

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received MAR 24 1980

date entered MAY 23 1980

1. Name

historic Park Hotel

and/or common The Plaza Hotel

2. Location

street & number 217 S. River Street _____ not for publication

city, town Seguin _____ vicinity of 23rd congressional district

state Texas code 048 county Guadalupe code 187

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation

4. Owner of Property

name S and S Investments, Mr. Duke

William Stevens

street & number 8151 Broadway

city, town San Antonio _____ vicinity of state Texas 78209

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Guadalupe County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Seguin _____ state Texas 78155

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 5/12/77 federal state county local

depository for survey records Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin _____ state Texas 78711

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Park Hotel, presently known as the Plaza Hotel, is located on lots 1 and 2 and the south two-thirds of lot 10 in Inner Block 25, New City Block 163 on the east side of the Courthouse square which is also known as Central Park. The hotel is constructed of a reinforced concrete skeleton faced with brown brick. The building, consisting of five stories and a basement, has a two story base upon which is built a rectangular vertical shaft consisting of three stories. It has a flat roof and terra cotta cornice with geometric designs. Low brick balustrades extend around the veranda located on the mezzanine level. Narrow brick pilasters with terra cotta capitals further enhance the verticality of the three upper stories of the building. Two over two, double hung windows occupy a great proportion of wall space. A wrought iron balcony the width of one window extends from the central bay of the third floor of the east facade.

The hotel stands on the property known since 1874 as the Davis homestead [Vol. M, p. 214]. Mr. Walter Nolte purchased the property in 1909 [Vol. 32, p. 249] and in 1915 conveyed it to the Seguin Hotel Company. Mr. Nolte, a member of the family who owned E. Nolte & Sons Bank, established in the late 1880's, was also the Treasurer of the Seguin Hotel Company.

The site, located at the corner of River and Market Streets, was thought to be ideal as it provided the building with southern and eastern exposures and a pleasant view of Central Park. The hotel had entrances with vestibules leading to the lobby in both the south and east facades. Decorative iron awnings attached to the building hung over the entrances and extended the width of the sidewalks surrounding the building. The hotel was set back from the street in order to allow for attractive space for guest parking in front of it on both River and Market Streets.

When the hotel was being built, the Guadalupe Gazette [November 12, 1915] reported that it was to be the handsomest as well as best equipped hotel in any town of the size of Seguin. The hotel offered every accommodation of a modern hotel. It consisted of approximately thirty-six rooms, twelve on each of the upper three floors. First floor plans included a large lobby with tile flooring, a large dining room which was also used as a grand ballroom that had an atrium opening through the mezzanine floor. A decorative metal and plaster motif was incorporated into the center of the ceiling. The work was executed by Frank A. Seifert Plastic Relief Company. The ground floor also housed the kitchen which was equipped with the latest models of the Majestic Smokeater ranges. Large staircases with marble steps led from the first floor to the mezzanine. The mezzanine included offices and a veranda on either side for dancing and dining. The hotel included other novelties such as a roof garden which could be used for dancing, shower baths, private baths, a baggage room, a barber shop, attractive telephone booths, and an elevator. The basement housed the coal boiler and pipes which supplied each room with steam heat and the machine room for the elevator. A penthouse housing the elevator core stood on top of the building [Original Floor Plans; Guadalupe Gazette, March 31, 1916].

Continued

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The exterior of the hotel has been virtually unaltered throughout the years and the interior has been modified in terms of decoration, but no major structural changes have occurred. The dining room and entrance originally finished with white plaster walls and dark mahogany woodwork have been painted green, but most of the original lighting fixtures, marble bathroom fixtures, and mahogany woodwork remain in place.

The hotel has changed owners several times and the name was changed to the Plaza as early as 1935, but it continued to operate as a hotel facility until 1954 [Vol. 275, p. 189] when it was sold to the American Lutheran Church for use as a dormitory for the students of Texas Lutheran College, established in Seguin in 1912. The building was sold ten years later and leased as apartments until purchased in 1978 by S & S Investments, the present owner, who intends to renovate the old hotel for luxury office and retail space.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates _____ **Builder/Architect** _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Park Hotel, designed by the San Antonio architect Leo M. J. Dielmann, was completed in 1917 for the estimated cost of \$75,000. It was among the first modern "high rise" buildings to be constructed in Seguin after the turn of the century. The structure is architecturally significant not only because it is the work of a prominent architect, but because the structure demonstrated the use of important advances in construction technology associated with the Chicago School during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Hotel is also historically significant to the development of the modern community of Seguin because of the circumstances surrounding its construction.

Leo M. J. Dielmann, one of the most successful and widely known architects in San Antonio and Southwest Texas, practiced architecture from 1902 until 1957 with a main office at 306 E. Commerce Street in San Antonio. He was also involved in many civic activities. Dielmann, born in San Antonio in 1881, was the son of J. C. Dielmann, a contractor and pioneer in the building and supply business who operated a wholesale and retail business in building materials in San Antonio. Dielmann attended St. Mary's College where family tradition relates he studied under Theodore Gentilz, a French artist of the late nineteenth century. He graduated in 1898 and then attended a school in Idstein, Germany where he studied Architecture and Architectural Engineering. When he returned to San Antonio, he established himself as an architect in his father's business and served as President of Dielmann Construction Company for many years. In 1909, he was appointed to the position of City Building Inspector and in 1913 he was elected alderman-at-large [Dielmann, Dielmann's Review, p. 5; Souveneir, p. 27].

Dielmann designed numerous residences, commercial structures and public buildings throughout Texas [see attached list of Dielmann's work]. In Seguin, he designed over twenty-five structures which included the store buildings of H. H. Heidecke and H. Krezdorn, both officers of the Park Hotel Company. Heidecke and Krezdorn were good friends of Dielmann and it was this friendship coupled with the widespread knowledge of Dielmann's architectural ability which prompted the Company to employ his talents to build the Park Hotel. Dielmann was a progressive man and responsible for a great advance in architecture and public improvements in Texas.

The Park Hotel was built during a period of transition between the four to six story commercial building and the modern skyscraper. In the Park Hotel, Dielmann combined the improvements in fireproofing, windbracing and foundation technology with the skeleton frame, first used in Chicago in 1883 which made the construction of "tall"

Continued

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buildings feasible. The use of the steel skeleton did not arrive in San Antonio until 1906. Although the five story Park Hotel was small in size compared to structures of twenty stories built in Chicago and the skeleton frame consisted of reinforced concrete instead of steel, the structure was an example of a new type of construction and it exhibited Chicago School characteristics. The building had a base consisting of the two lower stories, a rectangular vertical shaft in which verticality was emphasized by the narrow windows, a flat roof and a terminating terra cotta cornice with geometric designs. The ornamentation was minimal with horizontal spandrels between the windows. The building also exhibited a curvilinear gable in the cornice characteristic of the Spanish Colonial Revival popular in San Antonio and with Dielmann during the early years of the twentieth century.

Since May, 1915 Seguin had let building permits aggregating to the sum of almost \$200,000 which seemed a phenomenal progress for a city with a population of less than 5,000. The Guadalupe Gazette [March 24, 1916] editorialized that "literally and actually speaking, we are on the eve of building up a city out of a village." The people of Seguin felt they were on the verge of diverting San Antonio's large tourist trade to Seguin due to its location on the Guadalupe River. The necessity for a first-class hotel to accommodate the anticipated traffic to Seguin became greater in the minds of the businessmen. They felt the location of the hotel would indicate where future development of the town would be. Therefore, the race to develop the town began and activities became polarized between two hotel companies which were backed by two local banks owning property in different ends of town.

A group of prominent Seguin businessmen formed the Seguin Park Hotel Company during the latter part of 1915. The Company incorporated with assets totaling \$40,000 and elected officers and directors. They included the following: H. A. Heidecke, President; James A. Harley, Secretary; and Walter Nolte, Treasurer. Herman A. Krezdorn was elected to the Board of Directors and the Building Committee. The Company employed Leo M. J. Dielmann, the San Antonio architect, to design an elegant, first-class hotel on the courthouse square [Seguin Enterprise, December 17, 1915].

Competition in hotel construction soon developed with the formation of another hotel company for the purpose of erecting a six story, forty room hotel on the northeast corner of Austin and Mountain Streets. The Chamber of Commerce

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called a special meeting to discuss the proposed erection of two new hotels and attempted to persuade the two companies to erect only one hotel and invest the money intended for the other hotel in another building which would be more beneficial to Seguin.

The Seguin Park Hotel Company accepted the bid of \$40,000 for construction offered by Robert Uhr of San Antonio. Smylie of Seguin received the electrical contract, West and Gutzeit the plumbing contract and Otis Elevator Company would install the elevator.

Work on the Park Hotel broke ground first on March 17, 1916 and the Guadalupe Gazette boasted that "at least one of them [hotels] will be built; and that in the future Seguin may boast of having one of the finest hotels between Houston and San Antonio." The City Hotel Company hired the San Antonio architect Atlee B. Ayres and began construction soon afterward.

Mr. T. B. Baker leased the Park Hotel for a period of fifteen years beginning in March, 1916. He also leased the St. Anthony and Menger in San Antonio and the Connor in Joplin, Missouri. Mr. Baker possessed an enviable record as a hotel manager and was given the authority to purchase elegant furniture and fixtures for the hotel.

Citizen interest prompted detailed newspaper coverage of the hotel race during the following months. Both hotels offered similar attractions and conveniences from a quick lunch counter to a barber shop to a roof garden. Each hotel attempted to be as elaborate and modern as possible for the day and time.

The City Hotel, later named the Aumont, which was a combination of the street names, Austin and Mountain, won the race and held its grand opening on November 22, 1916. Although the Park Hotel did not open until January 9, 1917 it seems that no expense was spared or excitement was diminished. Five hundred guests attended the reception to view the beautiful new hotel's parlors, suites and dining rooms and celebrate the prosperity Seguin seemed to be experiencing.

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The management prepared an elegant menu and provided entertainment by The Imperial Mexican Orchestra from the St. Anthony Hotel in San Antonio in addition to a singer from New York. Seguin was praised for her public spirited citizens that supported the opening of the Park Hotel. The management advertised in the Guadalupe Gazette on January 19, 1917 that the Park Hotel operated on the American Plan with rates at \$2.75 and \$3.00 per day and stated that guests were always welcome at the finest and most up-to-date little hotel in Texas.

The building boom in Seguin continued into 1917. Seguin became the envy of numerous small towns which felt that one of the biggest assets in community promotion was a hotel of the most modern and magnificent type. Seguin had one to spare.

9. Major Bibliographical References

✓ Dielmann, Leo M. J. Collection, Daughters of Republic of Texas Library, University of Texas Archives.

Continued

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Seguin, Texas

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	4	6	0	0	4	0	0	3	2	7	1	1	0	5
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots numbers 1, 2 and the south two-thirds of lot 10 in Block Number 25 of the Inner Building lots in New City Block 163. Property fronts 66 and 2/3 feet on River Street and runs back 150 feet for depth to Market Street.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynn Osborne Bobbitt

organization Consultant date 5-31-79

street & number 410 King William telephone 227-7804

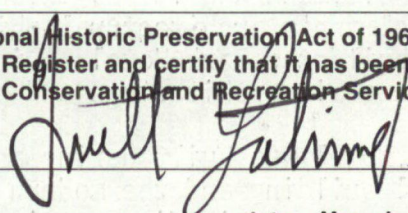
city or town San Antonio state Texas 78204

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

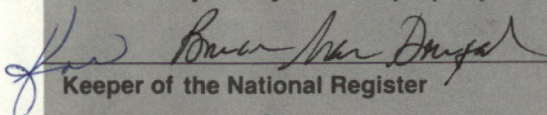
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

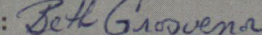
title Texas State Historic Preservation Officer date March 14, 1980

For HCRS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register

date 5/22/80

Attest: 
Chief of Registration

date 5/19/80

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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- Dielmann, Leo M. J. Dielmann's Review. San Antonio: privately published, n.d.
Guadalupe County Deed Records, Guadalupe County Courthouse, Seguin, Texas.
Guadalupe Gazette, February 4, 1916 - December 22, 1916; January 5, 1917 -
December 21, 1917.
Interview with Mrs. Inez Mueller, Dielmann's daughter, May, 1979, San Antonio,
Texas.
Picturesque San Antonio. n.p., 1909.
Seguin Centennial City Directory, 1938.
Seguin Enterprise, January 1, 1915 - December 31, 1915.
Souveneir, The City of San Antonio, Texas, n.p., 1902.

Property Park Hotel

80004124

State Tx - Guadalupe

Working Number 3-24-80 969

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 2

Maps 1

HISTORIAN

One of the town's first modern multi-story bldgs after the turn of the century. Illustrates early influence of Chicago school in TX during transitional period of commercial architecture. Of historical signif. in representing a significant period of growth during whl the town had visions of rivaling San Antonio - one of 2 hotels built by rival companies competing to build the most modern and impressive facility in the town.

accept

GROVENE

5/19/80

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

accept

GROVENE

5/19/80

BRANCH CHIEF

KEEPER

National Register Write-up _____

Send-back _____

Entered MAY 23 1980

Federal Register Entry 2-3-81

Re-submit _____



MAY 23 1980

Park Hotel
217 South River Street
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas
Photo: Texas Historical Commission, 5/12/77
Negative on File
West Elevation, Camera facing east
Photo # 1 of 2

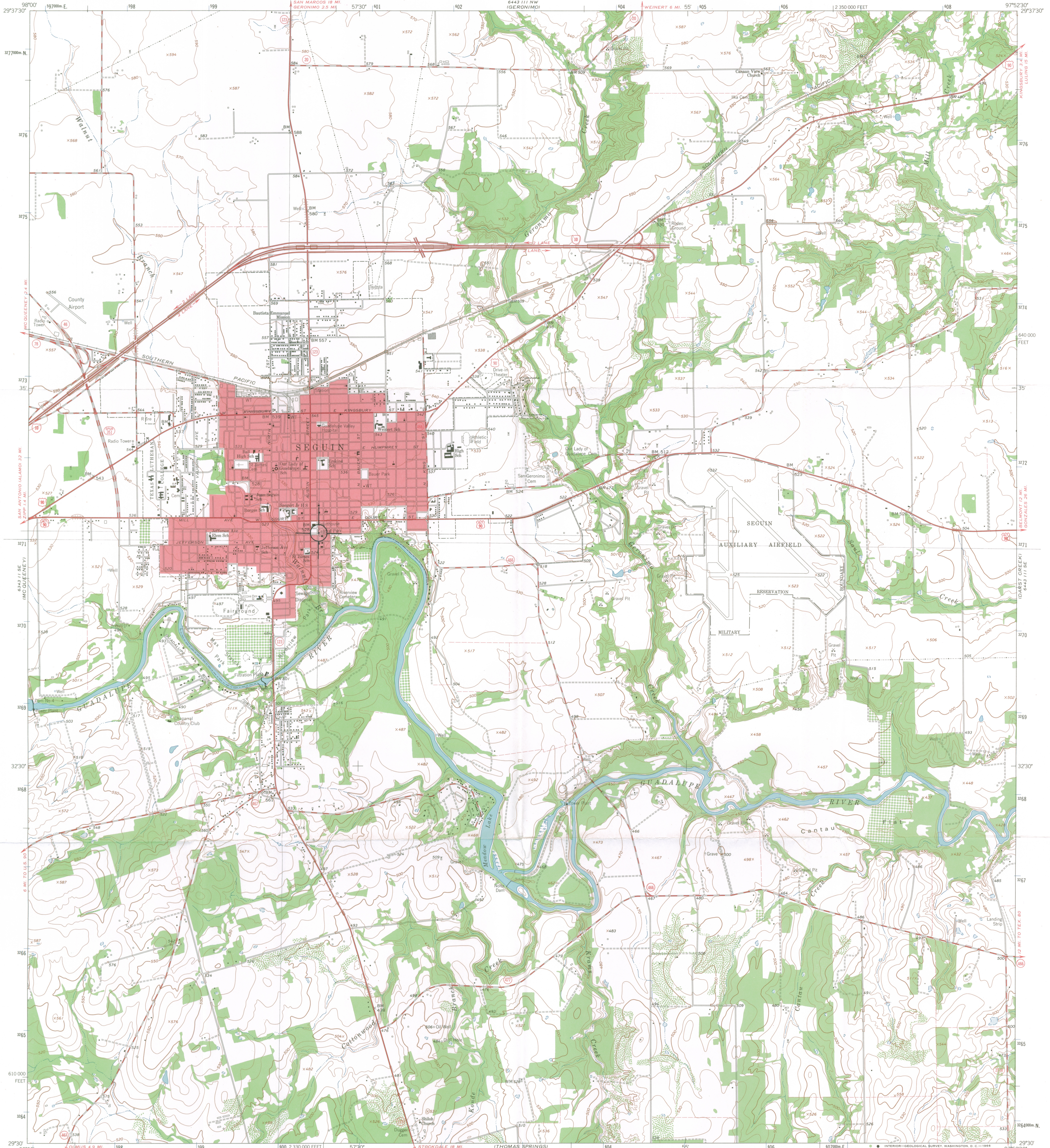
MAR 24 1980



MAY 23 1980

Park Hotel
217 South River Street
Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas
Photo: Texas Historical Commission, 5/12/77
Negative on File
Southwest Oblique, camera facing northeast
Photo # 2 of 2

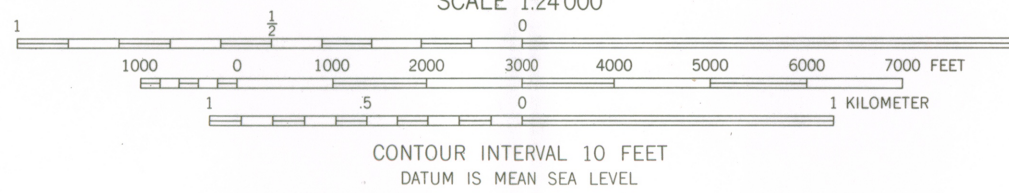
MAR 24 1980



PARK HOTEL
217 SOUTH RIVER STREET
SEGUIN, GUADALUPE COUNTY, TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 14J600400/3271105

Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS and USCE
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1958. Field checked by USGS 1964
Polyconic projection: 1927 North American datum
10,000 foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, south central zone
1000 meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines

UTM GRID AND 1964 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

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NATIONAL REGISTER

SEGUIN, TEX.
SW/4 SEGUIN IS QUADRANGLE
N2930-W9752.5/7.5

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered MAY 23 1980

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Miller, John Hickman, House	Dallas Dallas County
Warren-Crowell House	Terrell Kaufman County
Whaley House	Longview Gregg County
Park Hotel	Seguin Guadalupe County
Taylor National Bank	Taylor Williamson County
Hays County Courthouse	San Marcos Hays County
Scanlan Building	Houston Harris County

Also Notified

Honorable Lloyd Bentsen

Honorable John G. Tower
Honorable James M. Collins
Honorable Ray Roberts
Honorable Abraham Kazen, Jr.
Honorable James M. Leath
Honorable J. J. (Jake) Pickle
Honorable Mickey Leland

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Truett Latimer
Executive Director
Texas State Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin , Texas 78711

NR Byers/bjr 6/2/80
For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.