### OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. No.</th>
<th>LOR-1302-21</th>
<th>REV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. County</td>
<td>Lorain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Name(s)</td>
<td>Verizon Communications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Present Name(s)</td>
<td>Oberlin Telephone Exchange Building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Historic or Other Name(s)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 6. Specific Address or Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Number</th>
<th>56 South Main</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Name</td>
<td>Oberlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Reference</td>
<td>Lorain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Quadrangle Name</td>
<td>Oberlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Zone</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lot, Section or VMD Number</td>
<td>0900085112081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. City or Village</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. U.T.M. Reference</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Exterior Material(s)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10. Interior Material(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>11. Architect or Engineer</td>
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<td>12. Owner's Name &amp; Address, if known</td>
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#### 7. City or Village

- **Oberlin**

#### 8. U.T.M. Reference

- **Oberlin**

#### 9. Exterior Material(s)

- **Brick**

#### 10. Interior Material(s)

- **Unknown**

#### 11. Architect or Engineer

- **Modern Movements**

#### 12. Owner's Name & Address, if known

- **Private**

#### 13. Part of Established Hist. Dist? YES

#### 14. Other Designation (NR or Local)

- **Downtown Oberlin Historic District**

#### 15. Thematic Associations:

- **Telephone/Telegraph**
- **Public Social Service**
- **Auto**

#### 16. Date(s) or Period

- **1910**

#### 17. Alteration Date(s)

- **17b.**

#### 18. Style Class and Design

- **Queen Anne**

#### 19. Style of Addition or Elements(s)

- **Modern Movements**

#### 20. Architect or Engineer

- **Modern Movements**

#### 21. Building Type or Plan

- **Two story**

#### 22. Alteration Date(s)

- **17b.**

#### 23. Present Use

- **Communications Facility**

#### 24. Ownership

- **Private**

#### 25. Owner's Name & Address, if known

- **Private**

#### 26. Property Acreage

- **0.16**

#### 27. Other Surveys

- **None**

#### 28. No. of Stories

- **Two story**

#### 29. Basement

- **Yes**

#### 30. Foundation Material

- **Stone bearing**

#### 31. Wall Construction

- **Brick bearing**

#### 32. Roof Type

- **Flat**

#### 33. No. of Bays

- **6**

#### 34. Exterior Wall Material(s)

- **Brick**

#### 35. Plan Shape

- **Irregular**

#### 36. Changes associated with 17b Dates

- **Original/Most significant construction**
- **Substantial alteration/addition**

#### 37. Window Type(s)

- **1 over 1**

#### 38. Building Dimensions

- **Casement**

#### 39. Endangered?

- **NO**

#### 40. Chimney Placement

- **No chimney observed**

#### 41. Distance from & Frontage on Road

- **15' approx**

#### 42. Historic Outbuildings & Dependencies Structure

- **Temporary**

#### 43. Associated Activity

- **None**

#### 44. Affiliated Inventory Numbers Historic (OHI)

- **17/17b**

#### 45. Archaeological (OAI)

- **None**

#### 46. Description of Environment and Outbuildings

- **See #52**

#### 47. History and Significance

- **This building was constructed in 1910 to house the Oberlin telephone exchange. Eight years after a private company offering telephone service failed, the Oberlin Telephone Company was incorporated in 1895, opening its exchange the next year with 82 patrons. A state-of-the-art building was deemed necessary just after the turn of the century, when plans formed for construction at this downtown site on South Main. Previously this location contained a residence, also used as a boarding house, which had been built prior to 1883. The plans were apparently slow in translating into action; a headline in the April 30, 1907 edition of the Oberlin News stated of the proposed new building, 'Manager says that it is really going to be built.' Two years later the plans had not advanced significantly: the continued...**

#### 48. Date Recorded

- **12/09/2005**

#### 49. PIR Reviewer

- **Laurie Stein**
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8. Site Plan with North Arrow

54. Farmstead Plan:

- Door Selection: Three or more
- Door Position: Altered
- Orientation: Lateral axis with lateral smaller extension
- Symmetry: Bilateral asymmetry

Report Associated With Project:
NADB #: 

[Site Plan Diagram]

[Building Image 1]

[Building Image 2]
of the building, set back farther from the road, attempts to echo the original style, with red brick and belt coursings (though concrete, not sandstone) that mimic those of the original. The second story windows on this addition are also filled in with brick; the first story contains two windows, located between the lower two belt coursings, each with a larger central, square window flanked by two narrower casement windows, and a transom above. The door, located on the northermmost end of this addition, has six panels, the middle two of which are windows. It is topped by a broken pediment with a finial in the middle and flanked by flat, fluted pilasters. Still facing east, to the left of the original portion is a more modern addition on the south end of the building, comprised of yellow brick with a high concrete foundation. The roofline of this addition sits slightly lower than that of the original building. Sheet glass windows and double doors make up the majority of the red brick addition and in back, to the right, another portion of the modern yellow brick addition which mimics that on the south side, rectangular pattern and the projecting columns of brick continue to run along this side. The northern elevation has two sections: to the left is the roofline. Between these two bands are a pair of tall narrow windows with three lights; surrounding these windows, some columns of bricks project outwards. The south elevation of the building is dominated by this modern, yellow brick addition; the concrete bands with the roofline of this addition sits slightly lower than that of the original building. Sheet glass windows and double doors make up the majority of the red brick addition and in back, to the right, another portion of the modern yellow brick addition which mimics that on the south side, except with a third story and a roof-access door. The left section has four 1/1 double hung windows in the first story, and a fire escape leading to two double doors in the second story, with one brick-filled window to the left and two to the right.

Oberlin News reported on July 28, 1909, 'Building on South Main to resume soon.' A new manager, Mr. I. H. Griswold of Elyria, was at that time 'to take charge of the reconstruction and equipment of the building, which will be along modern lines.' By the next summer, however, the building had neared completion. The Oberlin Tribune boasted about the new building despite the delays in its construction, reporting that 'The telephone building is very neat in its appearance and has been so arranged as to give operators and electricians a chance to work without interfering with one another and without being molested by the public'; it was also highlighted that 'The new switchboard is one of the latest models and will be the best of any in the state.' In February 1911 the building was finally ready for public scrutiny, holding an open house for patrons and Oberlin residents. The Oberlin News noted on this occasion that 'The company has expended about $60,000 on the plant here,' including the new building, underground wiring, and less 'unsightly' poles and cables. 'The new building in which the system is housed,' reported the News, 'is a most commodious structureàThe room used by the operators is a most convenient, well ventilated and an excellently lighted one, and a fine place for women to work. There is probably no exchange in northern Ohio equal in efficiency to the one that has just been installed in Oberlin.' A 1924 article in the Oberlin News included a detailed description of the building, still described then as 'new': 'The first floor contains the commercial and manager's offices, a public lobby and waiting room and two built-in pay stations. On the second floor a new full feature common battery four-position Kellogg switchboard, six hundred lines installed with automatic listening and ringing and instantaneous disconnect makes possible a service well above the average. The wire chief's room and rest room quarters for the operators are also on this floor. The basement houses a modern steam heating plant, battery and store rooms. An extra room on the first floor is rented for headquarters of the AAA and Oberlin Automobile Associations.' In late 1926 stockholders approved the merger of the Oberlin Telephone Company with the Northern Ohio Telephone Company, adopting the name of the latter. By 1929 the offices of several local organizations and business associations had moved to this building as well, most of them under the leadership of former Oberlin politician and businessman extraordinaire, Judson N. Stone. Throughout the 1930s and 40s the Oberlin Automobile Club had its headquarters here; during most of those years it was joined by the Oberlin Credit Association, the Oberlin Auto License Bureau, the Oberlin Branch County Tax office and the Oberlin Businessmen's Club. With Stone's death in 1950 these offices found homes elsewhere. An addition attempting to replicate some of the original architecture was erected to the north side circa 1940, with other larger additions constructed at the back in the 1960s. By 1979, the Northern Ohio Telephone Company had given way to the General Telephone Company of Ohio as owner of the building; currently, and since at least 2001, the building is owned by Verizon.

42. Further Description of Important Interior and Exterior Features (Con't)

43. History and Significance (Con't)

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44. Description of Environment and Outbuildings (Con't)