**1. NAME**

**COMMON:** P.A. Smith Hotel

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**

- **2. LOCATION**

  **STREET AND NUMBER:** Railroad Street

  **CITY OR TOWN:** Navasota

  **STATE:** Texas

  **CITY OR TOWN:** Navasota

  **STATE:** Texas

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Yes: Restricted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Unoccupied</td>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Bath</td>
<td>Preservation work in progress</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**PRESENT USE**

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Museum
- Other (Specify)
- Religious
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Public
- Private Residence
- Park
- In Process
- Being Considered
- Public Acquisition

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

**OWNER'S NAME:** Grimes County Historical Survey Committee

**STREET AND NUMBER:** % Mrs. W. T. Wilcox Box 44

**CITY OR TOWN:** Navasota

**STATE:** Texas

**CITY OR TOWN:** Anderson

**STATE:** Texas

**CITY OR TOWN:** Austin

**STATE:** Texas

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:**

- **5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

  **GRIMES COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

  **STREET AND NUMBER:**

  **CITY OR TOWN:** Anderson

  **STATE:** Texas

  **CITY OR TOWN:** Austin

  **STATE:** Texas

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**

- **Texas State Historical Survey**

  **DATE OF SURVEY:** 1974

  **DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**

  - **Texas Historical Commission**

  **STREET AND NUMBER:**

  **CITY OR TOWN:**

  **STATE:**

  **CITY OR TOWN:**

  **STATE:**
The three story structure is constructed of rough limestone rubble with cast iron facade at the first floor and cast iron sills and arched decorative lintels on the second and third floor. The front facade is capped with a pressed tin cornice. The openings on the north and east facades have stone segmented arch lintels and cast iron sills. The east or rear facade has been stuccoed. All of the exterior windows are six over six lites.

The building measures approximately 50' by 80'. The walls are solid limestone and about two feet in width at the first floor reducing to 12 inches at the third floor. The first floor has been modified to accommodate various commercial establishments, but still retains the central stairway. The original hotel room organization is preserved on the second and third floor. This room organization consists of a central hallway from front to rear with rooms to either side. A smaller hallway, also running from front to rear, is found along the south wall and provides a back access for the rooms on that side. Natural light illuminates the central halls on the second and third floor from a roof skylight and lightwell. Other interior features include wainscoting in the halls, balustraded stair opening and lightwell and feather-graining finish on the paneled doors which still retain their painted room numbers.

The original canopy at the first floor exterior was supported by columns at the street and offered protected access to the nine sets of double doors. The canopy was later lowered and suspended from iron hangers imbedded in the wall. The original skylight cover on the roof was a small frame structure with double hung windows on all four sides. The windows could be raised and the air on the interior would be naturally drawn from the second and third floor through the lightwell and out the open windows in the skylight structure. Access to the skylight structure was provided by a small set of interior stairs. The stairs to the roof still remain but the functional skylight cover has been replaced with a sealed metal and glass cover.

The Grimes County Historical Survey Committee presently owns the building and is in the process of raising funds for its restoration. The first floor will continue to be used for commercial tenant space, the second floor will be used for community meetings and events and the third floor will be used for small private meeting rooms.
Although 19th century commercial architecture abounds in other Texas cities such as Galveston, The P.A. Smith Hotel in Navasota stands as a unique Texas blend of native limestone construction with the sophistication of cast iron detailing. Built in 1876 by Captain Philip Aurene Smith, the structure served as a hotel until the death of his wife in 1890. After that time, the upper floors were used as the private residence of the Smith family while the first floor was leased as commercial space. The building was maintained by members of the Smith estate until 1944 when it was sold to Martin Allen. It was later sold to Eddie Coneley who deeded the property to the Grimes County Historical Survey Committee.

P.A. Smith was born in Lewis County, New York on March 21, 1829. He studied to be a schoolteacher and first accepted a job in Springfield, Illinois. A good friend of Smiths, Abraham Lincoln, failed to persuade him from his Copperhead (Northern Democrat) politics and Smith traveled south to join the Confederate Army, Company A, 12th Regiment, Parson’s Brigade. By 1868, Smith, after having returned to school-teaching, settled in Hillsboro, Texas.

Smith soon found his way to Navasota in 1869 where he engaged in many business adventures. As well as building and operating the hotel, he organized the Navasota Weekly Tablet, a newspaper catering to the politics of the conservative Southern Democrats. In addition to a furniture store, a cotton business and extensive real estate, Smith built the Navasota Opera House that brought many plays and larger stage companies to Navasota. Smith is recognized in local history as a man whose public-spirited manner contributed greatly to the cultural enlightenment and commercial success of Navasota.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Grimes County Courthouse Records, County Clerk's Office, Anderson, Texas


Read, Clara Curtis. Handwritten MS. (Smith's adopted granddaughter).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>SW</td>
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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>CODE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Joe Williams, Project Director
Marie D. Landon, Historian David Hoffman, Arch. Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Texas Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 12276

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STATE: Texas CODE: 048

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [ ] State [X] Local [ ]

Name: Truett Latimer
Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: January 6, 1975

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/10/75

ATTERT: Keeper of The National Register

Date: APR 1975

* U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1973-729-147/1442 31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Smith, P. A. Hotel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>TECHNICAL</td>
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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service WASO No. 7
Form No. 10-301c
(7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>Texas</th>
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<tr>
<td>COUNTY</td>
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<td>FOR NPS USE ONLY</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENTRY NUMBER</td>
<td>APR 16 1975</td>
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1. NAME
COMMON: P.A. Smith Hotel
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER: Railroad Street
CITY OR TOWN: Navasota
STATE: Texas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>CODE</td>
<td>185</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT: David Hoffman
DATE OF PHOTO: October, 1974
NEGATIVE FILED AT: Wayne Bell and Associates

4. IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
Photograph from alley showing rear (east) facade.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)*

1. **NAME**
   - COMMON: P.A. Smith Hotel

2. **LOCATION**
   - STREET AND NUMBER: Railroad Street
   - CITY OR TOWN: Navasota
   - STATE: Texas

3. **PHOTO REFERENCE**
   - PHOTO CREDIT: David Hoffman
   - DATE OF PHOTO: October, 1974
   - NEGATIVE FILED AT: Wayne Bell and Associates

4. **IDENTIFICATION**
   - DESCRIPTIVE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
     Photograph taken from railroad tracks looking across Railroad Street showing front (west) elevation and side (north) elevation.

**SEE INSTRUCTIONS**

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

#2082
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1. NAME</strong></th>
<th><strong>2. LOCATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>3. MAP REFERENCE</strong></th>
<th><strong>4. REQUIREMENTS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>COMMON: P.A. Smith Hotel</td>
<td>STREET AND NUMBER: Railroad</td>
<td>SOURCE: U.S. Geological Survey</td>
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<td><strong>SEE INSTRUCTIONS</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>CODE: 185</td>
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<td><strong>FOR NPS USE ONLY</strong></td>
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**STATE:** Texas

**COUNTY:** Grimes
ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE: TEXAS

Date Entered: APR 18 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Blake-Beaty-Orton Home</td>
<td>Jasper, Jasper County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, P.A. Hotel</td>
<td>Navasota, Crimes County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown, John M., House</td>
<td>Washington-on-the-Brazos vicinity</td>
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<td>Wilson Utility Pottery Kilns</td>
<td>Saguin vicinity, Guadalupe County</td>
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<td>LaGrange, Fayette County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and House</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower
Hon. Lloyd Bentsen
Hon. J.J. (Jake) Pickle
Hon. Charles Wilson
Hon. Abraham Kazen, Jr.
Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Truett Latimer
Executive Director
Texas State Historical Survey Committee
Post Office Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

4/21/75
NR Data Sheet

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: P.A. Smith Hotel

LOCATION:
STREET & NUMBER: Railroad Street
CITY, TOWN: Navasota
STATE: TX
VICINITY: Navasota, TX
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: second code
COUNTY: Grimes
OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER
ADMINISTRATOR: FEDERAL/AGENCY NAME:

NR DATA SHEET:

FEATURES:
INTERIOR:
- Substantially intact-1
- Unknown - 4
- Not applicable - 7
EXTERIOR:
- Substantially intact-2
- Unknown - 5
- Not applicable - 8
ENVIRONS:
- Substantially intact-3
- Not applicable - 9

CONDITION:
- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Deteriorated
- Altered
- Original site

ACCESS:
- Yes-restricted
- Yes-unrestricted
- No access
- Unknown

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?: YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK?: YES NO

ADAPTIVE USE:
YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)
them- HOTEL

now- NOT IN USE

SIGNIFICANCE:

CLAIMS
"first" YES NO
"oldest" YES NO
"only" YES NO
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: ITALIANATE

architect/mbuilder: 
landscape/garden designer: 
interior decorator: 

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES: personal 
(label role & appropriate date)

institutional
dates:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): 1876

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE: (OF NOMINATION) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOVT MUNICIPAL COUNTY

OTHER FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE: (to nearest tenth of an acre) 1 acre

COMMENTS: (include architectural information here) Limestone, cast-iron, 3 stories, rectangular, flat roof, interior chimneys; 1st-story, cast-iron facade; 2nd & 3rd-story, cast-iron window sills and decorative segmental-arch headers, bracketed; dentilated pressed-tin cornice; 1st-story full-width canopy; interior light well; 1890, converted to private residence, restoration in progress. ITALIANATE. Built for Captain Philip Aurene Smith, early Navasota entrepreneur and developer of Grimes County.

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)