deep lots measuring between 25 and 50-feet wide by more than 125-feet deep, with those closer to 16th Street generally being the widest. One notable exception to this was Lot 10 in Square 2799—a large 40,655 square-foot lot measuring 170 feet by 295 feet and carved out around the Jost-Kuhn House, at present-day 1354 Madison Street. The plat also included another sizeable 10,000 square-foot lot (Lot 20 Square 2796), north of the house that was drawn around the barn that had been part of the Jost-Kuhn farm. This barn, which had been converted into a residence, stood at 1342 Montague Street until 2004 when it was demolished.

In March 1910, Holmes Realty purchased the former Brightwood Driving Park, an 8.83-acre property just south of the Jost-Kuhn tract, clearly with the intention of expanding its surburban development. A newspaper account of the sale noted that the $93,000 purchase price represented more than $10,000 per acre, "one of the highest prices ever paid" for land that far from the center of the city. The paper confirmed that the new owners "will make a subdivision and provide

[22] "Real Estate Transfers," *The Evening Star*, July 27, 1909.

building sites."[23] With the purchase of this acreage, Sixteenth Street Highlands would be extended south to present-day Kennedy Street.

Although it is not known who occupied the Jost-Kuhn farmhouse after Holmes Realty purchased the property in 1909, by 1916, the principal of the realty company, James Holmes had moved into the house (the property had the address of 5618 Colorado Avenue from 1909-1919). James Holmes lived in the house for several years, until at least 1918. The following year, in 1919, the company reduced the size of the house lot by subdividing Lot 10 into Lots 16-22 and adding a public alleyway.[24] The Jost-Kuhn house thus stood on new Lot 19, measuring 9,832 square feet, still larger than the surrounding lots, but much-reduced from its historic 24 acres. At the time of subdivision of the lot, James Holmes took out a permit to repair the house which included covering the house with asbestos shingles, repairing the "veranda" and papering and plastering "as required." The permit also notes that there would be "no enlargement of present structure."[25] With Madison Street as the principal street frontage of the lot, the house, askew on the lot, also gained a new address—1354 Madison Street. The house's primary entry façade no longer faced south to the city, but instead opened into a small rear yard. Doors were later added to the house elevations on the Madison Street side which are today treated as the building's principal front.

Throughout the 1910s, Holmes Central Realty advertised extensively for its Sixteenth Street Highlands suburb. The ads touted the subdivision as "a Magnificent New Suburb" located at the "highest point on Sixteenth Street" and "designed exclusively for a section of the highest order of detached homes." The ads emphasize the subdivision's building restrictions, namely that of detached houses (semi-detached houses were not permitted) and minimum construction costs of $4,000 per house. The ads similarly play up the "pure air and sunlight" and the city amenities: "Sixteenth Street Highlands is the only subdivision actually bordering Rock Creek Park and containing all city improvements."[26] The ads also note the convenience of the new suburb along the 14th Street streetcar line and along 16th Street, "designed to be one of the grandest and most beautiful boulevards in the world."[27] A list of early purchases of lots in the subdivision indicate that at least one local builder, L.E. Breuninger was equally optimistic about the prospect for development, as he bought several lots in May 1911 alone.[28]

Beginning in 1920, after the president of Holmes Realty, James Holmes sold the property, the historic house and its lot became home to a succession of owners. At some point, the single-family dwelling was converted into two apartments—one on the first floor and the other on the second floor. Over the course of the century, few changes have been made to the exterior of the house, leaving the Jost-Kuhn House as a rare intact survivor of a mid-19th century Italianate country villa.

[23] "Fredonia and Brightwood Driving Park Disposed Of," *The Evening Star*, March 2, 1910, p. 3.
[24] Subdivision Plat Liber/Folio 60/128 in the D.C. Office of the Surveyor.
[25] D.C. Permit to Repair, June 18, 1919, #4680.
[26] See ad for Sixteenth Street Highlands in *The Evening Star*, 10/15/1910 and many other ads throughout the 1910s.
[27] Advertisement, *The Evening Star*, 10/21/1911.
[28] "Rush to Buy Homes: Remarkable Activity in Sixteenth Street Highlands," *The Washington Post*, May 7, 1911.

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Maps
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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:
__X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _Less than 1 acre_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.958178 Longitude: -77.032752
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Jost-Kuhn House at 1354 Madison Street, NW occupies lots 19 and 809 on Square 2799.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These lots have been associated with the house since 1919, following a re-subdivision of the 1909 division of the large 24-acre property into the residential subdivision of Sixteenth Street Highlands. The house has stood on that site since its construction in 1859.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kim Williams
organization: D.C. Historic Preservation Office
street & number: 100 4th Street, SW
city or town: Washington, D.C. state: _____ zip code: _____
e-mail kim.williams@dc.gov
telephone: 202 442-8840
date: July 1, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Jost-Kuhn House
City or Vicinity: Washington, D.C.
County: State: DC
Photographer: Kim Williams
Date Photographed: 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

View looking south showing northeast and northwest elevations
1 of 11

View looking west showing northeast elevation
2 of 11

View looking northeast showing southeast and southwest elevations
3 of 11

View looking northeast showing window bay on southwest elevation
4 of 11

View looking skyward to north showing cupola
5 of 11

View looking southeast showing northwest elevation
6 of 11

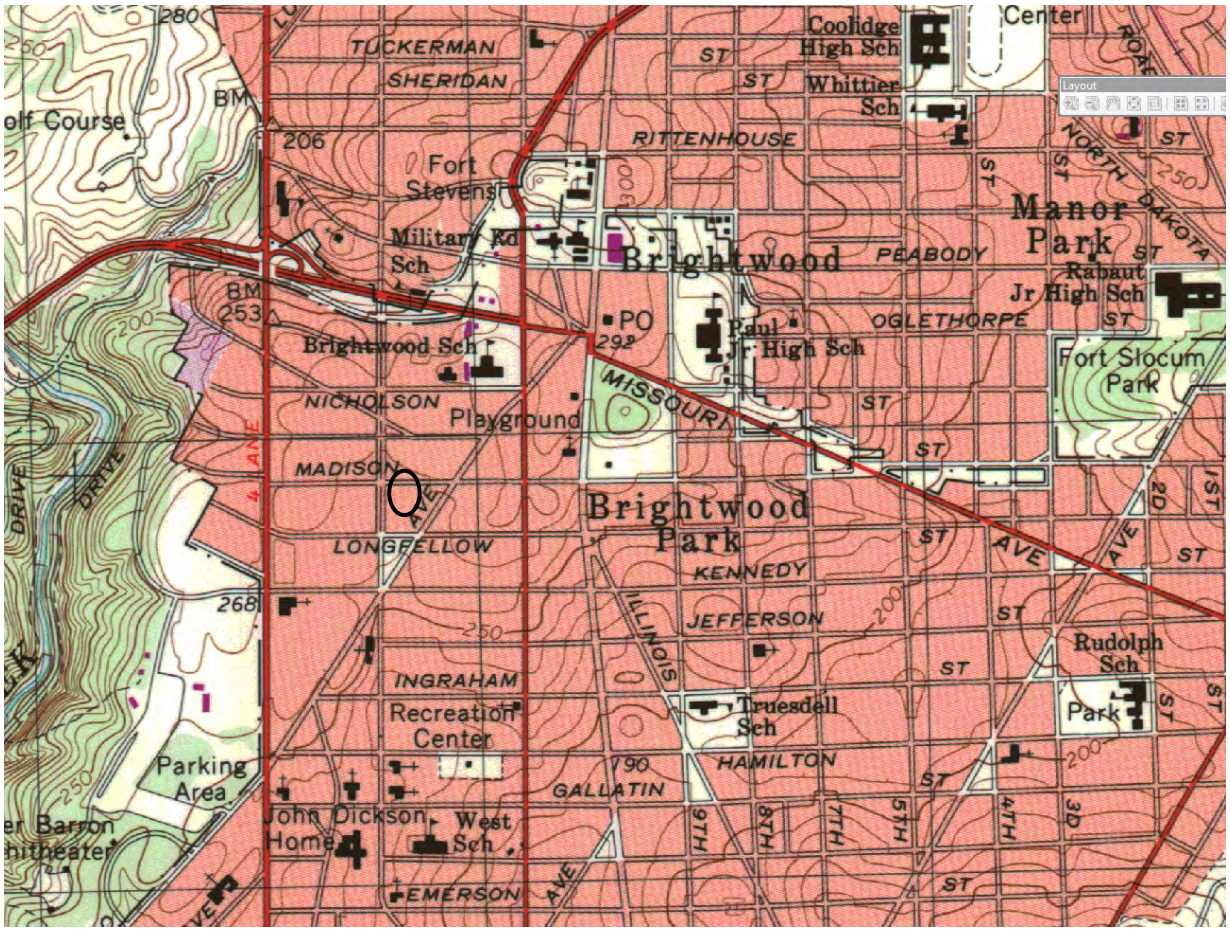
View looking northwest showing southeast elevation
7 of 11

Detail of windows on northeast elevation
8 of 11

View looking southwest showing northeast elevation
9 of 11

Interior view showing 2nd floor mantel
10 of 11

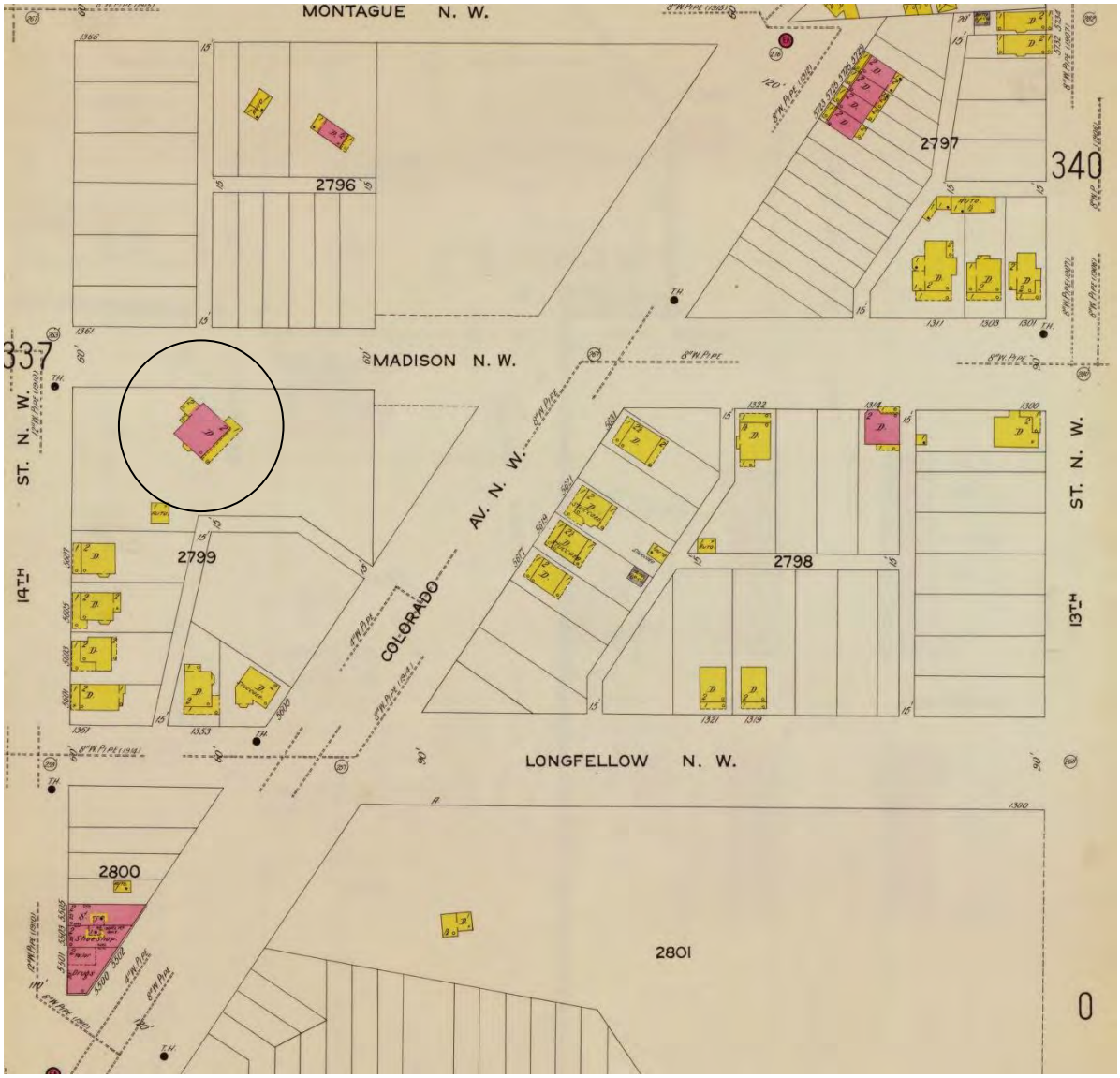
Interior view of showing 2nd floor hallway
11 of 11



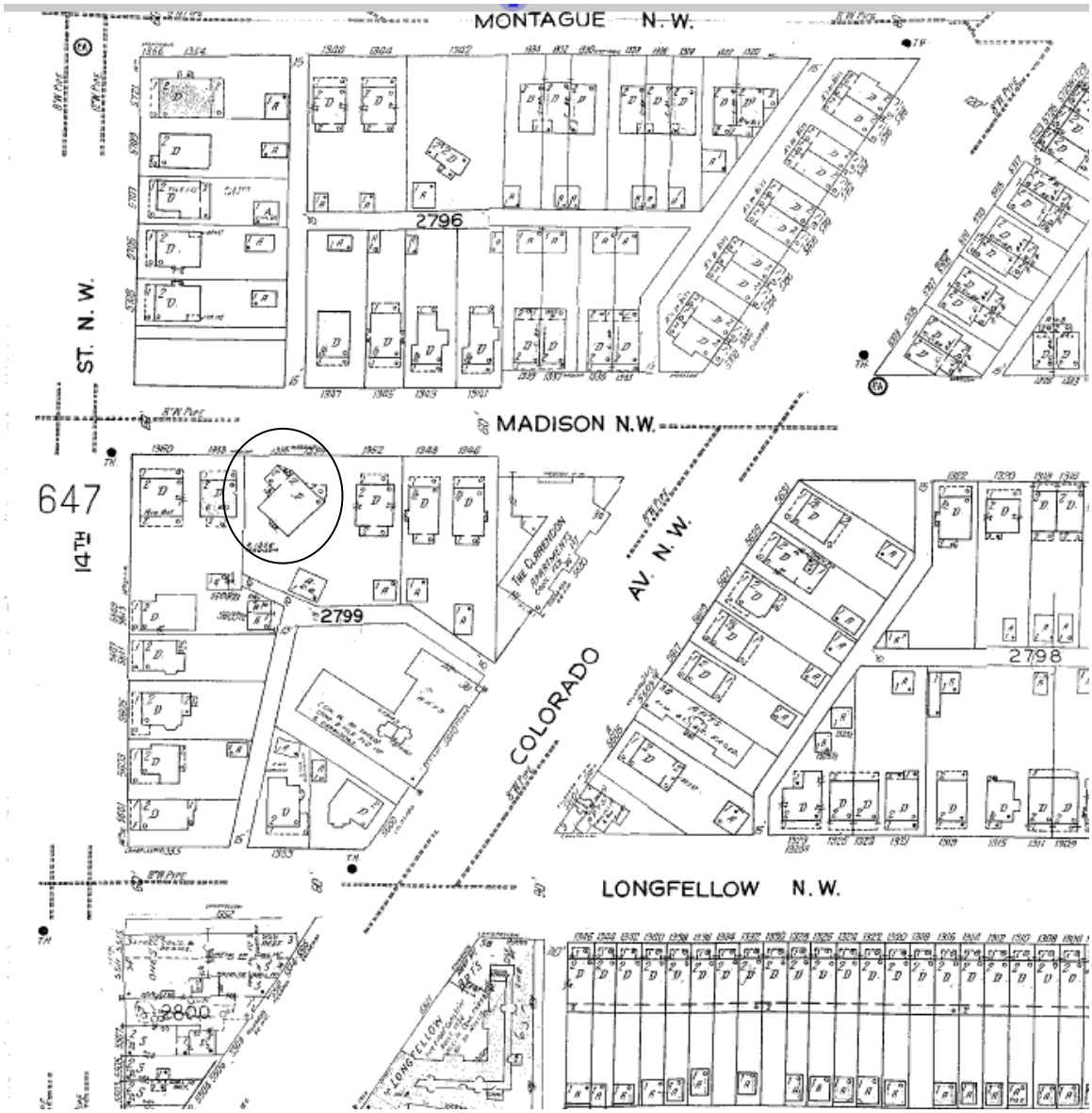
Site Map of Jost-Kuhn House, 1354 Madison Street NW
(USGS Washington West Quad Map)

Map of General Vicinity of Jost-Kuhn House, 1354 Madison Street NW

Detail of *Topographical Sketch of the Environs of Washington, D.C.* by N. Michler, 1867, showing the B. Jost property, south of Brightwood, and north of Crystal Springs resort and the Piney Branch Race Course.



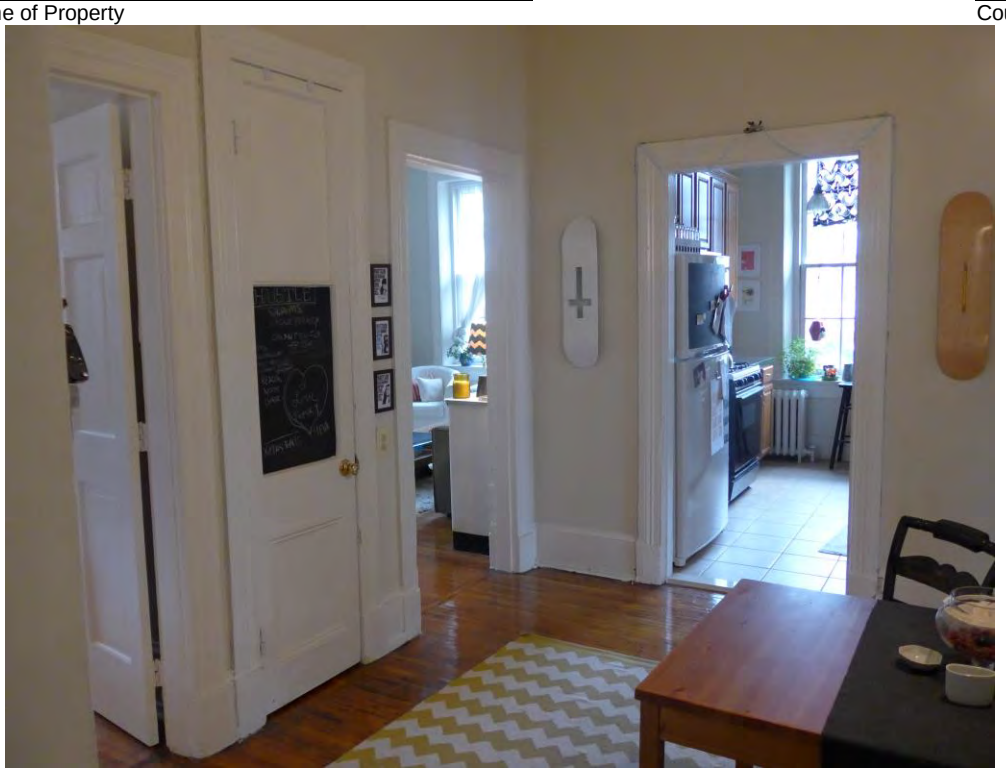
Map showing Jost-Kuhn House, 1354 Madison Street NW
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1916, Plate 338)



Map of Jost-Kuhn House, 1354 Madison Street NW
(Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1927, vol. 6, plate 648)

Historic Photograph of Jost-Kuhn House, ca. 1890
(*Historical Society of Washington, D.C.*)

ART HISTORY



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ART HISTORY

HUSTLE
CLAIMS
ORDER TURKEY
CLEAN FREEZER
FRIDGE
READING
NOOK
CHAIR
XMAS BALLS