

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received FEB 19 1987

date entered MAR 19 1987

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

1. Name

historic N/A

and/or common OLD WORLD THIRD STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

2. Location

street & number See Inventory _____ not for publication

city, town Milwaukee _____ vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Milwaukee code 079

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name N/A

street & number N/A

city, town N/A _____ vicinity of state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Milwaukee County Courthouse

street & number 901 North 9th Street

city, town Milwaukee state WI 53233

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Comprehensive Milwaukee Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979/1985 _____ federal _____ state _____ county local

depository for survey records Department of City Development, 809 North Broadway

city, town Milwaukee state WI 53202

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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

General Description

The North Old World Third Street Historic District occupies parts of three city blocks in the northwest part of Milwaukee's Central Business District. The district contains mixed commercial uses including retail shops, several ethnic groceries, three restaurants, two taverns and a sausage factory. The street's unique name was the result of a 1984 Common Council resolution that renamed what had historically always been North 3rd Street as North Old World 3rd Street for six blocks between West Wisconsin Avenue and West McKinley Avenue. North of McKinley Avenue, Third Street was renamed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, a portion of which was listed in the National Register in 1984. The district is compactly built with most buildings of party-wall construction. There are 19 commercial buildings in the district with four non-contributing buildings of contemporary design. These are less than 50 years old and do not contribute to either the district's architectural or historical significance. The 15 significant buildings in the district represent the period of commercial development in Milwaukee from c.1858 to 1910. In most cases, the buildings have retained their original architectural character above the first floor level.

Boundary Justification

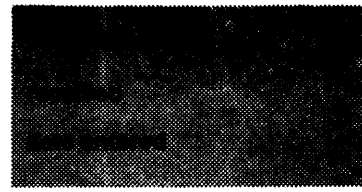
The district is distinguished from its environs by the architectural cohesiveness of its continuous streetscape of Victorian and early twentieth century commercial architecture. The adjacent areas either represent changes in land use or else have been redeveloped with building types that are not in character with the district. To the north and west of the district are surface parking lots and non-historic twentieth century industrial buildings; to the east is the Milwaukee River and to the south is a modern park built in the 1960s, Pere Marquette Park, and the Milwaukee Journal Company plant, a massive 1920's complex with major 1960's alterations and additions that covers an entire city block.

Buildings Descriptions

The buildings vary in height from one story infill structures like the Central Film Laboratory (No. 17) to the six-story Usinger Sausage Factory building (No. 18). The remaining buildings are two to five stories in height. The largest buildings in the district are located on the east side of the street and include Usinger's and the Steinmeyer Building (No. 16). On the west side of the street are many small-to-medium scale Victorian commercial buildings built between c1858 and the 1880s. These buildings were architecturally treated with Italianate, Gothic and Queen Anne motifs while the later ones were articulated with Romanesque and Neo-Classical detailing. An exception to this is Mader's Restaurant (No. 12). Located at this site since 1930's, Mader's was originally an unassuming commercial building that was dramatically transformed in 1952-53 and enlarged in 1962 into its present Neo-Germanic form. It is a non-contributing structure.

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The buildings were constructed with either load bearing solid brick walls or a combination of brick cladding over a wood or metal frame. Beginning in the mid-1890s all buildings in the district were built with either reinforced concrete or metal frames or a combination thereof. The exteriors were clad with materials that were considered to be fireproof such as brick, stone and terra cotta which were used to both face exteriors and for trim elements. Wood and sheet metal were used to construct ornamental cornices and storefronts. The brick was either locally produced cream brick or imported pressed brick.

The following inventory indicates the map no., street address, historic name (if known), construction date (if known), and classification code of each building in the district (C-contributing; NC-non-contributing). Dates of construction were determined from building permits, newspaper articles, date stones, fire insurance records and tax records. Historic names were determined from newspaper articles, social, business and commercial histories, city directories, fire insurance records and fire insurance maps.

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>
1	322 W. State St.	Anton Kuolt Schlitz Brewing Co. Saloon	1889	C
2	1001 N. Old World 3rd Street	Hinkel Building	1877	C
3	1003 N. Old World 3rd Street	Retail Shop	1944	NC
4	1005-07 N. Old World 3rd Street	Retail Shop/Office Building	1901	C
5	1009 N. Old World 3rd Street	Otto Thiele Drug Store	1874	C
6	1013 N. Old World 3rd Street	Retail Shop	1894	C
7	1015-19 N. Old World 3rd Street	Schoenleber Building	1882	C
8	1021 N. Old World 3rd Street	Wild Building	1888	C
9	1023-27 N. Old World 3rd Street	Retail Shop	1894	C

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10	1029-31 N. Old World 3rd Street	Bauer Building	c.1858 ¹⁰	C
11	1033 N. Old World 3rd Street	John Pritzlaff Hardware Co.	1861/c.1890 ¹¹	C
12	1037 N. Old World 3rd Street	Mader's Restaurant	1952/1962 ¹²	NC
13	1103 N. Old World 3rd Street	Lipps Building	1878 ¹³	C
14	1107 N. Old World 3rd Street	Retail Shop	c.1872 ¹⁴	C
15	1109-11 N. Old World 3rd Street	Retail Shop	1880 ¹⁵	C
16	1054 N. Old World 3rd Street	Steinmeyer Building	1893/1898 ¹⁶	C
17	c1036 N. Old World 3rd Street	Usinger Sausage Co. Addition	1963 ¹⁷	NC
18	1030 N. Old World 3rd Street	Usinger Sausage Co.	1906 ¹⁸	C
19	1016 N. Old World 3rd Street	Usinger Sausage Co. Addition	1984 ¹⁹	NC

Description of Selected Contributing Building

<u>Map No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>
11	1033 N. Old World 3rd Street	John Pritzlaff Hardware Co. ²⁰	1861/c1890

The former Pritzlaff Hardware Company building is a four-story, brick, Italianate style building. It was constructed in two phases with the first three floors erected for Pritzlaff in 1861. The fourth floor was added about 1890. The facade is four bays wide and clad with cream brick. It is articulated with elongated round arches that rise as pilasters between the windows. Limestone is used as trim in the sills and keystones. The design of the fourth floor duplicated the proportions and fenestration of the original

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building, but is distinguished by a pressed metal cornice in the Queen Anne Style. The ground floor has been completely altered from its original appearance.

10 1029-31 N. Old The Bauer Building²¹ c.1858
World 3rd Street

The Bauer building is an example of a small scale Italianate style commercial block. It is three stories high, three bays wide and clad with cream brick. The windows have ornately carved segmental lintels. Across the top is a simple cornice of dentils formed by the brickwork. The ground floor has been completely altered from its original appearance.

5 1009-11 N. Old Otto Thiele Drug Store²² 1874
World 3rd St.

This former drug store is another fine example of Italianate style architecture. Built for Otto Thiele in 1874 it was designed by Milwaukee architect Henry C. Koch.²³ It is three stories high and three bays wide, clad with cream brick, now painted, and trimmed with limestone. The window hoods are finished with incised keystones. Across the top of the building is an elaborate pressed metal cornice, which was probably added at a later date. The ground floor retains no original fabric.

2 1001 N. Old World John Hinkel Building²⁴ 1877
3rd Street

The John Hinkel Building was erected in 1877 as a saloon for Hinkel who operated his business at this site until 1896. It is prominently sited on a long narrow lot at the northwest corner of North Old World 3rd and West State Streets. It is three stories high with both facades fully articulated with Italianate and Victorian Gothic details. The exterior is clad with cream brick that is now painted. The segmental window openings are finished with stone sills and brick hood molds with incised limestone keystones. At the top of the building is Gothic style corbelling and a pressed metal cornice that is gabled at the corner and on the State Street facade. The store front is modern, but some of the original fabric remains on the State Street side. Several windows on the second and third floors have been bricked-up.

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13 1103 N. Old World John Lipps Building²⁵ 1878
3rd Street

The John Lipps Building is a high style example of Victorian Gothic commercial architecture. It was designed by Milwaukee architect Charles Gombert.²⁶ Located at the northwest corner of Old World Third Street and West Highland Avenue, it is a substantial, three story structure, six bay wide on Old World 3rd and twelve bays long on Highland Avenue. The Old World 3rd Street facade is finished with Amherst sandstone while the Highland Avenue side is clad with cream brick. The sandstone facade is enlivened by richly carved and incised corner piers, hood molds and belt courses. Additional ornament is found on the center gable at the top of the building. The Highland Avenue facade is treated with the same sandstone hood molds and beltcourses. Crowning the block is an ornate cornice of carved sandstone corbelling and pressed metal brackets. The upper floors of this building are virtually unchanged except for several windows which have been bricked-up on Highland Avenue, but the ground floor has modern store fronts.

7 1015-19 N. Old A. Schoenleber Building²⁷ 1882
3rd Street

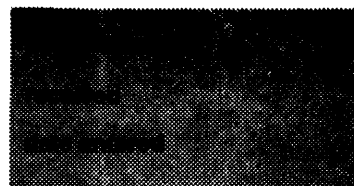
The Adolph Schoenleber Building is a three-story, six bay, Italianate commercial block, designed by Milwaukee architect, Frederick Velguth.²⁸ The upper floors are clad with painted cream brick while the ground floor has been altered by the addition of modern store fronts. The highly decorated effect of the second and third floors is produced by the articulation of the wall planes with elaborate blind arcading with trefoil arches springing from projecting brick piers. Centered within the trefoil arches, are round arched windows finished with boldly profiled surrounds. Originally there was an elaborate pressed metal cornice and center gable across the top.

8 1021 N. Old World J & H Wild Building²⁹ 1888

The Wild Building exemplifies the later Victorian period of construction in the district. The building is three stories high with the upper floors clad in unpainted cream brick. The ground floor has been altered with a modern store-front. The floor levels are defined by denticulated belt courses. A substantial oriel window of pressed metal on the second floor is flanked by double-hung sash with sprayed brick lintels. At the roofline, a frieze of carved sandstone tiles is surmounted by a pressed metal cornice in the classical mode with garlands and swags.

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4 1005 N. Old World Retail Building 34 1901
 3rd Street

This building was built in 1901 to the designs of Milwaukee architect, Carl Barkhausen. It is two stories high and clad with cream brick. On the second floor is a broad oriel window of pressed metal. A simple pressed metal boxed cornice with consoles caps the parapet. The ground floor has been altered with a modern store front.

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FOOTNOTES #7

- ¹City of Milwaukee
- ²Plaque on Building
- ³Building Permit
- ⁴Ibid.
- ⁵Milwaukee Sentinel, 31 December 1874.
- ⁶Building Permit
- ⁷Plaque on Building; Sentinel, 20 April 1882.
- ⁸Plaque on Building
- ⁹Building Permit
- ¹⁰The first known occupants are listed as early as the Milwaukee Business Directory of 1858.
- ¹¹Jerome A. Watrous, ed., Memoirs of Milwaukee County, 3 vols. (Madison: Western Historical Association, 1909), 2:777.
- ¹²Building Permit
- ¹³Sentinel, 11 May 1878.
- ¹⁴City Directory, 1873
- ¹⁵City Directory, 1881
- ¹⁶Building Permit
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸Ibid.
- ¹⁹Ibid.
- ²⁰Watrous, ed., Memoirs, 2:777.

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²¹Bauer is the earliest known occupant of this building as listed in the Milwaukee Business Directory of 1858.

²²Sentinel, 31 December 1874.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Plaque on Building

²⁵Sentinel, 11 May 1878.

²⁶Jonathan E. Land, ed., Milwaukee, Her Commercial and Manufacturing Advantages, 1882-83. (Milwaukee: n.p. , c.1883), pp. 151-152.

²⁷Plaque on Building

²⁸Sentinel, 1 January 1883, p. 2, col. 6.

²⁹Plaque on Building

³⁰Building Permit

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Period of Significance:

Specific dates 1855-1910 Builder/Architect Multiple (see text)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Significance

The Old World Third Street Historic District is both architecturally and historically significant. It is architecturally significant as an intact Victorian-era streetscape of exceptionally fine Italianate, Victorian Gothic and Romanesque influenced commercial buildings designed by prominent Milwaukee architects. It is historically significant as the last remaining intact portion of the original German retailing district in the Kilbourntown plat section of Milwaukee. From the founding of the city in the 1830s until World War I, the nominated district was one of the downtown's most important commercial areas and housed the businesses of some of the city's most important German-American merchants.

Architecture

The buildings on North Old World Third Street represent some of the best remaining examples of Milwaukee's nineteenth century commercial architecture. From the beginning, the intersection of Third Street and Juneau Avenue was the commercial focus of the pioneer era Kilbourntown settlement. It quickly became identified with the German immigrant community that settled in this area in the late 1840s. It soon eclipsed Juneau Avenue, an earlier commercial strip which became more industrial in character, and grew to be the most important retailing area on the west side. Even after the rise of West Wisconsin Avenue as the city's center of major retailing at the turn of the century, Third Street retained its commercial importance. As a result, the buildings erected there were substantial, expensive structures designed by prominent architects. Represented in the historic district are examples of the Italianate, Victorian Gothic, Romanesque and Commercial Styles that were popular from the Civil War to the turn of the century. Although two pre-1865 buildings remain, the architectural character is essentially that of the 1870s and 1880s. During these decades the district was extensively rebuilt with substantial masonry commercial blocks that replaced the pioneer store buildings of the 1830s and 1840s. The architects commissioned to design the structures included Henry C. Koch, Charles Kirchoff, Frederick Velguth, Charles Gombert and partners George Bowman Ferry and Alfred C. Clas who are counted among Milwaukee's finest nineteenth century architects. Their works significantly contributed to maintaining the streetscape's consistent, high-quality architecture.

The Bauer Building (c.1858) (No. 10) and the first three floors of the Pritzlaff Hardware Co. Building (1861, c.1890) (No. 11) are the two oldest

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Item 9, Continuation Page 1

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 8.7
Quadrangle name SW/4 Milwaukee 7.5 Series
(See Continuation Sheet)

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A	1 6	4 2 5 4 3 0	4 7 6 5 9 6 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 6	4 2 5 5 6 0	4 7 6 5 7 7 0
E			
G			

B	1 6	4 2 5 5 6 0	4 7 6 5 9 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 6	4 2 5 4 2 0	4 7 6 5 7 7 0
F			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Item 8, Page 13

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Les Vollmert, Sr. Planner, Robin Wenger, Assoc. Planner, Carlen Hatala, Consultant

organization Department of City Development date _____

street & number 809 North Broadway telephone 414/223-5706

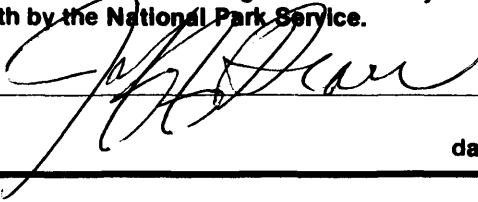
city or town Milwaukee state WI 53202

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

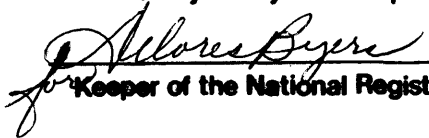
national state local

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 
title _____ date 2/10/87

For NPS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register date 3-19-87

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration

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structures remaining in the district. Their architecture exemplifies the simplified Italianate design that was common in Milwaukee during the Civil War era. Both are substantial, masonry buildings that reflected the need for larger commercial buildings than the original wood frame structures of the pioneer period that they replaced. They were built for Adam Bauer and John Pritzlaff, two pioneer German immigrant merchants who prospered in the first generation of German settlement. The architects are unknown. The upper facades of each building have been well preserved and clearly illustrate the type of Italianate details that were used during this period. Of particular note on the Bauer Building are the ornate window lintels with foliated trim. The Pritzlaff Building is an example of a facade that was enlivened by articulating the brickwork into elongated piers and arcades trimmed with stone. The fourth floor was added about 1890 and reproduced the round-arched window fenestration and pier articulation of the original lower stories.

In the 1870s three of the most significant examples of high style Victorian architecture were built in the district. The Thiele Building (1874)(No.5), the Hinkel Building (1877)(No.2) and the Lipps Building (1878)(No.13). Each exemplifies the bolder proportions and eclectic ornamentation of the Victorian period. The Thiele Building replaced the earlier frame store of its owner, Otto Thiele, a pioneer druggist. Thiele commissioned Milwaukee architect Henry C. Koch to design his new commercial block. It demonstrates the growing eclecticism of the Victorian Italianate style as polychromy and a more original approach to ornamentation drew it further away from its pre-Civil War Italian Renaissance Revival roots. The building is one of the earliest remaining works of important architect Henry C. Koch. A native of Olle in Hanover, Germany, Koch had been working in the city since 1856 in the office of pioneer architect, George W. Mygatt. Koch was first an apprentice to Mygatt and later his partner before he opened his own office in 1870. He immediately established himself as a designer of the first class with his plans for Calvary Presbyterian Church (1870) (NRHP-1986). During the remainder of the nineteenth century, Koch built a reputation as a master designer not only in Milwaukee, but throughout the state. He produced some of the city's most prominent landmark buildings including City Hall (1893)(NRHP-1973), the Pfister Hotel (1890-91), Turner Hall (1882)(NRHP-1977) and Gesu Church (1898)(NRHP-1986) as well as many commercial buildings for businessmen like Thiele. Like the Thiele Building, the Hinkel Building also replaced an earlier frame building on the site. The structure was built to house Hinkel's saloon and is an imposing presence in the district with its fully articulated fifty foot long facade facing State Street. Although the architect is unknown, its scale and attention to detail suggest an experienced professional. The design combines Italianate and Venetian Gothic motifs. The third building in this series is the Lipps Building. Like the Hinkel Building, it is a significant example of the Victorian Venetian Gothic influenced architecture popularized by John Ruskin. Its owner, John Lipps, was a German immigrant who built this imposing business block as an investment

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property. The ground floor was leased to various department stores over the years, including Espenhain and Bartels, and the Boston Store while the upper floors had offices and a meeting hall used by a variety of union, civic and religious organizations. Located at the northwest corner of Third Street and Highland Avenue, the three story building was elaborately articulated on its two principal facades. The Third Street facade is finished in Amherst standstone with incised windows hoods and a magnificent corbelled cornice of the same stone. Lipps commissioned master architect Charles Gombert to design the building. Gombert was one of the city's pioneer architects with a well established reputation among the city's German community. His extant residential commissions include the Baasen House (1874)(NRHP-1984), the Seuss House (1883-86)(NRHP-1984), and the Schlitz House (1890)(NRHP-1986), but his best known work is the Victorian Gothic North Point Water Tower (1873)(NRHP-1973). The Lipps Building is one of his few known extant commercial buildings.

The rebuilding of Third Street with larger, masonry business blocks continued through the 1880s. Adolph Schoenleber erected the present building on the site of his original frame building in 1882 (No. 7). He was a pioneer furniture merchant who been in business at this location since 1849. Schoenleber commissioned Milwaukee architect Frederick Velguth to design his new store building. Velguth also a German trained architect, was well known in the Milwaukee community for his many residential commissions and his masterpiece, Trinity Lutheran Church (1878-80)(NRHP-1979), which was much admired at the time and is even now regarded as one of Milwaukee's finest examples of Victorian Gothic ecclesiastical architecture. The Schoenleber Building illustrates the extent to which even the staid Italianate Style could be manipulated to produce the complexly detailed surfaces and cookie-cutter ornateness that was coming to dominate Victorian design in the 1880's. The facade brick work is articulated in a unique pattern of projecting surrounds and trefoil blind arcades across the second and third floors, with a multi-staged corbelled cornice incorporating a prominently enframed name and date plaque.

Another important building erected in the 1880s was the former Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company Saloon (1889)(No. 1) at 322 West State Street. Charles Kirchoff, Jr. was the architect of this building. He was a native Milwaukeean who had received his architectural training in the office of Henry Messmer, who in turn had been trained by pioneer Milwaukee architect Leonard A. Schmidtner. Kirchoff worked in Messmer's office until 1885.² Although he would later design with his partner, Thomas L. Rose, some of the city's largest and most important commercial buildings and mansions, his early independent commissions were primarily small hotels, commercial blocks, and brewery buildings for the Miller and Schlitz Brewing Companies. Kirchoff and Rose's most important buildings, including the subject structure, were designed for the Uihlein family, owners of the Schlitz Brewery. Built on a long narrow

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lot, much like the Hinkel Building, the two principal facades were richly articulated to enhance the buildings apparent size and architectural pretension. The cream brick exterior is trimmed with rusticated limestone and accented by two story oriel windows clad in ornately molded pressed sheet metal. The resulting Romanesque styled structure is one of the best preserved and most architecturally distinguished of the Schlitz Brewery corner saloons.

The erection of the Steinmeyer Building (1893/1890)(NO. 16) marked the beginning of the final phase of commercial development along Third Street. Prosperous merchants like the Steinmeyers whose businesses had grown to serve a city-wide constituency manifested their wealth and the stature of their businesses in the construction of huge and handsome edifices like this one. The principal elevations are articulated in the Romanesque Revival, a style that was considered to be particularly appropriate for massive mercantile blocks and warehouses. The Steinmeyer Building represented the first clear design departure in the district from the eclecticism of the previous Victorian structures. The architects for this building were George Bowman Ferry and Alfred C. Clas. Ferry, a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Clas, who apprenticed under pioneer Milwaukee architect James Douglas, formed their partnership in 1890. Their firm is better known for their Beaux Arts designs for such structures as the Milwaukee Central Library (1895-99)(NRHP-1974), the Northwestern National Insurance Company Building (1906)(HABS) and the State Historical Society Building (1900)(NRHP-1972) in Madison. Their design precedent for the Steinmeyer Building, however, was their somewhat more ornate Matthews Brothers Building (1890) which was also Romanesque Revival in design.³ The Steinmeyer Building is probably the city's finest example of the austere Romanesque Revival warehouse style popularized by H.H. Richardson's Cheney Block in Hartford and the Marshall Field Warehouse in Chicago.

Commerce

Old World Third Street is historically significant in the area of commerce. It was home to some of Milwaukee's best known businesses of the nineteenth century and was the heart of the German retailing district from the 1850s until World War I. The majority of the proprietors were drawn from the city's German-American community, many of whom were among the city's civic and business leaders of the day. Third Street is the product of the pioneer German immigrant merchant who started small, but prospered in the expanding post-Civil War economy, and remained at his original location on the street replacing his original modest frame store building with a substantial masonry block.

Third Street's original commercial importance was the direct result of its fortunate location at the heart of Kilbourntown where one of the first bridges crossed the Milwaukee River. It continued to prosper even after the

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Street (No. 7). Otto Thiele was educated as a chemist at Koenigsburg University in Germany. He lived briefly in New York and then Sauk City, Wisconsin before moving to Milwaukee. He was first employed by the pioneer druggists Tesch and Bode until 1865 when he established his own drug company on Third Street.⁷ Like his contemporaries, Thiele's business soon outgrew his original building and the High Victorian, Italianate block at 1009 North Old World Third (No. 5) was built in 1874 from the plans of architect Henry C. Koch. John and Charlotte Lipps owned a successful millinery business on Third Street. He came to the United States from Germany in 1845 and lived in New York City until 1858 when he and his wife moved to Milwaukee. They established a shop near the northwest corner of Third and Highland Avenue. By 1868 the Lipps employed 15 women. In 1878 their original building was replaced by the present Lipps Building at 1103 Old World Third (No.13), designed by Charles Gombert. Though their millinery business did not operate out of this building, the ground floor was leased to a succession of Milwaukee's best known department and clothing stores. These included Espenhain and Bartels, Boston Store and Brill Brothers.⁸

An interesting aspect of Third Street's commercial development was that no single business dominated its character. It contained a variety of business types, including a significant number devoted to selling food stuffs. Two prominent saloons were located here that served not only as mere neighborhood bars, but also assumed a wider role in the life of the community because of their rental halls upstairs. John Hinkel immigrated from Germany to Milwaukee in 1857. He was employed by the Best Brewing Company for six years before opening his own saloon on Third Street.⁹ Like the other merchants on the street, he replaced his original frame building with the present elaborate, three-story Hinkel's Central Hall at 1001 Old World Third (No. 2) in 1877. A similar situation occurred around the corner of 322 West State Street (No.1) with the erection of the Schlitz Brewing Company saloon built in 1889 and leased to Anton Kuolt. The public was drawn to these establishments not only for their barrooms, but for their upper floor public halls that were rented to a variety of clubs, unions, and civic and fraternal organizations.

Located on Third Street were two of Milwaukee's best known businesses associated with the food industry: the William Steinmeyer Company and the Usinger Sausage Company. Steinmeyer's was the city's largest combination wholesale-retail grocer of the nineteenth century. Its founder, William Steinmeyer, came to Milwaukee in 1844 as a child with his family. Educated at the German-English Academy, he enlisted in the Union Army shortly after graduation. Upon his discharge in 1865 he returned to Milwaukee and entered into partnership with grocer John C. Bauer. The business known as "Bauer and Steinmeyer" was located on the north side of West Juneau Avenue near North 4th Street. Bauer retired from the business in 1877 and that same year Steinmeyer, who continued the business, replaced the original building with a larger one to accommodate the increased business. A south side branch was

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opened in 1880 at the corner of South 2nd and Mineral Streets. Steinmeyer's business fortunes so dramatically increased during the 1880s that his Juneau Avenue building was soon outgrown and a new site was needed. In 1890, he signed a 100 year lease on the property at the southeast corner of Third Street and Highland Avenue. Plans were made for the construction of the present five-story Romanesque Revival style warehouse and retail store at 1054 North Old World Third Street (No.16), but Steinmeyer died in 1892 before it could be erected. His son-in-law, Emil Ott, and his brother Charles, who assumed control of the business, had the building erected in 1893. The Steinmeyer Company operated as a carriage trade grocer who employed a staff of order takers that would then dispatch the groceries to the house via a fleet of delivery wagons that served all parts of the city. This structure was one of the first food emporiums in Milwaukee to be outfitted with refrigeration equipment to provide year round supplies of dairy products, fresh meats, vegetables and fruits. Steinmeyer's name became synonymous with high quality food stuffs in Milwaukee until personalized service became uneconomical and the business closed in 1940.¹⁰

On the same block as the Steinmeyer Building is the Usinger Sausage Company at 1030 Old World Third (No.17). Begun in 1880 by Fred Usinger, it is still considered by many to be one of the premier sausage companies in the United States. Usinger came to Milwaukee from Germany in the late 1870s and first worked in the butcher shop of Julia Gaertner on the site of the present building. He soon married Gaertner's daughter and assumed control of the business. The present six story building was erected in 1906 to house all of the company's operations except for slaughtering. At present the company is entering into the fourth generation of family operation. An addition was made to the south in 1984 to house the expanding operations.

Archeological Potential

The archeological potential of the Old World Third Street Historic District was not investigated.

Preservation Activities

The buildings in the district were refurbished with paint schemes in the Victorian style in the early 1980s as part of a general streetscape improvement project designed to call attention to the historic character of the area. In 1985 North Third Street was renamed Old World Third Street in recognition of its special character. The Old World Third Street Association, a property owners organization, oversees activities on the street.

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Historical Background

Milwaukee's commercial history began with the first town settlement in 1835. Prior to this, extensive commercial trade had been carried on between French Canadian traders and the Indians in the vicinity of downtown Milwaukee, but little permanent construction had resulted. In Wisconsin, sites on Lake Michigan were favored locations for trade with the Indians. Throughout the 18th century, various fur trading posts had been established in the Milwaukee area along the river estuaries, but none of these had resulted in permanent settlement. Jacques Vieau was one of an early group of fur traders who had established a major trading center at Green Bay. In 1795 he came to Milwaukee and established a seasonal post on a knoll overlooking the Menomonee River in present day Mitchell Park. Vieau divided his time between his two posts and was not a permanent resident of the Milwaukee area.¹¹ In 1818 a young French Canadian, Solomon Juneau, came to Milwaukee to work as a clerk for Vieau. Juneau married Vieau's daughter, Josette, in 1820 and assumed control of the business within a couple of years. Juneau is considered by most accounts to have been the first permanent settler of Milwaukee. He built his cabin in 1822 at what is now the northwest corner of North Water Street and East Wisconsin Avenue.¹² Juneau remained at this site the year round and operated a trading post in a separate building. Permanent settlement of any kind in the region was inhibited by Indian control of southeastern Wisconsin. Treaties with the Indians in 1831 and 1833 ceded this part of the state to the federal government. Almost immediately after the land was surveyed and put up for sale, European and Yankee settlement began in earnest.¹³

Milwaukee's topography influenced the physical and political character of the early settlement. The Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers divided the area into three sections: east, west and south. By 1835 when the Indian lands had been surveyed and were ready for public sale, a handful of promoters had already claimed the lands which comprised the original nucleus of Milwaukee. Morgan L. Martin in partnership with Solomon Juneau, staked out the eastern wedge between the lake and the Milwaukee River as a townsite. Byron Kilbourn, an Ohio engineer and surveyor, chose land on the west side of the Milwaukee River. This is where the historic district is located. The third developer, George H. Walker, established his claim south of the Milwaukee River on a peninsula which became known as Walker's Point (listed in the NRHP 12/19/78). Thus, Milwaukee's development began as three separate speculative real estate ventures. Rivalry among the original town-makers, as a result of the speculative origins of the towns and fostered by the existence of the river barrier, characterized Milwaukee from the beginning.¹⁴

The 1830s were the heyday of land speculation and townsite promotion in the territory between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River. In Milwaukee this not only produced competing settlements, but also influenced the original layout of the village. In 1835 Kilbourn and Juneau filed their

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respective plats for the west and east sides. Both plats followed the gridiron plan of repetitive rectangular blocks, which was the most common layout of western towns during the nineteenth century. This plan facilitated land survey, lot subdivision, and sales. Its uniformity appealed to promoters and prospective buyers alike. Both the Kilbourn and Juneau plats, however, shared the typical failing of the gridiron plan in that they disregarded topography. The plats preserved the straight line and the right angle at the expense of the natural lay of the land and the individual features of the site. The only deviation in Milwaukee's checkerboard street pattern was East Water Street (today's North Water Street) and West Water Street (now a part of Plankinton Avenue), both of which paralleled the crooked course of the Milwaukee River. Several randomly-placed public squares were also included in both plats. Because of competition between Juneau and Kilbourn, however, the east-west streets of the two plats did not align and were given different names.¹⁵

Despite its formal gridiron plan, Milwaukee at this time was a small frontier village of scattered buildings. Writing in the early 1840's Increase Lapham described some of the site's features:

The city commences about a mile above the mouth of the river, at a place called Walker's Point, and extends about a mile and a half along the river. Below Walker's Point, the river is bordered by impassable marshes. The ground occupied by the town is uneven, rising from the river from fifty to one hundred feet, thus affording very beautiful stations for residences, commanding a full view of the town and bay, with its shipping. But few of these sites have yet been occupied and improved, as their peculiar importance and interesting views would lead us to suspect.¹⁶

Throughout the small riverfront community, radical alterations of the terrain had begun by the 1840s. Hills and bluffs were removed or graded, eliminating, no doubt, some of the commanding views, and the remaining soil was used to fill in the extensive marshes and lowlands along the river banks. These and other costly "improvements" were financed by the local promoters chiefly Byron Kilbourn and Solomon Juneau, to entice settlers to their respective townsites. By 1837, Kilbourn had spent about thirteen thousand dollars for the construction of roads and streets.¹⁷ Today the topography is so altered from its original state that it is difficult to conceive of the original irregular terrain with its bluffs, ravines and swamps.

In Juneautown, on the east side of the river, most of the buildings clustered along today's North Water Street near the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue. Kilbourntown, on the west side, was centered at the corner of today's Old World Third Street and Juneau Avenue. Among the earliest structures built

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were log cabins and "claim shanties," built by driving stakes in the ground and surrounding them with basswood lumber. These were soon replaced by modest clapboarded frame buildings one to three stories high. The early town consisted of a random jumble of dwellings, stores, taverns, sawmills, and shops belonging to blacksmiths, coopers, and other tradesmen.

Most of the stores and dwellings were very simple, cheaply built, gable-roofed boxes, their flimsiness not infrequently disguised by a false front. As early as 1836, however, the first two brick houses were built of locally-made cream brick, a building material for which Milwaukee would later become famous. The first brick store block in Milwaukee was erected in 1840 at the northwest corner of Third Street and Juneau Avenues, the most important commercial area on the west side. It was three stories high, and housed the first theater in Milwaukee.¹⁸ None of these early buildings remain today.

Between 1835 and 1840 the population of Milwaukee expanded from 125 to 1,692. Although the majority were Yankees from New York State and New England, Milwaukee's population was ethnically diverse from the beginning. The first groups of British, German, Irish, and Norwegian immigrants started arriving before 1840. The first black settler, Joe Oliver, who worked for Solomon Juneau as a cook, arrived in 1835.¹⁹

As the pioneer trading post gave way to a permanent village settlement with improved streets and waterways and the erection of saw and flour mills, the growing population demanded businesses that could provide goods and services. On both sides of the river, offices and shops were opened - land offices and lawyer's offices, liveries and blacksmiths, hotels and taverns, and stores which sold everything from salt to books. Originally, commercial activity on the west side was concentrated at the intersection of what is now West Juneau Avenue and Old World 3rd Street. There, on the high ground, five blocks north of present day West Wisconsin Avenue, Byron Kilbourn commenced to build his village. The intersection was a strategic transportation node. Third Street connected with the Green Bay Road leading to the settlements in northern Wisconsin and Juneau Avenue connected with the Western or Madison Road (present-day Vliet Street) via Winnebago Street going west into the interior of the state.²⁰ Thus Third Street developed as a commercial strip with shops and stores lining the street from about State Street as far north as West Walnut Street.

Development was not immediately possible on West Wisconsin Avenue because the vicinity of Wisconsin and Plankinton Avenues was a swamp covered with two to six feet of water where wild rice and tamarack trees grew. This prompted pioneer-historian James Buck to comment that for a long period of time, "Chestnut (Juneau) and 3rd was the heart of the flourishing business section ...while Spring Street (West Wisconsin Avenue) was quiescent."²¹ An inventory of west side buildings compiled by Buck shows that a fairly substantial

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business community was established at Third and Juneau within the first years of settlement. Located here were groceries, taverns, hotels, restaurants, liveries and general stores. At this time Kilbourntown was still predominately a "Yankee" village with few immigrant settlers as evidenced by the list of surnames in Buck's inventory.²² The German domination of the west side did not occur until the later 1840s.

In the 1840s Milwaukee grew from a loose confederation of three independent villages to an established community that was incorporated as a city in 1846.²³ Though the city was politically unified the rivalry between the three villages lingered into this decade. Competition was still keen among the town developers and new arrivals were steered to specific townsites by the transportation systems provided by the particular developer. Kilbourn was the most intensely competitive of the three as he provided ferry service up the Milwaukee River from the Lake Michigan steamboat landings, with stops only on his side of the river. Even though Kilbourntown and Walker's Point were connected by a bridge at present-day Plankinton Avenue and South First Street as early as 1836, the overwhelming majority of Milwaukee's settlers arrived via the Great Lakes and not by the overland routes that connected Milwaukee with Chicago.²⁴ Many of those who did travel overland by-passed Walker's Point because of the uncertainty of Walker's land title.²⁵ True unification of the villages, occurred only as the competing towns were linked via bridges over the rivers. The first bridge to connect the east and west sides was erected in 1840 at Juneau Avenue.²⁶ This bridge not only allowed free movement between the east and west sides, but also intensified the commercial development at Juneau Avenue and Third Street.

At this time, several pioneer entrepreneurs recognized the development potential of the west side and began to make substantial physical improvements. In 1842, James H. Rogers erected a bridge over the Milwaukee River to connect Spring Street with East Wisconsin Avenue on the east side. Although the bridge at Juneau Avenue had existed since 1840, this was the first direct link between the west side and the east side's business district centered about North Water Street and East Wisconsin Avenue. With a direct link established with the east side, Edward D. Holton, Harvey Birchard and John Plankinton built commercial buildings on West Wisconsin Avenue between the river and North 2nd Street around 1844, inaugurating its emergence as a commercially important extension of the city's main business district across the river on North Water Street.²⁷ West Wisconsin Avenue was still overshadowed in importance, however, by the old commercial node at North Third Street and Juneau Avenue.

After the first decade of settlement (1836-1845) Milwaukee's demographic make-up changed dramatically. During this first period, the city's population consisted largely of native Americans from New York and New England. From 1845 until to the start of the Civil War (1860), the city was transformed by a

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massive influx of European immigrants. Significant numbers came from the British Isles, particularly Ireland, the low countries, and Scandinavia, but the Germans far out numbered all immigrant groups and became the largest ethnic component of the population as a whole.²⁸ Even though representatives of all immigrant and native groups were found in all wards, a clustering soon became apparent that divided the city into distinct quarters based on ethnicity. The native and Anglo-Americans lived on the high ground, east of the river, called Yankee Hill while the Irish lived south of East Wisconsin Avenue in the Third Ward between the Milwaukee River and Lake Michigan. The Germans were most numerous west of the river in the Second Ward of the Kilbourntown plat.²⁹

Milwaukee's German immigrants were generally a highly skilled and educated group. They quickly found employment in the skilled trades, the professions and business. The majority of those engaged in business followed the same general pattern. Immediately after immigrating there would follow a period of apprentice-like employment of three to five years with an established merchant. Having successfully learned English, American business procedures and management, the immigrant would often establish his own business, sometimes in a partnership with a fellow immigrant and often capitalized by the former employer. More often than not, these new German-owned businesses would locate on Third Street in the Old Kilbourntown settlement. The concentration of German settlement in the Second Ward with the resulting development of institutions to meet social and cultural needs and the concentration of German-owned businesses on Third Street changed the Yankee settled Kilbourntown village into a German dominated community that was virtually a self-contained community.

The first detailed inventory of Third Street's commercial development after the close of the pioneer period was the Milwaukee Business Directory of 1858. A survey of those businesses on Third Street indicated that about 90% of the owners had German surnames and that a commercial mix of neighborhood shops, regional wholesale houses and light manufacturing plants lined the street. By this time, Third Street had assumed the character and identity that continues to the present. It had become both a viable commercial district and the institutional center of the German community.

During the Civil War era, the historic core of the North Third Street commercial area between State Street and Juneau Avenue began to be rebuilt with larger commercial blocks. It was during this period that the merchants who had started their businesses in the period between 1845 and 1860, prospered into major entrepreneurs. This was manifested by the scale and architectural treatment of their new buildings. The small one and two-story frame shop buildings were replaced with imposing brick blocks of three and four stories with facades articulated with elaborate brickwork, cornices, beltcourses and window trim. This trend continued into the twentieth century.

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By the end of the nineteenth century a continuous strip of commercial development extended along Third Street from West Wisconsin to North Avenue. The former Kilbourntown settlement, south of Juneau Avenue, was now fully incorporated as part of the west side central business district which was now focussed around the intersection of West Wisconsin Avenue and Plankinton Avenue. Although Old World Third Street remained a distinct business center, it was no longer a physically separate entity. Tying Old World Third Street to the main west side business district on Wisconsin Avenue was the streetcar network. Wisconsin Avenue was the primary east-west streetcar artery and Third Street was the primary streetcar route out of the downtown to the north side. The first streetcar route to operate successfully on Third Street was the Milwaukee City Railway Company. Franchised in 1865, it originally served Third Street between Juneau Avenue and Walnut Street. By the 1880s the route was extended south to State Street where it connected with a line running south along Plankinton Avenue. Electrification of the streetcars in the 1890s dramatically increased ridership and the Third Street route was then extended to intersect with Wisconsin Avenue.³⁰

This greatly bolstered the commercial importance of the Third Street corridor and spurred the construction of some of the largest commercial buildings built in the historic district along the east side of the street. The Metropolitan Block (non-extant) stood at the northeast corner of Third and State Streets. Built c. 1889-1890, it was one of Milwaukee's most prominent office buildings of the period. It was five stories high and extended a half block along Third Street. The ground floor was leased to small retail and service shops with the upper floors used as offices. In 1976 the building was gutted by fire and subsequently raised. The Usinger's addition now occupies part of the site (No. 19). In 1893 the William Steimmeyer Co. erected its huge building at the southeast corner of Third Street and Highland Avenue (No. 16). Between these two buildings was the Usinger Sausage Co. building. Founded in 1880 by Fred Usinger, the company significantly expanded and replaced the original butcher shop/sausage factory with the present six story building in 1906. Bolstered by this type of large-scale business expansion, Third Street maintained its role as a significant commercial district into the early twentieth century.

Gradually, in the twentieth century, the district became isolated from the surrounding commercial fabric. As the adjacent areas were built-up with massive, large scale office and industrial buildings, such as the Milwaukee Journal Building, 333 West State Street (1924), the district became a distinct enclave of small scale Victorian architecture. This trend continued into the 1950's and 1960's when the construction of the Park East Freeway just north of Juneau Avenue severed the district's linkage with Third Street to the north. A few years later, the clearance of all of the buildings west of North Fourth Street for surface parking and the construction of Pere Marquette Park over

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the former course of Plankinton Avenue south of State Street visually separated it from the rest of the westside downtown, which subsequently lost almost all of its Victorian commercial buildings.

The buildings that survived between State Street and Juneau Avenue were recognized during the 1970s to be a specialty shopping district with a unique "old world" character. The intact block faces were refurbished and many of the facades were painted to highlight their architectural details. The "old world" character of the retail enterprises is maintained by the import shops selling European goods, Mader's Restaurant, nationally known for its German cuisine, Usingers Sausage store and the other local proprietors who sell an interesting variety of goods, services, and food stuffs. Even in its present form, the district still evokes that German character and curious blend of neighborhood and city wide retailing that has been identified with Third Street since the time of the Civil War.

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Boundary Description

The boundaries of the North Old World North 3rd Street Historic District are described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the south curb line of West Highland Avenue and the west bank of the Milwaukee River; then south to the north curb line of West State; then west to the west property line of 322 West State; then north to the north property line of the same; then east to the east R.O.W. line of the alley; then north to the north property line of 1109 North Old World North 3rd Street; then east to the west curb line of North Old World North 3rd; then south to the south curb line of West Highland Avenue; then east to the point of beginning in the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

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- 17 Still, Milwaukee, pp. 23-24, 97.
- 18 Conzen, Immigrant Milwaukee, p. 138; James Buck, Pioneer History of Milwaukee, 4 vols. (Milwaukee: Milwaukee News Co., 1876-1886), 1:22, 45, 47-48, 183, 280; Still, Milwaukee, p. 66.
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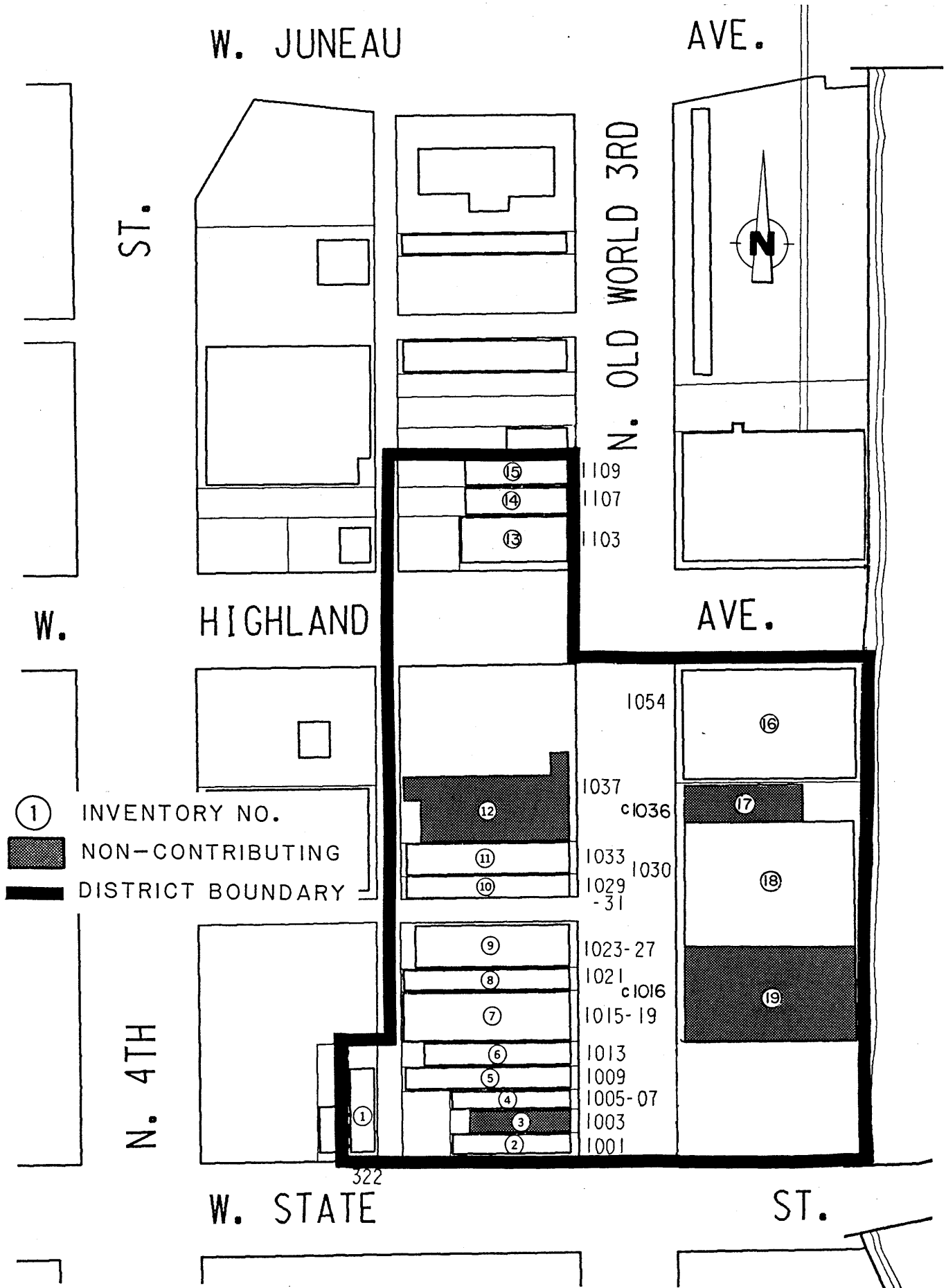
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