

City of Afton, Minnesota  
**Heritage Preservation Commission**  
**LOCAL PROPERTY DESIGNATION**

**DRAFT**

**NAME OF PROPERTY:**

*Historic Name:* Asa and Flora Tracy House  
*Other Names:* Asa Tracy House  
*SHPO Inventory No.:* WA-AFC-  
*Parcel No:* 22.028.20.41.0030

**LOCATION:**

*Street & No.:* 3632 St. Croix Trail South  
*City/Town:* Afton  
*State, County, Zip:* Minnesota, Washington County, 55001

**PROPERTY OWNER:**

*Owner Name:* Kathy A Bolton-Iverson  
*Owner Phone/Cell:*  
*Street & No.:* 3632 St. Croix Trail South  
*City/State/Zip:* Afton, Minnesota 55001

**CLASSIFICATION:**

<i>Ownership of Property</i>	<i>Category of Property:</i>	<i>Number of Resources within Property</i>	
		<i>Contributing</i>	<i>Noncontributing</i>
X private	X building(s)	1	2
public	district		buildings
	site		sites
	structure		1
	object		structures
			objects
		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
			<b>TOTAL</b>

*Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places:* 0      *Open to the Public:* No

**FUNCTION or USE:**

*Historic Functions:* DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
*Current Functions:* DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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**SIGNIFICANCE:**

**Historic significance:** Associated with activities, processes, events, trends or persons of importance to the community, state or nation.

**Narrative Statement:**

The Minnesota state census of 1857 lists Asa Tracy, age 24, Flora Tracey, age 18, and William Tracey, age 1, all born in the state of Maine. Asa Tracy's profession was listed as a "lumberman". He and his family had just arrived in the territory, settling in Afton. It was about this time that the house was built. Asa and Flora had another son (George) and three daughters (Fannie, Eva and another child whose name is unknown.)

Asa was identified as both a shingle-maker and sawyer and found employment in the nearby sawmills. He responded to the call for volunteers in the War Between the States and enlisted in Company C of the Seventh Minnesota Regiment, mustering out in 1865. According to the Afton Courier, Asa ran the shingle mill at Hersey, Bean & Brown where he was badly injured in 1880.

Jane (also known as Jenny) and London Peters, free African-Americans born in New York and Ohio respectively, were frontier pioneers in the St. Croix Valley in the 1840s. Living in Afton circa 1855, London disappeared and the Tracy family took in the elderly Jane who was unable to live alone, caring for her until her death.

Asa Tracy died in March, 1912 in Stillwater, MN at the home of one of his daughters, Mrs. A. G. Schuttinger, at the age of 78.

**Architectural significance:** Possessing distinctive characteristics of a style, place, period, method or materials of construction, builder or architect.

**Architectural Classification:** Residential building  
**Materials Used:** Wood frame, asphalt roof  
**Foundation:** Stone, concrete  
**Walls:** Wood frame  
**Roof:** Gabled with asphalt shingles

**Narrative Description:**

In 1860 Asa Tracy and his wife Flora built an L-shaped wood frame Victorian cottage at the southerly outskirts of Afton Village. Their handsome home originally displayed tall porch posts with arched bracketed crowns. The front porch formed a colonnade with ten arched openings with the front porch wrapping around the cottage's front elevation. The colonnade was crowned with dentils under the porch soffits.

The front porch, the house's most distinctive feature, could be accessed from the interior either through the front door, or windowed French doors with shutter. Much remains of the home's original architecture and much has changed.

What remains of the original design includes four front porch carved posts sans the crowning large arching brackets. The original front door entry set and the tall first floor front porch openings with shutters remain. The

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unique and original raised and arched window surrounds are displayed on all the visible fenestration. MOST OF THE HOUSE RETAINS ITS NARROW LAP SIDING

Any future changes to the front porch should attempt to replicate the openness and heft of the original colonnade seen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century historic photograph.

The site also displays a low-pitched shed garage behind the main house and a larger two stall utility building along the northern parcel boundary. Both buildings date outside the period of significance.

The portion of the original house and those house elements and features that remain from the original design would be considered contributing to the historic significance of the property. The outbuildings and subsequent additions to the original profile of the main house are outside the period of significance and would be considered noncontributing to the house's significance.

**SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT:** The Asa Tracy House is significant to the Village of Afton because of its association with one of the settlement's early carpenters and builders. The Period of Significance spans the time from when he built his house in 1860 to when his work life was impaired by a work related accident in 1880.

**OTHER ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

<p><b>Related Historic Contexts:</b>          Townsite Development in Washington County 1839-1955          Immigration and Ethnicity in Washington County ca. 1838-1920          Early Agriculture and River Settlement 1840-1870          Railroads and Agriculture Development 1870-1940</p>	<p><b>Significant Person(s):</b></p>
<p><b>Period of Significance:</b>          1860 to 1880</p>	<p><b>Cultural Affiliation:</b></p>
<p>1860</p>	<p><b>Architect/Builder(s):</b> Asa Tracy</p>

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:**

**Acreage of Property:** 1.00

**Legal Description of Property:** LOTS 7-12 021 SUBDIVISION NAME AFTON LOT 7 BLOCK 21 SUBDIVISION CD 19040

**Boundary Justification:** Washington County tax records, Afton Village boundaries

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**PHOTGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION:**

*Historical Photographs:*



*This photograph was taken of the Asa Tracy House in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was an outstanding example of Cottage Victorian architecture and craftsmanship. The house was built at the southerly end of Afton Village in 1860.*

*Current Photographs:*



*The Asa Tracy House has retained much of its original cottage feeling, but also been modified in many ways. The fenestration on most of the elevations has remained intact but the trimmings have been changed over time.*

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*The Asa Tracy House displays two major out buildings and a fenced garden none of which appears to be contemporary with the main house.*



*While it is difficult to determine what is original or modified on the south-facing elevation, it retains a simple balance of design.*

**AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH(S) AND SITE MAP(S) OF THE PROPERTY:**

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*Aerial photograph of the Asa Tracy House on the south end of the Village and west side of St. Croix Trail South.*



*Parcel Map shows how the Asa Tracy parcel was larger and somewhat more rural in its scale and location.*

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES:**

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***Published***

Afton Historical Museum. Various archives. Fall/Winter 2015-2016.

Afton Courier. June 17, 1880.

Blondo, Steven. Minnesota Architecture-History Inventory Form City of Afton Flood Protection and Sanitary Sewer Improvements, Afton, Washington County, Minnesota. 2015.

Martens. *The Perilous St. Croix River Valley Frontier*. History Press. Charleston. 2014.

Minnesota Census. 1857.

Stillwater Messenger. March 16, 1912.

Washington County Department of Property Records and Tax Payer Services.

[www.mn-washington.manatron.com](http://www.mn-washington.manatron.com)

**FORM PREPARED BY:**

Name/Title: Thomas R. Zahn & Associates LLC  
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Telephone No.: 651-221-9765  
Date Prepared: May 28, 2016

**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER COMMENT:**

Review and comment by the State Historic Preservation Officer pursuant to Minnesota Statute \_\_\_\_\_; Subd. \_\_\_\_.

Date Submitted to SHPO: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of SHPO Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

**AFTON CITY COUNCIL REVIEW / APPROVAL:**

Designation of property pursuant to: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Action: \_\_\_\_\_