



Name of Property: Mountain Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS)

City, State: Johnson City, Tennessee

Significant Dates: 1901-1930

NHL Criteria: 1

NHL Theme: IV. Shaping the Political Landscape
2. Governmental Institutions

Previous Recognition: 1984 Historic American Buildings Survey

National Historic Context: 2009 *National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers Study*

NHL Significance:

- Established by Congress in 1865 and ultimately encompassing eleven branches across the country, the NHDVS represents a policy of veterans’ benefits that directly influenced the development of a national system for veteran health care in the United States. The NHDVS demonstrates the concern and commitment of the federal government for the well-being of the civilian soldier. The NHDVS evolved over five distinct phases, reflecting changes in policy regarding admissions and medical care before its 1930 incorporation into the Veterans Administration.
- The Mountain Branch represents phases four and five, a time of increased attention to medical care for veterans beyond age-related illnesses and disabilities. It reflects changes to the NHDVS after the admission of Spanish American War veterans and the development of care for their attendant respiratory conditions caused by tuberculosis.
- It is an outstanding example of the evolution of National Homes developed by the Board of Managers and their emphasis on significant buildings and designed landscapes as sources of security, peace, and comfort, instilling pride for veterans and respect for them among the general public. The formalized landscape and cohesive Beaux Arts style represents a departure from earlier designs reflecting a change in operational and administrative requirements.
- Mountain Home National Cemetery (originally the Soldiers Home Cemetery) is an



integral part of the Home, providing a final benefit -- honored burial among comrades.

Integrity:

- The building complex and associated landscape have a high degree of integrity, although some early buildings, service buildings, flower gardens, agricultural facilities and fields, are gone.
- Major post-1930 development has been at the perimeter of the complex; however, the urban location has placed development pressures close to the historic core.

Owner of Property: Federal

Acreage of Property: Approximately 247 acres.

Origins of Nomination: Via an interagency agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs Federal Preservation Office (VA FPO), and through a Cooperative Agreement with the National Council on Public History, the NPS contracted for a context study to assess significance and develop NHL nominations.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- Recognition of the NHDVS as a nationally significant resource will help Americans to better understand the commitment of the federal government to its military veterans.

- The successor of this ground-breaking federal policy in veterans care is of current national interest.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Landmarks Committee Comments:

Landmarks Committee Recommendation: Designation. Mr. Hoyos moved, Dr. Odo seconded; unanimous approval.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (comments received as of 10/29/10):

Jane M. Myron, Mayor, City of Johnson City, Tennessee

Alan Bridwell, Marketing Director, Economic Development Board, Johnson City, Tennessee

David P. Roe, U.S. Congress, Tennessee

Advisory Board Recommendation: