



Landmarks Nomination Report

Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission

Altona Barn

(On Altona Farm)
356 Old Altona Ln
Charles Town, WV, 25414

Physical Description:

Altona Barn is located on Altona Farm, on Middleway Pike just west of Charles Town. The barn sits on north side of WV-51/Middleway Pike and west of Altona's mansion house. Other structures on the property include a stone outhouse, quarters for enslaved people, a smoke house, corn cribs, 2 outbuildings, a stone garage, and the Sears Roebuck House.

Historic Description:

Altona Barn sits on land that was originally farmed and owned by Major Abraham Davenport, Jr. in 1793. Ownership of the land originated from the Fairfax Land Grants when it was awarded to Charles Washington, who then turned and sold it to Major Abraham Davenport, Jr. Abraham Davenport, Jr. built the original farm house and farmed the land. He also became a magistrate for the county, which officially became Jefferson County in 1801, and then in 1813 became a sheriff. From Abraham Davenport Jr., the farm was passed to his son, Colonel Braxton Davenport in 1830. Under Braxton Davenport's ownership, the farm house was renovated to add two rooms on both floors, as well as a large brick façade. The brick wall, that still stands, was also erected by Braxton Davenport. Farming in the mid-1800s on Altona included mulberry trees, silk worms, and Angora goats (one of only two flocks in the United States at the time). The barn was built around this time, in the 1850s, for the usual farming needs as Davenport grew his enterprises. The onset of the Civil War, however, halted these productions and Altona became a popular and repeating encampment for both sides of the war. The sprawling fields in front of the house made it suitable for men to set up tents, while the large farm house was ideal for generals to take up in the drawing rooms. General Sheridan, for instance, used Altona's Carriage House and commandeered the horses and carriage for transportation to Harpers Ferry.

Henry Bedinger Davenport, Braxton's only son, took over the farms operations. He was active in the militia that captured John Brown, and also served the Virginia militia in the Confederate Army. After Henry Bedinger Davenport died in 1901, his widow sold the farm out of the family

in 1906. During the new ownership, the barn was doubled in size, attaining the image we see standing today. In 1936, Henry Davenport, Jr. bought Altona and it has stayed in the family ever since. Altona has played witness to over 200 years of farming and occupation, including its importance during the Civil War for both armies. Since the 1850s, the barn has served as an integral part of farm production.

Historic Resource:

Altona Barn serves as an excellent example of a mid-19th century bank barn in Jefferson County retaining a high level of integrity. It is only one of two brick barns in Jefferson County. Altona Barn is a 198' common bond, brick gable end, standing seam, tin roof bank barn built ca. 1850, with a significant addition in 1915.

The southern end of the barn is recognized as the original construction from 1850. The northern end, added in 1915, replicated the original structure, doubling the size of the barn. The barn sits on a cut limestone foundation with quoins, with the stone surrounded by raised mortar. The brick gable ends are reinforced with "S" shaped iron braces. Vertical vents are present in both gable ends. The original north elevation gable end is still present as a dividing wall in the bank barn and the vents are still visible, but closed.

A weatherboard forebay extends on the east elevation, under which are alternating stall doors and window grates. The 1950s section of the barn has a row of 8 windows in the forebay. Two cupolas with weathervanes sit on the roof, and snowbirds decorate the edge of the roof.

Nomination Criteria:

The JCHLC nominates this property under the following designations: *a property, structure or site the character of which is a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian structure, such as a barn or commercial structure, with a high level of architectural significance*; and *a property, structure or site representative of an architectural and/or landscape type which exemplifies a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of local materials and retains a high degree of integrity*. The property owner, Henry Davenport, has agreed to have the property listed as a Jefferson County Historic Landmark.

Nomination Action:

The JCHLC voted unanimously to add Altona Barn to the rolls of registered Jefferson County Historic Landmarks on July 8, 2020.



Internal Rating: _____

WEST VIRGINIA HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY FORM

Street Address	Common/Historic Name/Both	Field Survey #	Site # (SHPO Only)
Town or Community	County	Negative No.	NR Listed Date
Architect/Builder	Date of Construction	Style	
Exterior Siding/Materials	Roofing Material	Foundation	
Property Use or Function Residence <input type="radio"/> Commercial <input type="radio"/> Other <input type="radio"/>	UTM#	Photograph (2" x 3" Contact)	
Survey Organization & Date	Quadrangle Name		
	Part of What Survey/FR#		

Sketch Map of Property
Or Attach Copy of USGS Map

Site No.

N



Present Owners Phone #	Owners Mailing Address						
Describe Setting <div style="text-align: right;"> _____ Acres _____ Archaeological Artifacts Present </div>							
Description of Building or Site (Original and Present) <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: -20px;"> _____ Stories _____ Front Bays </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <i>(Use Continuation Sheets)</i> </div>							
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: left;">Alterations</th> <th style="width: 10%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: left;">If yes, describe</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes No</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Alterations		If yes, describe	Yes No		
Alterations		If yes, describe					
Yes No							
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: left;">Additions</th> <th style="width: 10%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%; text-align: left;">If yes, describe</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes No</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Additions		If yes, describe	Yes No		
Additions		If yes, describe					
Yes No							
Describe All Outbuildings <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <i>(Use Continuation Sheets)</i> </div>							
Statement of Significance <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <i>(Use Continuation Sheets)</i> </div>							
Bibliographical References <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <i>(Use Continuation Sheets)</i> </div>							
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; vertical-align: top;"> Form Prepared By: Name/Organization: Address: Phone #: </td> <td style="width: 40%; vertical-align: top;"> Date: </td> </tr> </table>		Form Prepared By: Name/Organization: Address: Phone #:	Date:				
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West Virginia Division of Culture and History
 State Historic Preservation Office

Barn Survey Form



PROPERTY NAME: Altona Barn

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 10331 Middleway Pike/356 Old Altona In

OWNERS NAME: Henry Davenport

CONTACT INFORMATION: PO Box 27, Charles Town WV
(304) – 725 – 2181

COUNTY: Jefferson

TOWN: Charles Town

UTM #:

NATIONAL REGISTER: Yes, as a part of Altona

COUNTY LANDMARK: Yes, as a part of Altona

PHOTOS #: Exterior 5 Interior 3

TYPE: Bank Barn

ESTIMATED DATE RANGE: 1850s

MAIN CONSTRUCTION TYPE: limestone foundation, common bond brick gable

CONDITION: Good

MEASUREMENTS: Ext Width 38' 3" Length 198'

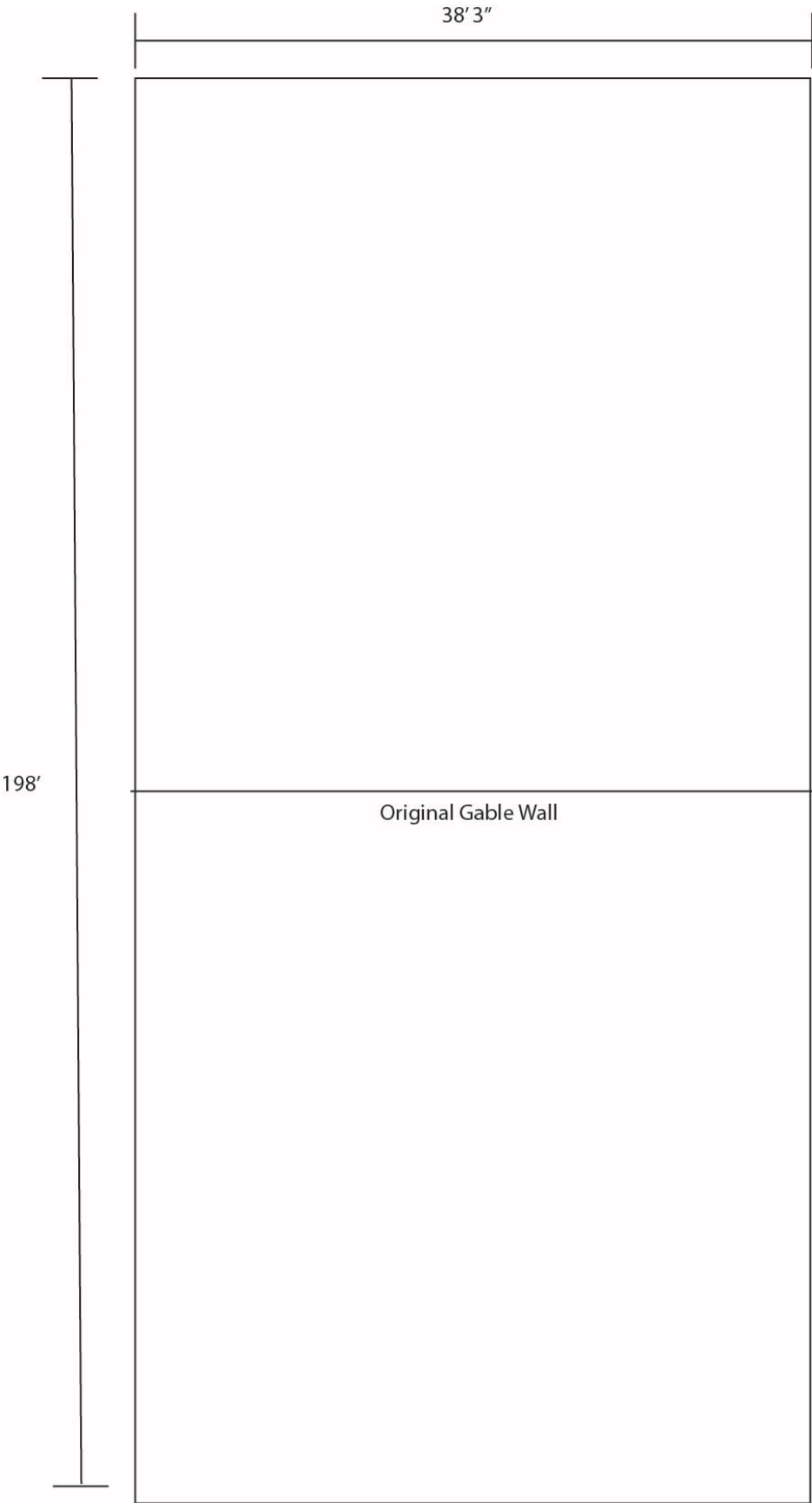
Interior Lower Level _____ Upper Level _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

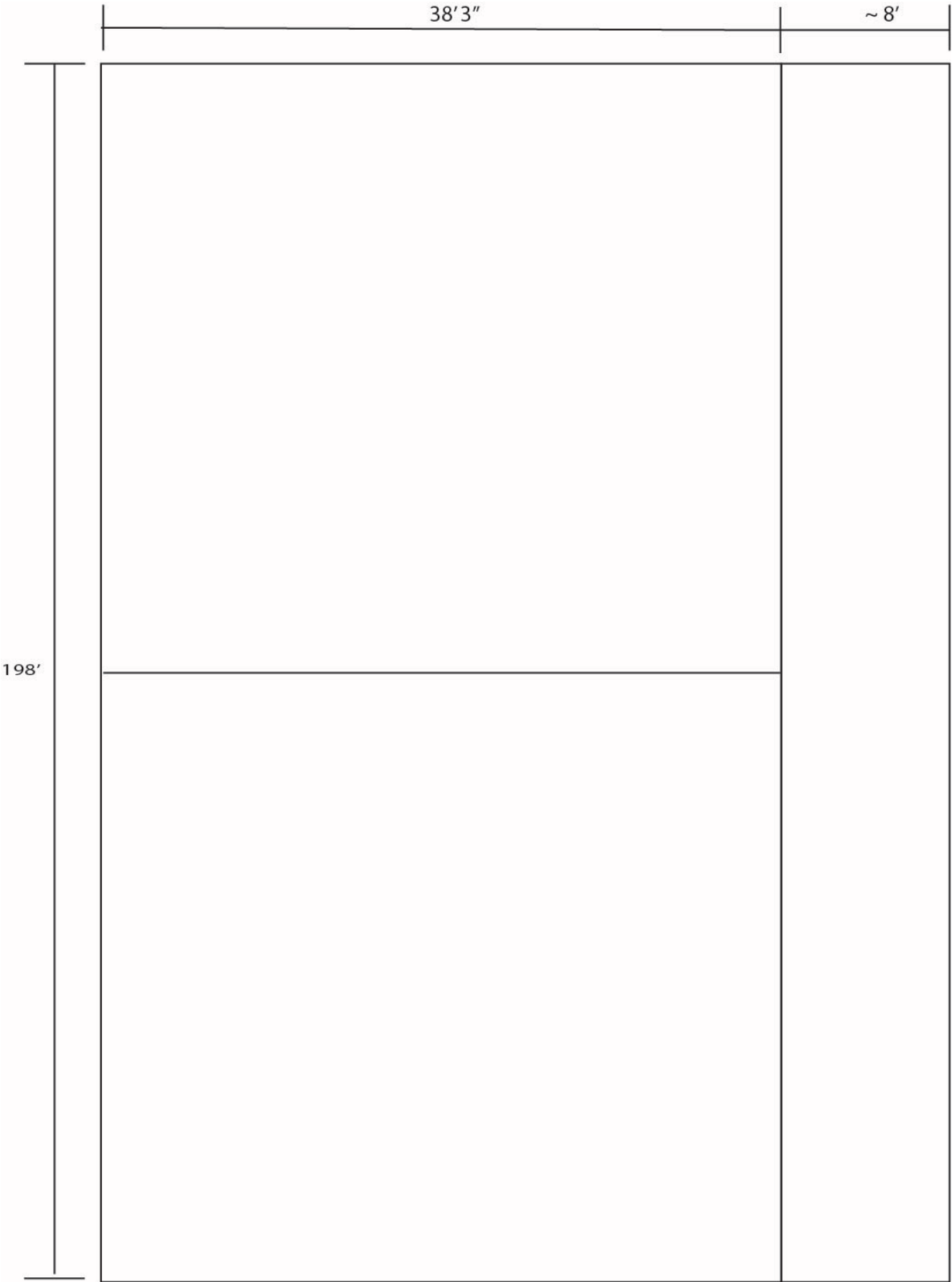
Common bond brick gable end bank barn with standing seam tin roof. Foundation is of cut limestone with quoins. The present structure consists of the original barn from the 1850s and the addition that doubled and duplicated the original barn in 1915. The original barn wall is still in place as a partition of the enlarged barn.

ROOF FRAMING TYPE: Brick Gable with standing seam tin roof.

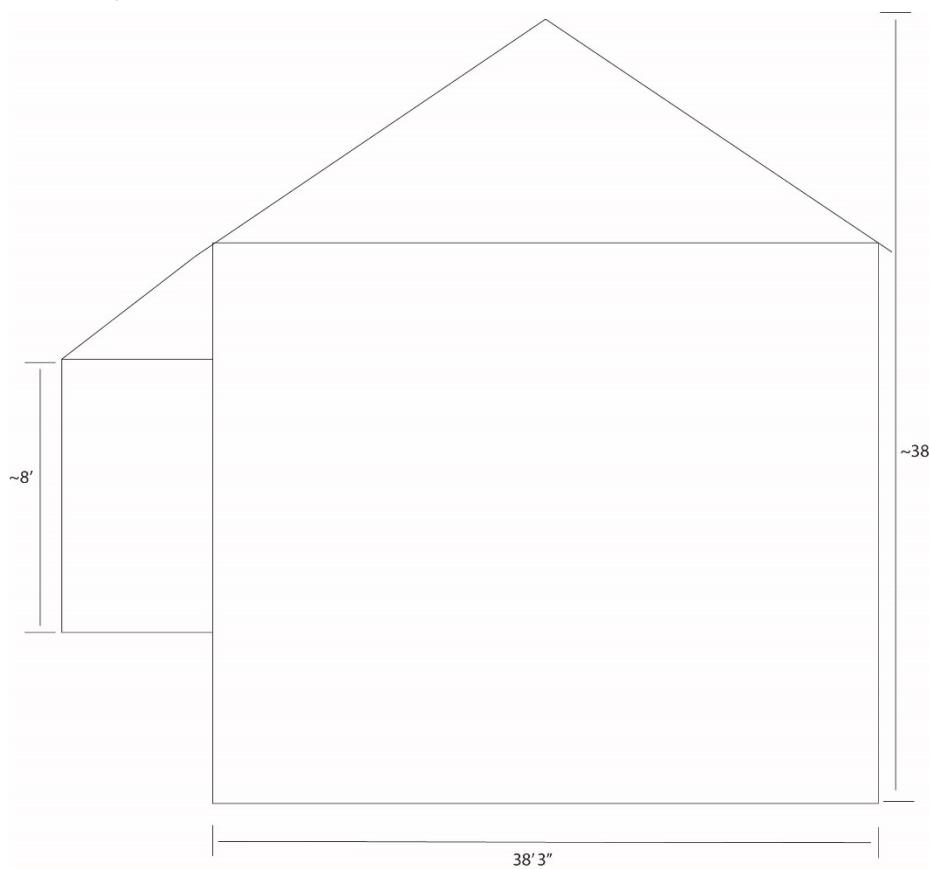
FOUNDATION SKETCH:



UPPER LEVEL SKETCH



GABLE/BENT SKETCH:



OTHER INFORMATION:

Measurements on sketches with ~ are approximations, drawings not to scale.

DATE:

SURVEYOR:



West Elevation. Original section is on the southern end.



South elevation gable. Original gable end.



North elevation gable end



West elevation showing stalls and forebay.



West elevation showing stalls and forebay.



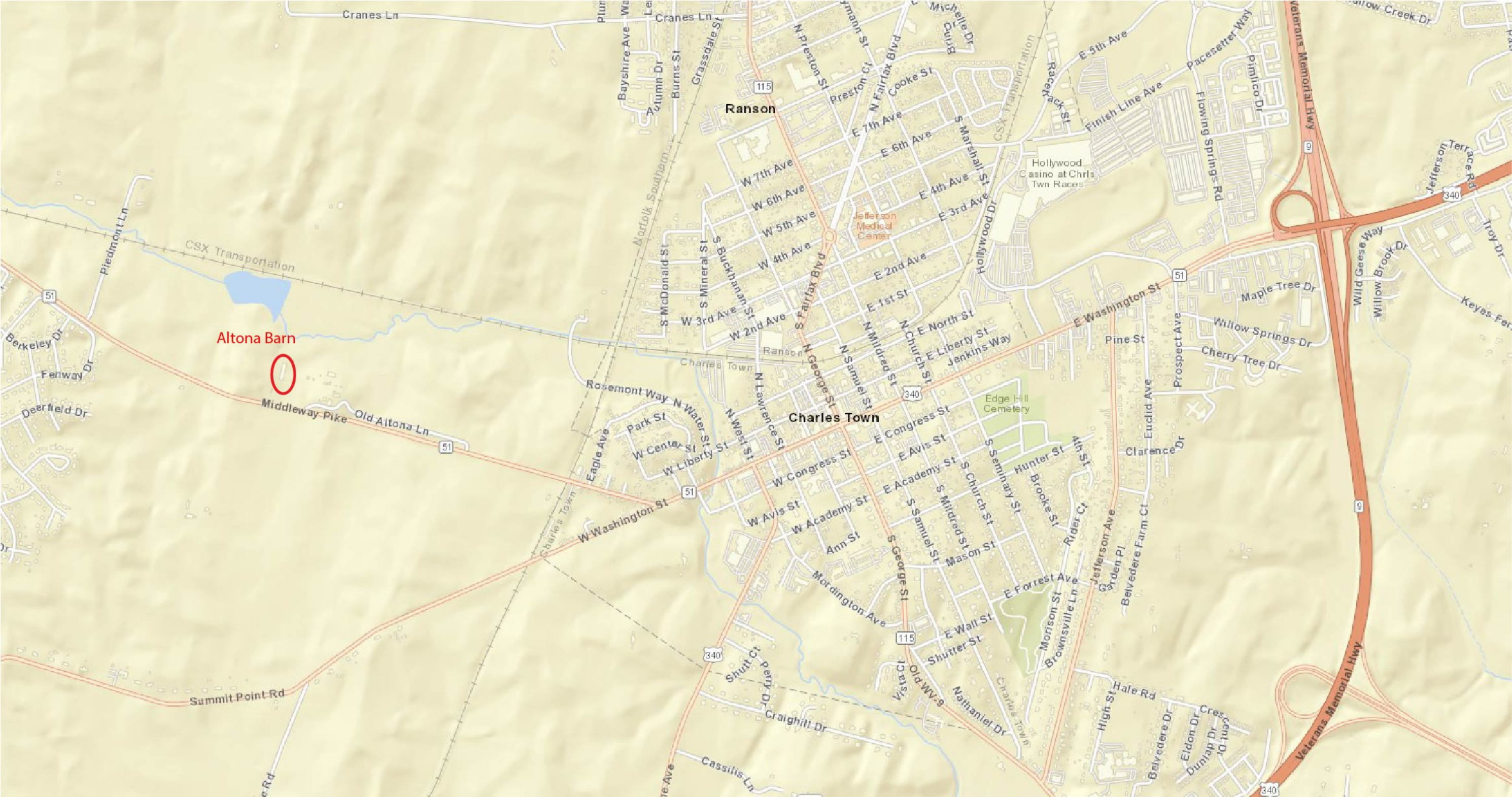
Inside picture of the north elevation gable end. Original to structure.



Image showing rafter details and the original southern gable end



Detail of west elevation barn door





Altona Barn

Evitts Run

544 ft

537 ft

201

MIDDLEWAY PIKE

51

51

OLD ALTONA LN

MIDDLEWAY PIKE

OLD ALTONA LN

10400

10314

10230